

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF MEN'S DISCIPLE-MAKING PROGRAMS: HOW DISCIPLESHIP INFLUENCES MEN'S LIVES

by

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Using two Assembly of God churches with a men's disciple-making program and two Assembly of God churches without such a program, the purpose of the research was to evaluate the impact of a men's disciple-making program on each individual.

The literature review examines the theological foundation of discipleship and moving men into relationship with God and one another. The literature examines in detail small group ministry and family systems. The primary task of this research was to evaluate and study the impact of men's disciple-making ministries as they relate to individual men.

The findings of this study demonstrate that churches with a men's disciple-making program are more successful at making disciples than churches without such a program. The findings suggest that discipleship, growth, and biblically masculine relationships are items about which men are concerned and items men desire to have in their lives. Additionally, churches with a men's disciple-making programs are more likely to have male involvement in ministries than churches without such a program. The success of this research can be directly linked to pastors who take men's ministry with a focused approach, desiring to see men's lives changed.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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HOW DISCIPLESHIP INFLUENCES MEN'S LIVES

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of
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Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

I believe wholeheartedly that the greatest spiritual need in America is to reach men for Christ. The focus on reaching men certainly is not to minimize the importance of women or the need to minister and reach women, but this study is one that focuses on the discipleship of men. Therefore, the reality of one situation that plagues the church and America at large is that men are failing in so many of their roles and have lost sight of what true success really encompasses. With men dropping their responsibilities in the home and in the church, the church has become weaker in its natural context and is struggling to find its footing. With books being written such as *Why Men Hate Going to Church* by David Murrow, a study of disciple-making programs is noteworthy for exploring the possibility that churches have lost touch with today's man and that churches have been ineffective in reaching men.

The problem is evident: according to a recent study, the male population in America exceeds over 98,000,000 and only 35,000,000 men know Christ. Of these 35,000,000 men, only 8,000,000 are involved in some form of discipleship (Morley, Delk, and Clemmer 27). Research shows one in every twelve men in America is active in discipleship. Jesus said as recorded in Matthew 28:19, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations" (NIV). The research shows discipleship is not a primary focus of local churches.

Somewhere between the first century and present day, the church has lost the vision and the passion for making disciples. According to studies conducted by George

Barna, less than 18 percent of Christians surveyed, including both men and women, said that their effort to grow spiritually is the single most intense commitment in their lives today. Half of the believers said that even though they work at spiritual growth consistently, they are not as committed to growing in spiritual maturity as they would like to be (42).

A significant problem within many churches is a lack of interest in discipleship. For the church to function as a biblical community of believers that the Holy Spirit can use as an avenue to reach the world, the church needs to examine the necessity and the means of true discipleship. Patrick Morley believes reaching men for Christ will affect the family unit, the church and America in strategic ways when he says:

How can we change the nation, unless we first change the church? Then, how can we change the church, unless we first change the family? Even further, how can we change families, unless we first change marriages? Finally, how can we change marriages, unless we first change men?
(*Coming Back to God* 83)

This statement resonates with me in large part because of my experience in ministering to men. I have observed how God can reach an entire family by first reaching the man.

In general, church-based discipleship programs for men have been unsuccessful. Although continuing research on the important factors needed for successful organizational initiatives exists, many of these concepts have simply not migrated to church-based programs where new concepts are needed. While such programs are relatively easy to start, they are difficult to sustain. While traveling and ministering for the national men's ministry of the Assemblies of God, I observed and heard several stories of the many churches that attempted to implement men's discipleship programs and failed.

This condition is a problem worthy of study because (1) church leaders indicate a profound dissatisfaction with the number of men in their churches who are disciples, and (2) church leaders have been unable to sustain the number of men active in discipleship (Morley, “Factors” 3). The Barna Group’s article entitled “Christian Education/Sunday School” shows that only 16 percent of church-attending adults (men and women) are involved in discipleship programs (e.g., small groups, Sunday school, and other classes; qtd. in Morley, “Factors” 3).

The data is clear that a vital men’s ministry is now a necessity for the future of the church. The United States Census Bureau with the help of Wade Horn and Tom Sylvester provides the following facts:

- Approximately 40 percent of the baby buster generation was raised by divorced or separated parents.
- Tonight, 33 percent of America’s 72 million children will go to bed in a home without a biological father.
- More than 33 percent of all children are born out of wedlock.
- Approximately 40 percent of first marriages end in divorce, affecting one million children each year. Divorce rates for second and third marriages are higher.
- Approximately 66 percent of children are not expected to live with both biological parents through age eighteen.

Many, if not most, cultural problems—divorce, abortion, juvenile crime, fatherlessness—can be traced back to the failure of a man. While no man fails on purpose, when looking closely at the data available, men inevitably surrender their will and passion to thrive. For every ten men in the church

- Nine will have children who leave the church;
- Eight will not find their jobs satisfying;
- Six will pay the monthly minimum on their credit card bills;
- Five will have a major problem with pornography;
- Four will get divorced, affecting one million children each year;
- Only one will have a biblical worldview; and,
- All ten will struggle to balance work and family (Morley, Delk and Clemmer 33).

As a pastor, I have observed firsthand the number of men within my ministry context who struggle with alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, juvenile crime, depression, and shattered relationships. Men are fighting to survive. Unfortunately, with only one in every sixteen men being disciplined, men have little direction or understanding of how to correct their course and bring joy, peace, fulfillment, and hope into their lives (Morley, Delk and Clemmer 33). By taking note of these staggering numbers, a clear problem exists in the area of men in America. The solution is suggested by returning to the New Testament's Great Commission, which calls on believers to be disciplined. Discipleship is the marching order from Matthew 28:19-20. I believe that a spiritual reformation and renewal of present society begins with a spiritual reformation and renewal of men. Churches need to have a vision for building disciples, not just seeking to find individuals to fill roles and responsibilities in the local church.

Purpose

Using two Assembly of God churches with a men's disciple-making program and two Assembly of God churches without such a program, the purpose of the research was to evaluate the impact of a men's disciple-making program on each individual man.

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following questions have been identified.

Research Question #1

What is the impact of the existing men's ministry of the churches studied?

Research Question #2

What is the contrast of a church with a vital men's ministry and one without a vital men's ministry?

Definition of Terms

In this study several terms require definition.

Discipleship or disciples of men is the act of encouraging one another and building up one another (1 Thess. 5:11). Discipleship is an activity of two or more persons encouraging and leading one another to experience a growing relationship with God. The methods by which discipleship may be accomplished are many, but discipleship is birthed out of relationship. Jesus established a relationship with his disciples before he called them. His relationship to the disciples permitted him to say, "Come to Me" (Matt. 11:28), and, "Follow Me" (Matt. 4:19). Mark records, "He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (Mark 3:14-15). Jesus targets men to equip and enable. Jesus seeks relationship with his disciples.

Vital Men's Ministry is a plan and program within a body of believers where a focus is placed on ministering to the male population group. The recognition of a group of this nature is established with a leader and a team of men committed to discipling

others while engaged in discipleship. A men's ministry that is qualified as being *vital* consists of being a relational discipleship program. Vital men's ministries engage men spiritually, relationally, and mentally. A vital men's ministry develops individuals into disciples, which are learners, and provides avenues for men to put the truth they have learned into everyday practice. The men's ministries of this caliber go beyond a once-a-month breakfast and challenge men to grow deeper in their relationships with Christ, their family, and their community.

Church-based discipleship programs are specific ministries within a local church that are committed to the cause of equipping and building up individuals to fulfill the destiny and calling that God has planned for their lives. These programs are identified through their leadership, structure, and activity. These programs may be executed through small groups and, but not limited to, Christian education classes.

Context

This study used four churches within its pre-invention research design. Each church supplied twenty men for this study. The men were randomly selected ranging in age from 25 years to 65 years being the only qualification. Culture, language group, political affiliation, and economic status were not determining factors for selection.

Each of the four Assembly of God churches average more than 150 attendees on a regular Sunday. Within this context two of the four churches selected met the criteria for being a church with a men's disciple-making program (A1 and A2). Similarly, two of the four churches selected did not meet the aforementioned criteria for being a church with a men's disciple-making program (B1 and B2).

Church A1 is located in the southeast of the United States of America. Church A1 averages between eight hundred to one thousand adults between their two Sunday morning worship services. The church staff includes eleven individuals who carry the title of pastor, ranging from senior pastor to children's pastor. The church employs one on a part-time basis who provides leadership for their men's ministry. Church A1 is multiethnic and is located in the downtown central area that according to city rating demographics has a population of 412,153 individuals. The men's ministry of church A1 has been active for five years.

Church A2 is located in the northern part of the United States. Church A2 has an active men's ministry that consists of strong leadership. The leader of this program is the senior pastor. The pastor has equipped, trained, and released an individual within the church to be the head of this program. The individual appointed by the pastor to lead this program has done so for nearly thirty years. The church averages between 650-800 adults on a Sunday morning. Church A2 is located within a town of thirty thousand people. This church is multiethnic and has been a leader in the community for the last sixty years. The men's ministry leadership team of church A2 varies in age. A few members of their leadership team are in their sixties while other members are as young as twenty-seven. Church A2 has been consistent in their approach and method of men's ministry and instrumental in developing disciples through small groups and group studies.

Church B1 is located in the northern part of the United States. Church B1 has an average weekly attendance of three hundred individuals. While church B1 is nearly ninety years old, the current senior pastor began within a year of this study. Church B1 does not presently have a men's disciple-making program. Throughout its years church

B1 made attempts at sustaining a vital men's ministry but has been unable to sustain such a program. Church B1 is located in a city of 52,053 individuals. Church B1 encountered significant change in the last five years, including a large debt that has hindered the churches ministries.

Church B2 is located in the southeast portion of the United States of America. It is a church of 250 in a city of approximately seven thousand. This church is experiencing growth and excitement for the first time in years. The leadership is in the process of establishing a men's leadership team, but at the time of this project the ministry was not implemented. The church has some ministerial staff but is in large part led by volunteers and lay individuals whom the pastor has equipped to lead.

Methodology

This research involved a case study and analysis of four churches within the fellowship of the Assemblies of God. Two churches with a vital men's disciple-making system and two churches without a vital men's disciple-making system were used to compile the data for the analysis. The results of these tools provided an indication of the impact and effectiveness that similar systems have on a local church, the members, and the community.

Participants

The participants for this study were a sample of men from four churches with the Assemblies of God of the United States of America. Two churches with an established ministry to men and two churches without an established ministry to men were invited to participate in this project. Within these four churches, a group of twenty men from each church were involved, ranging in age from 25 years to 65 years.

Instrumentation

The project used two instruments to collect information regarding the impact of men's disciple-making ministries within the four Assembly of God churches. First, a semi-structured interview with the pastor of each church provided church information and the overall quality of each men's disciple-making program. Second, individual case studies allowed for men to share and provide personal reflection on the impact and influence that a men's disciple-making ministry has on their lives and families. While the impact and influence shared through the personal reflection cannot be measured, it does provide information that validates the necessity of a men's ministry within local churches. The semi-structured interview with the pastor provided the data to determine whether the church was classified as one with a disciple-making program as opposed to one with no such program.

Variables

The primary variable in this research project was the state of the men's ministry in the local church that was studied and the individual health and vitality of each church and each individual surveyed. Intervening variables that may have affected the outcome of the study included primarily personal and church demographics. The personal demographics considered and factored into this study were the subjects' ages and experiences in life (e.g., being married, having children, being educated, and having certain vocations). A secondary variable was limited to the churches with a vital men's ministry: whether the individual was, in fact, involved at some level within the leadership of the men's ministry. A variable of this study was the involvement and role of the lead pastor in the ministry to men at his or her respective church. Other variables included the

difference in the giving units within the church, the rate of success in marriage, and the involvement of men in their local churches.

Data Collection

After contacting, by phone, the National Men's Ministry of the Assemblies of God and Man in the Mirror, Incorporated, I sent a letter to these two organizations with the appropriate questionnaire and survey, inviting them to partner with me in this project. In response, they were gracious enough to aid me in finding two churches within the Assemblies of God that had over 250 in weekly attendance with an established men's discipleship ministry and two churches within the Assemblies of God that had over 250 in weekly attendance without a men's discipleship ministry. The churches that chose to accept the invitation were quick to respond and e-mail me their completed surveys, which consisted of twenty items answered by their men's ministry leader or lead pastor.

In regards to the four churches researched in this project, the data collection process was completed through personal interview and questionnaires filled out by the men. The incentive was the satisfaction they received in contributing to the research helping to provide the importance and necessity of every church in America having a vital men's disciple-making program. Each church willingly participated in this project with full disclosure that the project was to substantiate the claim that a men's disciple-making ministry has a positive impact on men within local churches.

Data Analysis

The collected information and data was predominantly case study. The materials used for this project gather the specific data that answers the research questions. The outcome of this information gained from the multiple instruments used to evaluate the

impact of a vital men's disciple-making ministry did not require a statistician but did require detailed analysis and evaluation. The project had an explanatory design where qualitative data provides contextual information. Each church and individual were interviewed and/or surveyed, thus analysis of interview notes was necessary.

This project provides ample information through the form of case study. Analysis and thorough reading of individual case studies show the impact that a men's disciple-making program can have on men. Individuals rather than a group of individuals complete the case studies. Each church committed to providing twenty men to complete the case study survey.

Generalizability

The four churches being researched set the parameters for this study. Boundaries had to be established to divide churches into two categories: those with a vital men's disciple-making ministry and those without. Proper boundaries were established by using pivotal markers with regard to church size, men's events or retreats, men's Sunday school classes, men's small groups, and the identification of a men's ministry leader.

In terms of selecting men from the churches chosen, the qualifications were willingness and a certain age range. The limitations were few; however, due to the fact that these men were required church attenders, they were most likely accustomed to what is supposed to be rather than what is reality. I set the interview and survey questions in such a manner as to limit the subject from indirectly affecting the outcome of the project by being able to know or guess at the expected answers.

Theological Foundation

The theological foundation for discipleship is a clear principle in Scripture. Morley points out how discipleship is a central mission of the church and why discipleship programs for men are worthy of study:

Making disciples is a central mission of Christian churches (Matt. 28:18-20). This study chose men's discipleship programs over programs for women because research indicates that churches have been more successful at making disciples of women than men. The Barna Group provides research in an Internet article entitled "Gender Differences" that shows women are more likely than men to attend church, participate in a small group, attend Sunday school, read the Bible, and pray. For example, women are 39 percent more likely than men to attend a Sunday school class. This statistic might be explained by well-known gender differences in which women more readily join together in communal activities, establish close relationships through communication, and reveal emotional information. (qtd. in Morley, "Factors" 3)

The church is already making a good effort in attracting women to the mission of discipleship. The evidence shows a clear and present need to focus the attention of the church to attracting men to the discipleship.

Most Protestant churches have one or more pastors and some form of lay leadership team (e.g., elders or deacons). These leaders customarily determine the scope of ministry and allocation of church resources, which would include men's discipleship programs. Most often a layman passionate about helping men proposes a men's discipleship program to the leadership team because he has experienced or seen the devastation caused when a man fails (e.g., his marriage, family, or integrity). Frequently, the formal church leadership acquiesces to this passionate layman and allows the program to proceed but without their wholehearted support.

While unfortunate, reality is such that no ministry in the church is in greater need of the senior pastor's support than men's ministry. Pastor Jack Hayford practices what he says and it is evidenced in his experience when he states,

When our church began to grow, I realized that one of the most important things that needed to happen was the development of a strong ministry for our men. That would mean my role, as pastor, would be that of discipler and model as well as that of the chaplain-leader. (56)

The pastor does not necessarily need to be at every function or personally lead the ministry, but the involvement and passionate support of the senior pastor will sway the pendulum toward success. The reason is because men's ministry is about relationships, and men long for a relationship. When men begin to build a relationship with their pastor, significant ministry begins to take place.

The *first* calling of the disciples was a call simply to follow and get to know Jesus. Discipleship is not an event or an occurrence accomplished overnight. True discipleship takes time and interaction.

Jesus called twelve men to follow him. He then spent every day of his life with them for the next three years. An enormous amount of time and energy was attached to this relationship. The calling, however, is essential. Without the call, discipleship will not take place. Saul of Tarsus was a crude and evil man. His actions against Christians were diabolical in nature, but God found him and called him, thus beginning a powerful ministry.

The primary key to understanding the first aspect of discipleship is the realization that men are all called to follow Christ. Repeatedly in Scripture Christians see stories of God calling men to follow him. The principle of calling is exemplified in Abraham,

Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, and the list could go on to include many men, most notably the twelve disciples.

In the Bible, the word for *disciple* literally means *pupil* or *learner*. When applied to the early Christians, it came to mean someone who declared personal allegiance to the teaching and person of Jesus. Today, the life of a disciple revolves around Jesus.

Second Timothy 3:15-17 provides a good definition of the need and the how-to of making disciples:

From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

When using this Scripture as a foundation, a clear three-point process for making disciples exists. First and foremost, a disciple is someone who has believed in Jesus—his life, work, death and resurrection. The first task of making disciples is evangelism—to call persons to walk with Christ by grace through faith.

The second task of making disciples is teaching, equipping them to live like Christ. When leaders do not disciple a man who professes Christ, he will almost always become lukewarm in faith, worldly in behavior, and hypocritical in witness. The third task of making disciples is moving men toward service and missions, sending men to work for Christ to build his kingdom and bring him glory.

The challenge, theologically, in understanding Matthew 28:16-20 is answering the question of how one can make a disciple. Making a disciple is the main thrust of the entire teaching of Jesus in this passage. The main thought, the main action, the main thing is disciple making. Jesus said, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations” (v. 19). In

the original language of the text, disciple making is what drives the entire passage.

Disciple making is the main thought in this scripture and everything else is subordinate and related to this one thing: making disciples.

The commission is expressed not in terms of the means, to proclaim the good news, but of the end, to make disciples. For people to hear the message is not enough; they must also respond with the same wholehearted commitment that the disciples made. The chief mission of the church is making learners and followers of Jesus Christ, lifelong, fully devoted, fervent followers of Jesus Christ.

Jess Bousa defines discipleship when he says, “Discipleship is leading people to faith in Christ and helping them grow in that faith so that they can lead others to faith in Christ and help them grow in that faith who will then lead still others to Christ, and on and on and on” (Bousa 8). Everything in the passage called the Great Commission revolves around making disciples. Making disciples of all nations. Having disciples of all nations is the culmination of all of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Making disciples of all nations is the culmination of the promises of the prophets and of Jesus himself.

Making disciples is a task with which many seem to struggle in regard to knowing *how*. Methods include preaching and teaching, small groups, private studies, Christian literature, seminars and conferences, informal discussions, and leadership training. All of these activities can help a person know Christ, but ultimately a leader’s goal needs to move from being concerned with one’s behavior and focusing on one’s heart.

Jesus exemplified this form of discipleship with the twelve apostles. He did not focus his teachings on behavior modification. He focused his teachings on how one’s

heart is transformed. Through the transformation process, behavior becomes modified to reflect Christ's behavior.

The concept of discipleship is not limited to Matthew 28. In Matthew 10:5-6, Jesus presents a vision for reaching other individuals and ministering to them. The principle of discipleship is seen clearly in the relationship of Moses and Joshua. A large part to the disciple-making process oftentimes goes by a different heading: mentoring. Howard and William Hendricks point out that mentoring/disciple-making relationships include eight key components:

Experience: You know the world works. Hopefully, you have acquired what Proverbs calls wisdom, meaning "the skill of living."

Knowledge: Certainly in your area of expertise. But how about knowledge of Scripture? Or other literature? It tends to be older men who can ask, "Have you read such-and-such a book? It's got the answer you're looking for."

Access: To people, including other maturing Christians. To networks. To information. To authority.

Money: Jesus challenged us to use our wealth to populate heaven (Luke 16:9), which forces us to ask, how much are we investing in people? Even buying lunch for a young man in order to have a conversation with him can be a powerful thing. Did it ever occur to you that unless you pay, it might never happen? He may feel that he cannot afford it.

Resources: Over time, you probably have acquired more resources than you realize—in most cases, certainly, more than your prospective protégé. By resources I mean useful assets such as homes, cars, offices, tools, personal libraries, and even cash. Using these possessions to help another man grow is one of the best ways I know to be a faithful steward of what God has given you.

Friendship: If nothing else, you can offer companionship. The journey from boyhood to manhood can be ever so lonely, which is why we often hear disillusioned young men say, "All I wanted was for someone to be there."

Time: The older you get, the busier you get—but the more control you tend to have over time. This is especially the case if you are near or in retirement.

Yourself: God created you as a unique, valuable individual. (137-38)

These components encompass a significant aspect of discipleship and mentoring.

Discipleship and mentoring are similar in goals and strategies. Each of these principles is found in Scripture. In terms of definition, I would differentiate the two terms in that discipleship is the relationship and mentoring is the process. Discipleship really is about relationship. A church that desires to make disciples is a church that is interested in building relationships with one another. Discipleship occurs one conversation at a time as exemplified through Jesus' methodology of disciple making. The disciples asked Jesus questions on a myriad of subjects and he would respond, teach, and explain. Responding, teaching, and explaining is how a leader makes disciples. This process is what Jesus commissioned his followers to do—to be in the business of making disciples.

Jesus often referred to his apostles as disciples. The first time Jesus is recorded using the term “my disciple” is in Luke 14:25-33. He had just finished telling the parable of the great banquet, indicating the kingdom of God was going to include many who were not originally expecting to come. Multitudes were following him who apparently were not serious about Jesus' mission. Jesus seems to be thinning out the crowds by teaching the meaning of being “my disciples.” In this passage, Jesus identifies three principles to follow to be his disciple. A person must (1) love Christ far above all other human relationships, (2) follow Christ even if doing so means suffering and death, and (3) give everything to Christ.

The term disciple seems to change into the word Christian during the early Church. In Antioch the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26). The terms seem to be interchangeable albeit the term disciple is more descriptive particularly in the present era of society where many claim the name of Christian.

Overview

With a vital men's discipleship plan in use within a church, the research provides the differences in percentage of men who tithe, lead, and volunteer. Furthermore, I want to show that men being disciplined are less likely to divorce and more likely to remain at home and be the spiritual leaders for their wives and families. I am also confident that when men are being disciples churches grow numerically because men will be more prone to invite friends and colleagues to experience the life change that they have encountered through a disciple-making plan. This research provides evidence that local churches that build and execute a vital men's ministry will reap a great harvest of souls committed to changing the world one man at a time.

In the following chapters, this dissertation will show men's lives that have been changed because someone took time to disciple them, to care for them, to love them, and to mentor them. Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to the concept of making disciples. Chapter 3 details this project with more clarity as it relates to the research questions. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides analysis of the results and a discussion of the study as a whole.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Introduction

The content of the literature review has been organized (1) to explain and identify the necessary requirements for being a church with a men's disciple-making ministry; (2) to explain the impact a sustainable ministry has on the church, its members, and the community; (3) to provide a literature-based review that identifies, analyzes, and synthesizes implementation factors from five themes into a basis for addressing the research purpose and research questions; (4) to provide a review of literature on methodology; and, (5) to provide a summary of the literature on discipleship.

The problem of this research introduced the need for a men's disciple-making program within a local church. This review of literature is based on the need for awareness and clarity for implementing a discipleship program that facilitates growth in men, which, in turn, affects and influences the local church, its members, and the community. This literature review is the result of consulting the most relevant and currently published peer-reviewed academic journals, books, and other documents. This review found substantial literature in the area of discipleship, small groups, and family systems but was limited in its findings related to discipleship programs specifically for men. The literature review focuses on five major themes with the intention of addressing the research purpose and questions (see Table 2.1). These five themes and related factors formed the foundation for the research questions in Chapter 1. The analysis of these themes and related factors are in the following section.

Table 2.1. Implementation Factors Grouped by Themes

Theme	Factors
1. Discipleship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As it relates to the Great Commission • Individual models of discipling-making programs • Plan versus program mentality • Heart transformation versus behavior modification
2. Ministry to men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How this specific form of ministry operates • Strategies for implementing ministry to men • Developing plans and models of ministry to men • Defining a vibrant ministry to men
3. Small groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating structures • Developing leaders • Male only small groups • Training those who will lead and facilitate • Providing a clear exit strategy of multiplication
4. Family systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single parent homes • Effects of fatherless homes • Reasons for different systems
5. Research design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study • Casual-comparative • Qualitative

Discipleship

The literature defines *discipleship* as (1) beginning with a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, (2) developing by involvement in a process of spiritual formation (e.g., Sunday school, Bible studies, or home groups), and (3) finding expression in acts of Christian service to others (e.g., evangelism, social justice, missions work, usher, teach, or kitchen helper; Francis and Astley 194).

For three years Jesus taught his disciples. He showed them how to live. He modeled life for them. They witnessed Jesus in every circumstance. They saw how he taught and how he responded. They witnessed his approach and his style. They saw how

he handled conflict and how he cared for others. Discipleship is not a sermon series, nor is it a forty-five minute Sunday school teaching. Discipleship is modeling how to live.

I would imagine one of the greatest benefits to being one of Christ's disciples was having the opportunity to ask questions. The equipping stage of discipleship is the core of the issue. For three years I was involved in a discipleship group with my senior pastor. Eight of us met with him to hear what was on his heart then to question him on any subject. He discipled us from his knowledge of Scripture, his experiences, his understanding, and his traditions. His knowledge made for great discussions and practical applications for my life.

Equipping others to be like Jesus is a matter of exemplifying Christ to one another. Exemplifying Christ is accomplished through love. Showing love to a hurting and lost world is showing Christ to nations. A minister's calling is to equip others to be like Jesus. While only Christ can make the ultimate change in one's heart, Christians need to be available to bring about his redemptive purposes within this world. Modeling Christ is an essential element to discipleship.

In order to begin, one must first equip others to be part of the leadership team. Jesus did not disciple each individual who followed him but equipped a few to lead and for them to go and equip others. Attracting a leadership team is not always a simple task. Most men, however, are attracted to causes with clear purposes and credible people involved.

In developing a team, certain phases exist that the leader must thoroughly address. The first is the preparing phase, which identifies the objectives and casts the vision of a vibrant ministry to men. In these initial stages the leader must formulate a clear mission

and approach that others can grasp hold of and capture within their own hearts. The leader is the one who casts the vision; the team of leaders then carry the vision. The second phase is mobilization. During this phase the leader recruits others to help carry the vision, trains and equips these individuals (discipleship), and then deploys or releases them to go and equip others.

The church was built on the ministry of twelve men. In observing the original calling of the twelve disciples, a few observations are helpful and practical for a modern model of discipleship. The twelve disciples were called by Christ to follow him, Jesus equipped and taught the twelve disciples to be like him, and finally Christ used the disciples to do the work of Christ in the entire world. Discipleship is circular in nature. The discipleship process has a multiplication factor to it.

John 14:12 says, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.” The first time I read this passage I had to pause. The statement that greater things could be accomplished than what Christ accomplished was confusing to me. He taught marvelously, healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, enabled a mute to speak, and called a man from the dead. The greatness of Jesus’ works would appear difficult to exceed. The nature of this verse carries a numerical meaning to it. Jesus was limited while on earth to his own present location. As he would ascend to heaven, he would send his Spirit to empower people to do his work. The meaning of this Scripture deals with quantity rather than quality. With twelve doing everything the one did, the impact could be far greater in number than had the one gone on alone.

The process of making disciples is not restricted to one set pattern or method. A multitude of ways exists to make disciples. Discipleship takes place through preaching and teaching, personal study, seminars, conferences, leadership training, informal discussions, counseling, and small groups.

Effective men's disciple-making programs in the local church that provide a positive impact on men in the church and in the community must have vision. The senior pastor and men's leader need to exude a vision for discipleship for a church to be proactive in making disciples. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18, KJV). The principle of people perishing without vision is as true in business as it is in life. Organizations whose leaders have little or no vision are susceptible to work under the burden of mere tradition and find limitations to their health and growth.

Vision is an idea expressed in a clear and inspirational way that encompasses a foundation of strategy and mobility. To find and then articulate a pithy, motivational vision is why information is gathered and analyzed. Creating this picture of the future is a task of leadership, not management (Kotter, "What Leaders Really Do" 91). The clear vision will need to be translated into a specific goal (Houston-Philips 16). Jim Collins and Jerry I. Porras coin the term "Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)" to describe the large-scale goals set by the visionary companies they studied that inspired greater results. Michael Beer, Russell A. Eisenstat, and Bert Spector found empirical evidence to conclude that building a shared vision with down-line managers was a key factor to successful change (12). Karen Ayas and Nick Zeniuk found that long-term project-based learning could not be sustained without a sense of purpose (i.e., vision; 67).

Joe Flowers interviews James Collins in his article "Building a Visionary

Organization is a do-it-yourself Project.” The article explains that vision is significant. It answers the questions, “Why are we here? Who are we? Where are we going?” A visionary is vital. The visionary, however, cannot be the lone advocate and leader in the process of casting vision. While one individual may dream up the idea that launches the beginning, the vision should not be limited to one person’s ideals and dreams. A visionary company can continue to do visionary activities almost regardless of who happens to be the CEO and that transcend any single idea or product.

A good vision is worth repeating. Leaders need to cast vision strategically to enable others to catch the vision. Andy Stanley says throughout his book for one to be most inclined to grab hold of a vision, leaders need regularly to (1) define the vision, (2) celebrate vision systematically, regularly rejoicing in the successes, and (3) live the vision continuously, putting vision into practice in his or her life.

Ken Blanchard and Mark Miller share in their work that once the vision is declared, the leader should dedicate huge amounts of time and energy to communicating it to anyone who will listen. The process of making the vision a reality allows outstanding leaders to distinguish themselves from mere dreamers.

Vision is something leaders should possess, especially in regards to having a vision for seeing men’s lives transformed to be more like Christ. The problem oftentimes is that one does a poor job of allowing individuals to catch the vision. Leaders that exude a vision for discipling men would be encouraged to allow the process to unfold, albeit the process may be lengthy. Process is a behavior change achieved over a period of time. Most men struggle with this because process requires a level of intentionality that they are unwilling to enter (D’Acchioli 44). The approach a leader takes in casting vision is

significant. Kotter explains this principle well:

Communicating the vision is necessary, but incomplete without empowering others to act on the vision. Visionaries need to get rid of obstacles to change and growth, change systems or structures that seriously undermine the vision, and encourage risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities and actions. (“Winning at Change” 29)

Within the realm of leadership is the necessity to be a visionary. Visionaries look beyond the problems, obstacles, and hurdles to the end result. A key component for strong visionaries is to surround themselves with individuals who can remove the obstacles that would prohibit the vision from coming to fruition.

In a seminary course, Dr. Laurence W. Wood gave eight major concepts for making disciples based on the theology of John Wesley. Wesley’s ministry was centralized on the belief and importance of small group ministry. His principles for developing believers into disciples are as follows:

1. Human nature is perfectible by God’s grace.
2. Learning comes by doing the will of God.
3. Humankind’s nature is perfected by participation in groups, not by acting as isolated individuals.
4. The spirit and practice of primitive Christianity can and must be recaptured.
5. Human progress will occur if people will participate in *the means of grace*.
6. The gospel must be presented to the poor.
7. Social evil is not to be resisted but overcome with good.
8. The primary function of spiritual/educational leadership is to equip others to lead and minister, not to perform the ministry personally.

These concepts make up the key ingredients for making disciples. Recognizing that learning and growing takes place in groups and in practice is a key step. Another is to recognize that humankind is not perfect. Edwin Louis Cole says, “Champions [disciples] are not men who never fail, they are men who never quit” (*Courage* 157).

The greatest way to make disciples is to interact with them, teach them, and exemplify Christ to them. Once they can stand on their own feet, consider releasing them in ministry alongside of the leader. By making disciples many benefits will arise: more evangelism, more service in the church and community, stronger families, more teaching, and through the multiplication method, more disciples.

One key principle to recognize in defining discipleship is that it deals with heart transformation rather than head knowledge or behavioral modification. Teaching others knowledge and lessons are good and undoubtedly necessary to the overall purpose and mission of the church, but Sunday school teachings and Bible studies are not the only tactics of discipling others. They are but a few parts to the whole. Becoming spiritually mature in imitation of Christ demands that one gives both the head and the heart sufficient opportunity to grow and to make a difference in one’s life and in the world. Faith must be lived out daily. Knowledge is only the first step.

According to Barna, three out of every five Christian adults expressed a desire to have a deep commitment to the Christian faith, but they are not involved in any intentional effort to grow spiritually (34). Thus, while one can teach the powerful passage from Matthew, it is not being practiced. If Christ used some of his final words to express to the listeners of the gospel to make disciples, then making disciples is, most likely, a vision worth recovering. As leaders and pastors, one ought to take note of the reason that

God equipped all with special abilities: “To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Eph. 4:12). If one has been endowed with special abilities from God, an understanding that a purpose exists as to why one has been given these gifts is necessary. The pastor is not the minister. The pastor is the shepherd. The sheep are the ministers. The pastor’s vocation is to equip the sheep so they also can do what they have been called to accomplish. The principle of equipping the sheep is discipleship at its most fundamental level.

Discipling one another is a significant portion of discipleship, but discipleship also consists of one becoming a disciple. Becoming a disciple is at some levels a great deal more difficult. Dietrich Bonhoeffer defines becoming a disciple as denying oneself and enduring the cross (89). For Bonhoeffer, being a disciple is joining in the suffering of Jesus:

Only a man thus totally committed in discipleship can experience the meaning of the cross. The cross is there, right from the beginning, he has only got to pick it up: there is no need for him to go out and look for a cross for himself, no need to deliberately run after suffering. Jesus says that every Christian has his own cross waiting for him, a cross destined and appointed by God. (89)

Discipleship is much bigger than one can comprehend. Discipleship is truly about becoming like Jesus. Discipleship is not a task that should be taken lightly.

Discipleship is a lifelong process that enables the believer to flow in the power and the understanding of Almighty God. In fact, Luke 6 indicates that after spending quite some time in ministry with a larger group of followers, Jesus spent a whole night in prayer. In the morning, “he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he also designated apostles” (Luke 6:13). Jesus invited them into ministry with himself early, but after spending time with them and a

whole night in prayer he designated them as part of the inner twelve. Discipleship is a lengthy yet rewarding process.

As one progresses in life as a disciple, one must empty oneself of the things of this world so that God can fill one with the things of his world. Anyone can grow through training and meaningful study of the Bible. Through reading the written word, one is equipped as a disciple for every situation that one may encounter. Psalms 119:1-16 is an excellent example of how embedding the Word of God in lives will keep one steadfast in obedience and to one's commitment to purity.

Engaging the Bible and implementing a disciple-making ministry for men in our church can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Barna suggests five specific models that churches use for practicing effective discipleship (134). First, the competencies model is based on the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. It requires the substantive integration of everything the church does. Second, the missional model, is aimed at helping people become more spiritually mature in their passion, more boldly evangelistic and more socially responsible (142). The third model is called neighborhood. This plan rates the believer's growth in biblical knowledge, practice of ministry skills, accountability, and prayer. It is very systematic in its approach (144). The fourth model is called worldview. It is based on confronting learners with dissonance. It asks people to identify the issue at hand, study the Bible in relation to that issue, and develop personal strategies for living out the truth discovered (148). Finally, the lecture-lab model focuses on delivering content through sermons and using small groups as the means of exploring the content further to follow through on applications. The bottom line on this model is

gleaning knowledge and building faith-based relationships that lead to godly character and Christian service (151).

I have witnessed far too often churches attempting to focus their full attention on individual models to the point of improper balance and to the extent of inner unhealthiness. I am an advocate for balance within the church. By taking note of these five models presented by Barna, one can adapt and utilize aspects from each to create a disciple-making ministry that is successful and effective and remains unlimited in its potential. The thrust of such a ministry needs to be centered on the transformation of an individual's heart.

Assistant General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Charles Crabtree has evidence to support the claim that discipleship in the local church is no longer a primary focus of some pastors:

Statistics also reveal a crisis in discipleship. In a general sense, discipleship in the Assemblies of God is ineffective. True discipleship begins with obedience and commitment. I am sorry to tell you that only one person in four who decided for Christ last year followed the Lord in water baptism, and one in five received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. If we continue this trend, I project in ten years we will have a small minority of Pentecostals in the Assemblies of God. So we must have a deep concern about Pentecostal Discipleship. (2)

This thought from Crabtree is sobering. A system of discipleship is necessary for new believers to mature in the faith.

Lawrence O. Richards shows that in the studies he observed the following in regards to relationships between adults and children:

Social sciences studies of identification and modeling have focused on relationships between adults and children. Yet studies have pointed out also that for adults as well, social anchors to personality and behavior are important. For all Christians, children and adults who are learning to live in the culture of Christ's Body and who are developing new, Christian

personalities as they move toward His likeness, the existence of models and a close relational identification with them is important. It also is important that the models be provided not only by the individual, but also by the Christian community itself. The existence of multiple models of faith's life is essential. (84)

A study of behavioral science literature on modeling and identification reinforces conclusions already drawn from theological consideration and helps describe factors in the educational situation that enhance the teaching/learning of faith as life. Richards shows the need for frequent, long-term contact with the model. He describes the need for a warm, loving relationship with the model and for the exposure to the inner states of the model. The model needs to be observed in a variety of life settings and situations. The model needs to exhibit consistence and clarity in behaviors and values. The need for correspondence between the behavior of the model and the belief of the community is necessary. Explanation of lifestyle of the model conceptually, with instruction accompanying shared experiences is also encouraged (84-85).

These factors help the reader see that instruction and modeling are not contradictory or mutually exclusive. Instead, they point the reader to a situation in which truth concepts are taught, explained, and expressed in words. Conveying these truth concepts is the task of discipleship and Christian education.

In order for individual discipleship to occur in the local church, leaders are called upon to practice specific activities and values. Ron Crandall mentions five practices. First, the leader is to challenge the process by seeking out new opportunities, becoming a pioneer, becoming innovative, and viewing mistakes as learning experiences. Second, leaders inspire a shared vision. Leaders look toward and beyond the horizon. Leaders are hopeful, genuine, positive, expressive, communicative, synergistic, and inclusive of

support from others. Third, leaders enable others to act. Leaders nurture relationships based on mutual trust and respect, involve others in planning and decisions, foster collaboration, and work to strengthen others. Fourth, leaders model the way. Leaders are clear about their own values and beliefs, model the behavior they expect from others, plan thoroughly, clarify achievable steps, and create opportunities from small wins and achievable goals. Fifth, leaders encourage the heart. Leaders recognize accomplishments and contributions, express appreciation and pride, celebrate achievements, nurture team spirit, and thus inspire continued efforts to work for the vision (111).

Discipleship is not an event or a situation in the church. Discipleship is an atmosphere. The atmosphere is love, gratitude, and hospitality. The atmosphere flows from upper leadership, allowing a guest to feel wanted and welcomed. Discipleship is a concept emphasized from the pulpit and the pew. Discipleship is a transformation from receiving to giving. Discipleship enlists all believers to be ministers and follow Christ. Believers are discipled by Christ through ministers and fellow believers. Crandall mentions that small groups offer a safe and nurturing arena for the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps most important, small groups is where the part of the discipling process Jesus referred to as “teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20) can best take place. In large groups, or teaching-talking-preaching kinds of groups, the obedience level is usually restricted to *oughts* and *shoulds*. In small groups, five or ten persons can decide to do something and hold one another accountable. People actually pray, bear one another’s burdens, read the Bible, and report to one another week after week of what they are learning about being obedient to Christ (126).

Discipleship is a church plan that fits under the umbrella of Christian education. In many churches the terms discipleship and Christian education are interchangeable. Jerry M. Stubblefield separates the terms discipleship and Christian education. He explains the separation in defining Christian education as a means to help individuals respond to God. An expanded statement is that the purpose of Christian education is to love and be loved, to know and to be known, to live and forgive within the context of a single cell, culture-carrying, history-bearing primary group. Stubblefield shows three different vehicles through which Christian education is accomplished in local church ministries. The vehicles are Bible teaching programs, mission's education, and discipleship training. He defines discipleship training as the vehicle to help believers understand their faith, mature in Christ, and learn to minister and witness to others (216-17).

Discipleship is essentially training, equipping, and loving on fellow believers. Christians are called to be like Jesus. Discipleship is the process that shows the path fulfilling the call to be like Jesus. Edward A. Buchanan suggests that pastors continually equip and train believers to be disciples and for disciples to become leaders. Buchanan's emphasis is in the area of training leaders to disciple fellow believers. He gives nine steps for leadership training: forecasting leadership needs, identifying training needs, preparing a budget, selecting training leaders, scheduling programs, providing program support, implementing training, recognizing course completion, and evaluating the program (230). This formula or step program is cyclical in nature. It is meant to be repeated and perfected; it is constantly evolving as new leaders are developed, trained, and released to disciple other believers.

The term disciple, or follower, is the standard English translation of the Greek *mathetes/mathetria* and its verb form *matheteuo*. The noun form appears at least 230 times in the four Gospels, twenty-eight times in Acts, but nowhere else in the New Testament. The verb form for the action of being or making a disciple appears four times in the New Testament. Disciples are those who follow Jesus. Jesus assigned the task of making disciples to his eleven disciples shortly before his ascension. The scope of disciple making extends to all nations and social groups. In modern usage, the process of disciple making has become standard words referring to the process of growing in Christ and to the key task of the church. Disciples define themselves in relation to Jesus and how they understand him in the sense that they know him as the object of their devotion. Disciples are committed to him such that maintaining their relationship with him is a personal and ongoing priority. Disciples behave in ways that fit their commitment, and discipleship involves affiliation with others similarly committed to Christ (Anthony 206-07).

Perry G. Downs unites Christian education and discipleship. He equates Bible study as a part of the disciple-making process but warns of the possibility for Bible study to be a way of escaping one's responsibility as a believer. By seeking the safety of yet another Bible study, one can thus effectively remove oneself from any active ministry or involvement with people. The last thing some Christians need is another Bible study; rather, they need to have their lives changed by God through scripture. Effective Christian education (discipleship) leads people into Bible study as a means of growth, not as an end in itself. Faithful study of the Bible must be a means of learning to know and obey God (42).

Discipleship is the equipping process of a local church. A biblical job description for the pastor is in Ephesians 4:11-12. The Apostle Paul defines equipping in terms of results. Equipping occurs when believers do the work of ministry and the body of Christ is built up. The Greek word for equip is instructive. One definition comes from the medical term used to describe setting a broken limb or bringing a joint back into proper alignment. Equipping conveys the sense of mending a part of the body so it can function again according to its proper design. Mark 1:19 describes James and John mending their nets. A fishing net is useful only if it does what it is designed to do. The word equip is also used for an artisan who works with his hands to make something useful or beautiful. Equipping implies that believers have a particular function or ministry for which they are suited (Ogden 37).

Discipleship is ongoing training. Within the nonrigid confines of discipleship is the necessity of reproduction and continuation of new disciples and new leadership. Oswald Sanders mentions that training cannot be done on a mass scale. It requires patient careful instruction and prayerful personal guidance over a considerable time. Disciples are not manufactured wholesale. They are produced one by one because someone has taken the pains to discipline, instruct, enlighten, nurture, and train someone who is younger (Sanders 153).

Ministry to Men

The idea of men's ministry or ministry to men is not new but was quite limited until 1990 when Coach William McCartney left coaching to launch a ministry. Since that day, Promise Keepers, according to their Web page, has directly reached more than five million men in sixteen years. Reaching that many men has been accomplished through

two hundred stadium and arena events for men, youth, and clergy through weekly radio and television broadcasts, the Internet, sixteen CDs, more than two dozen books, Bible studies, multimedia resources, plus outreach programs to local churches. This phenomenon raised many issues regarding the state of men in America and what motivates them to become who they desire (“History of Promise Keepers”).

While men’s ministry was already active in many churches and even a few books were written on the topic, not until Promise Keepers did the men’s movement really move to a new level. In reviewing the literature, few published articles are available regarding ministry to men. The prominent pieces of literature were studies and curriculum for men and for men’s small groups. One area of interest is the role of pastors in men’s ministry. David Garcia says that pastors (male pastors) need to look at their men as a father sees a son (23). He lists ten dynamics involved in mentoring and pastoring men, including communicating the vision for men’s ministry, coordinating the structure of men’s ministry, connecting with men through personal contact, agreeing to covenant with these men by pledging oneself to them, cooperating with them in an attitude of service, confessing hearts to one another, keeping confidences, counseling men with wisdom and sincerity, showing compassion, and being a companion in the journey of life (23). Dan Erickson, former executive director of the National Coalition of Men’s Ministry, says that the pastor and church are responsible for creating a transforming environment for men in the local church. He says that more than any other ministry in the church, the senior pastor needs to take an active role in pastoring and leading men (27).

Recently, Morley has written a book entitled *Pastoring Men* where he addresses the issue of a pastor’s role in men’s ministry and in ministering to men. His discovery is

that the senior pastor is the key to everything when discipling men. He found three main factors in highly effective churches:

1. A senior pastor with the vision to disciple every man in the church.
2. A senior pastor with the determination to succeed.
3. A senior pastor who found a sustainable strategy to make disciples. (27)

Morley contends that no one has more influence with men in the local church than their senior pastor. For a critical mass of men to become disciples in a church, pastors will need to take the lead. To succeed one will need biblically sound, research-based, field-tested strategies and models.

The theme of leadership transcends all the other themes in the literature regarding men's ministry because leadership is a necessary catalyst for organizations that want to implement and sustain organizational change (LeBrasseur, Whissell, and Ojha 144). John P. Kotter calls leadership "the engine that drives change" (*Leading Change* 32).

Successful leaders have resolved that implementation must be systematic and pursued with steady, relentless plodding (Miller 359). As this study concentrated on seeing change in a man's life and in the life and vitality of a church, the research question focused on leadership. In order for a men's ministry to function and grow within a church, the senior pastor needs to impart a strong element of leadership within the ministry.

Leadership in recent years has become a key word on the conference, publishing, and Internet circuits. Using the search engine Google, over 245,000,000 hits appear in less than 0.12 one-hundredths of a second ("Leadership").

Commitment to long-term results at all levels of leadership is repeatedly cited as a major factor for the successful implementation of any change (e.g., Kotter, *Leading*

Change 162). Strong leadership was required at all levels to implement successfully a continuous improvement program (Beer, Eisenstat, and Spector 16). This style of leadership is necessary in multiple levels of organizations but varies some in churches and other nonprofit organizations.

Leaders of nonprofits often preside over organizations where they must use influence instead of raw power to get things done (Collins 29). The term being circulated in many of the Christian leadership seminars is *coaching*. Coaching is the key element in producing good leaders. To be a good leader one must be a good coach, and to be a good coach one must recognize that coaching is a significant form of leadership (30). Coaching is a form of servant leadership that helps people accomplish their goals (Blanchard, Hybels, and Dodge 152). Rather than leading with raw emotion, the coaching approach to leadership instills a quality of influence. Leadership is at its lowest level when it is based on position only. It grows and goes to a higher level as one develops relationships with others. Influence functions in a similar way; it does not come instantaneously. Instead, it grows by stages.

These stages are *modeling* leadership, *motivating* leadership, *mentoring* leadership, and *multiplying* leadership (Maxwell 7). In the local church setting, this leadership paradigm translates seamlessly into a disciple-making ministry. The first level of influence is based on how individuals see the leader. The second level of influencing others is by encouraging people and effectively communicating with them on an emotional level. The third level is where one begins to mentor and help specific individuals reach their potential. The final level is to empower those whom one

influences to go and repeat this paradigm in their own lives by influencing and leading other individuals.

A large portion of these stages is grounded in a leader's ability to be an example worthy of being followed. The fulfillment of the Great Commission will depend not so much on sophisticated proclamation strategies as on Christlike living in the field (Krallmann 163). James Chalmers' last century experience in the Pacific clearly substantiates this view:

It is not the preaching of a sermon so much as the living the life that tells on the native heart. It is by living a divine life, by striving to follow in the footsteps of Him who came to express the Father's love, that we win the heart of the savage, and raise him up to become a true man or woman in Jesus Christ. (qtd. in Krallmann 163)

As Chalmers illustrates, discipleship is paramount in enabling a believer to become the individual that Christ destines for him. While preaching and evangelism are significant responsibilities of the church, a personal relationship with Christ is necessary in following Jesus' footsteps.

Within the theme of leadership and influence is a two thousand year old principle that until recently has been dormant in research and in practice. The idea of developing leaders is a fresh idea grounded in the work of Jesus Christ. A question that repeatedly is found in the literature is whether leaders are made or born. Many leaders or potential leaders start with severe handicaps in life, but in making the effort to overcome, they find the ability to continue until they have excelled beyond those even without handicaps (Cole, *Courage* 160).

When a leader develops not only his or her own leadership potential, but draws out the leadership potential of scores of other leaders as well, the kingdom impact from

one life is multiplied exponentially (Hybels 122). For leaders to fulfill the mission of the church, the Great Commission, they need to be proactive in modeling this form of leadership: developing those leaders around them.

A significant component to church leadership is in the ability to adapt and handle conflict and adversity. William Taylor notes in his article that every decision made will have an impact on those around one. Many will be affected by leader decisions and even in the decision-making process. Leaders need to be willing to take criticism and have humility about them to admit failure and mistakes when necessary (4).

In order for a church to experience true change and encounter the best results possible for having a men's disciple-making program, quality leadership needs to be in place within the local church as well as directly be involved with the program. Kotter finds that the first step in leading a change initiative is to create a sense of urgency that the change is needed. "Incredibly, we found that in over 70 percent of the situations where substantial changes were clearly needed, either they were not fully launched, or the change efforts failed, or changes were achieved over budget, late, and with great frustration" (*A Sense of Urgency* vii-viii).

A recent trend that has redefined church leadership is the activity of lay leaders in the local church. The distinction between clergy and laity for this project is merely that clergy holds ordination papers with a recognized institution of denomination and that a lay leader has chosen not to pursue that particular route. Table 2.2 demonstrates that by 2005 6.6 percent of all churches in the United States hired lay leaders who worked twenty hours or more. Studies conducted by Barbara J. Fleischer reveal that these lay leaders

consider themselves called to ecclesial ministry. Volunteers, deacons, and ministers who serve less than half time are not included in the numbers.

Table 2.2. Lay Ministry Growth

Year	Lay Ministers	Vowed Religious %	Women %	Men %	Churches Served %
1990	21,569	41	44	15	54
1997	29,146	28	54	18	60
2005	30,632	16	64	20	66

The numerical shift suggests an increase of individuals pursuing church leadership later in life as opposed to pursuing it directly from college. The additional increase of ministers adds to the field of leaders in the church as experience and maturation are sure to come alongside the individual (Fleischer 6).

A question that needs attention is what men want from a church. Phil Downer references Barna’s seven key factors that unchurched men said would draw them to the church. These factors define the window of opportunity open to the church and set the parameters for effective men’s ministry:

1. Men are looking for meaning and purpose in life.
2. Men are seeking understanding of who they are in life and in Christ.
3. Men want solutions to their everyday problems and difficulties.
4. Men want to know God—who he is and what he means to them.
5. Men want effective men’s ministry that touches them where they are.
6. Men want friendships that are built on trust and that will last.
7. Men want help with family issues, especially training for their children

(Erickson and Schaffer 17).

Within the realm of literature, *Man in the Mirror* has been a leader in furthering the men's ministry movement through seminars, Bible studies, and leadership development resources. Morley defines three spheres of ministry to men in the local church. First are the number of men who are allies with the vision and what God is doing. Second, are the men involved in the men's only activities—retreats, small groups, and ministry projects. The third group consists of all men who have contact with the local church. He focuses intently on what an ally in men's ministry is by defining an ally as a man who aligns himself with the vision God has given for the men of the church. An ally is a man who is willing to sacrifice and work to see that vision become a reality. He may or may not formerly serve on the leadership team, but he is convinced that discipling men is a cause worth giving his life to. The pastor does not have to beg an ally to be involved. He is grateful for opportunities to advance his ministry in the lives of other men (Morley, Delk, and Clemmer 60-61).

Several models of ministry have been written regarding men's ministry. The models reviewed for this study each consisted of a leadership team that seeks to create, capture, and sustain momentum in the men's ministry of the local church. The difference among models was found in their approach to accomplish these three acts. The National Coalition of Men's Ministry shows that a common denominator that was discovered was that small groups were the catalyst to sustaining the momentum.

An intriguing aspect to ministering to men is in the cases discovered when the pastor is a female. The senior pastor, regardless of gender, needs to be the leader of the men's ministry. In the cases where the senior pastor is a woman, the leadership responsibility can be delegated to her spouse or a key male leader within the local church.

The pastor remains an advocate and visionary for reaching men even in the case where the pastor is female. While a female pastor will not be the daily manager of the men's ministry, she still will inherit certain responsibilities for the ministry's leadership. While each of the four churches in this study is pastored by men, the scenario of a church with a female pastor and how she relates to the men's ministry needs further research. The premise remains consistent that the senior pastor, male or female, has to exude a passion for seeing the men disciplined and reached. Perhaps a female pastor would tend to be even more passionate for this cause having possibly seen firsthand the effects of the multitude of single mothers in the United States and in the local church.

Men's ministry is seen clearly in the methodological approach of Jesus. He formed a small group of men that became a men's ministry for the region of Galilee. Gunter Krallmann notes that Jesus prepared his closest followers thoroughly for future leadership responsibilities within the perspective movement. He did so through his modeling, yet he also provided them with teaching on specific leadership issues. In addition he gave them opportunity to apply what they had learned practically (68).

Krallman also recognizes the technique of ministry to men that Jesus used during his ministry. Jesus was relational in his approach. Jesus was informal in many discussions and teachings, oral in that he taught in large part with words, and mobile in his approach to mentoring and ministry. He modeled how one should strive to live. He taught the men. He enabled practical application and encouraged them through the process. Jesus shows a willingness to correct when necessary. Lastly, Jesus stressed the indispensability of divine empowering (124).

Small Groups

Willow Creek Community Church's small group mission statement exists to cast vision and purpose to the ministry:

To connect people into groups of four to ten who come together on a regular basis for a common purpose and are led by an identified leader who is assisting them in their progress toward full devotion to Christ by intentionally providing an environment for connection, community and spiritual formation. (Donahue 21)

Small group ministry finds its roots in Acts 2:46-47:

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 people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (NIV)

The two primary purposes of small group ministry are to provide opportunities for individuals to encounter spiritual transformation and to provide opportunities for individuals to connect with one another and build relationships.

In relation to the first primary purpose of small group ministry, Randy Frazee asks some significant questions:

Can a group of people be classified as a Christian community when they are as ignorant of the core beliefs that have to do with loving God and neighbor as our present day culture is? What would it be like to gather in community where the people were committed to growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? (77)

Frazee continues to substantiate the need and function of biblical community with seven key points.

First, a biblical community is concerned with spiritual formation. Members of a biblical community will annually assess their own development in Christ. Second, a biblical community is focused upon evangelism. Each household within the biblical community will commit to pray for other households in the neighborhood who need to

embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. Third, a biblical community reproduces itself by training new leaders and launching new groups as the Lord adds to their numbers. Fourth, a biblical community is concerned with volunteerism. The community will commit itself, according to Frazee, to support the greater body of Christ at the local church through involvement in ministries and service opportunities. Small groups celebrate what God is doing in the greater body of Christ. Small groups are part of the larger community. Fifth, a biblical community presently expresses a desire to share Christ with the world. A biblical community becomes internationally minded in relation to missions. Sixth, a biblical community is concerned with care and love for one another. Caring for others manifests in practical help for those in difficult and crisis situations. When a member of the biblical community suffers loss or finds a member hospitalized, the community is called to pray, provide support, provide meals, and to care for the individuals immediately connected to the need. Seventh, a biblical community extends compassion. In response to the social needs of the community, each biblical community shows community involvement by participating in a compassion project (Frazee 82-83).

In relation to the second primary purpose of small group ministry, Andy Stanley says, "One of God's biggest dreams for us is authentic community" (40). Stanley substantiates such a statement by saying, "We read of God's dream for us in the words of Jesus as recorded in John 17. His primary concern was the depth of relationship the disciples would experience with one another" (40). Stanley comments on Jesus' words "so that they may be one as we are one" (40) by pointing out the significance of this statement. Jesus prayed that his disciples would experience something amazing. He

prayed they would “experience the same quality of relationship with each other that Jesus enjoyed as part of the Trinity since before the beginning of time” (40-41).

Bill Donahue provides five philosophical considerations for small groups in the local church. First is the mandate that those who call on God’s name should be like him in attitude and in behavior. His primary value for small groups is to recognize Jesus as the head of the church and for individuals to have an opportunity to become more like him (22).

The second philosophical value revolves around method. Pastors are encouraged to view small group ministry as a community. A small group provides the optimal environment for the life change Jesus Christ intends for every believer. This environment is well suited to allowing relationships to be birthed and to flourish. While a variety of small groups are in operation, each should have a disciple-making component even if it revolves around a task (Donahue 23).

The third value involves mobilizing individuals to be discipled and developed. This value is the model of small group ministry. The most strategic person in the life-change process of the church is the small group leader (Donahue 23). A priority of church leadership is to help small group leaders succeed through support and training. Leaders need to continue in their efforts of learning and, in return, teaching, mentoring, and empowering others to become the leaders or individuals that God has called them to become. Small groups are designed to develop leaders. The very model and method by which they operate facilitates an equipping methodology that allows individuals to learn, grow, and be assimilated into the church.

The fourth value is that of multiplication. Groups must expand and multiply so that eventually every believer can be connected to others. A small group does not ultimately exist for itself (Donahue 23). Small groups are designed to reproduce themselves, thereby allowing new individuals into the group. Reproduction of the groups keeps the groups from becoming closed and stagnant communities. Small groups are similar to the overall church, which is their covering, organic and vibrant. Small groups are living beings that function as organisms rather than as organizations.

The fifth value is that of means. Small groups exist to seek Jesus and celebrate life. They should exhibit an atmosphere of fun and festivity that permeates joy and excitement about what God is doing in their lives (Donahue 24).

According to their Web site, in the 1970s Calvary Assembly of God in Winter Park, Florida, experienced dramatic growth in large part to their small group ministry. They called their ministry Care Groups as an appropriate title to give description to the purpose of this ministry. Rev. Roy Hartheren certainly did not invent small group ministry, but he did seem to reinvent its ability to meet the needs of individuals who desired an authentic relationship with Christ and other believers (“About Us”).

The roots of small group ministry, beyond the New Testament, can be seen distinctively in the works of John Wesley, according to Dr. Molly Scott. When looking at the work of Wesley, one of his greatest contributions to Christendom is the class meeting. The results of these meetings were changed lives, a deeper pursuit of holiness, and discipleship. This ministry approach has been shelved for far too long. Until the recent focus on small group ministry, most churches lived and unfortunately died with their church being centered on a Sunday morning gathering. If leaders return to the small

group style of ministry that Wesley proposed as a foundation to the Sunday morning celebration, they will regain a focus on their calling and bear witness to more people being involved. Their families will celebrate; their fruit will last. They will discover joy in their relationships. They will experience better health and make decisions based on primary issues rather than secondary ones. The primary reason for a class meeting/small group ministry within the local church is to practice the biblical principle of community and to follow the pattern of Jesus' ministry while on earth. Discipleship takes place in a small group setting. According to Geoff Gorsuch and Dan Schaffer, five key habits for healthy small groups exist (21). First is establishing a communication. The key to establishing effective communication in a small group is listening. Without good listening skills, a small group will struggle to communicate effectively. The second key revolves around the principle of facilitation. Rather than having a group with a designated teacher who speaks for a prolonged amount of time, a conversational dialogue is preferable. The leader exists to guide the discussion and present open-ended questions that provoke individual reasoning and focus. The third habit encourages the small group to be punctual as it relates to start time and conclusion. As with many things in life, tardiness will injure a group if not corrected quickly. The fourth habit focuses the group's attention on becoming more like Jesus. Jesus demonstrated grace and unconditional love to everyone with whom he came into contact. As a small group imitates the compassion and love of Christ, the group will be significantly stronger. The final habit asks all attendees to be participants. The group will find success in the involvement of each member.

Small group is the foundation for community in the local church. This term signifies relationships and accountability. The principle of community begins in Genesis 1:26a: “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.’” The Greek word for community is *koinonia*.

The accessible and available literature that pertains to small groups is growing daily as churches, publishers, and denominations provide new material for facilitating groups as well as new reasons why small group ministry is vital and effective. Some literature exists that deals with how to make small groups work and how to launch a small group ministry. This literature is found in the form of manuals, published articles, and books. As with many ministries in the local church, the approach to launching a ministry rests on vision and leadership. These two themes serve the church in many ways as a foundation to the success and sustainability of a plan or program.

The literature for small groups that focuses primarily on men is limited. Top Gun Men’s Ministries lists five scriptural reasons for small groups and then shows how they substantiate the need to have some groups reserved for men alone. The benefits, according to Top Gun’s Web site, are that they are a place to be encouraged, a place to be held accountable, a place to grow in Christlikeness, a place to function as believers (John 13:34-35), and a place to continue the momentum gained at large events (“Benefits”).

Morley provides four tasks for launching a small group for men in his article “How to Lead a Weekly Men’s Small Group.” First, the leader makes a list of men whom he or she might like to have in the group. Covering the names from this list in prayer invites the Spirit to supply additional names to add to the list. Second, the purpose of the men’s group should be established. That purpose could be a Bible study, a discussion

group, a prayer group, a support group, an accountability group, a fellowship group, a mentoring group, or a missions group. Third, parameters should be set to announce when and where the group will meet. Fourth, an informational meeting to discuss the small group allows men the opportunity to learn about the group without making a formal commitment (2).

An element that can be easily overlooked is what makes a group last. Morley says that value makes a group last. Every time a man shows up, he has decided not to do something else. Most men have many choices, so a small group has to meet the real and felt needs test or it will not last (“How to Lead a Weekly Men’s Small Group” 2). Despite the amount of overall literature on small groups, there exists less than substantial material on the case of the effectiveness of a men’s small group.

An essential ingredient to the success and significance of a small group is sustainability. Sustainability is the process by which a new idea or innovation becomes adopted, implemented, adapted, and normalized in an organization. Synonyms for sustainability abound. Knowlton Johnson, Carol Hays, Hayden Center, and Charlotte Daley found eleven terms used to describe the continued use of an innovation. Sustainability and institutionalization were used most often. Other synonyms include confirmation, continuation, durability, routinization, stabilization, critical mass, integration, adoption, and sustained use (Morley, “Factors” 30-31).

Pierre Pluye, Louise Potvin, and Jean-Louis Denis conducted a meta-analysis of the literature on program sustainability in the field of public health that identified six factors to sustain an implemented program. Using their terminology, those factors are (1) efficacy, (2) perception of efficacy, (3) concomitancy, or planning for how the program

will be sustained as part of the original planning process, (4) support from key personnel, (5) incorporation of the new program into organizational routines, and (6) adjustments along the way. The authors found that sustainability depends on integrating the program into the daily routines of the organization (*routinization*). Importantly, sustainability must be considered in the program planning process before implementation ever begins (*concomitancy*). Not surprisingly, a program that works (*efficacy*) is the most sustainable. Programs that do not work or, importantly, are perceived not to work, are difficult to sustain (128). The authors note that some programs deserve to fail, but others fail that deserve to succeed. All six factors were found important, but first among equals was the routinization factor. Generally, non-routinized program initiatives are weakly sustained, routinized programs moderately sustained, and institutionally standardized program routines strongly sustained (Morley, “Factors” 31).

Sustainability is congruent with leadership and vision as it qualifies distance and time rather than event and location. Discipleship is a lifelong calling, and leadership is challenged to sustain the call to discipleship. Morley contends that the most important aspect of sustaining momentum is to make sure individuals really know someone cares about them. His biblical contention is the distinction in Scripture of shepherds and teachers. For a disciple-making ministry to be sustainable, it requires shepherds more so than teachers. The pastor is the key to success in regards to the sustainability of a men’s ministry. Without the pastors’ involvement, ministry to men probably will not happen (*Pastoring Men* 124).

Sustainability is a concept that can be difficult to achieve. Small groups easily become targets for stagnation. Brad Lewis provides several ways to “breathe energy into

the group” (86). The first idea presented centers on location of the group. A strong suggestion is for small groups to get outside of the local church and into homes and communities. This resource also gives ideas regarding activities when the group needs a diversion from curriculum or teachings. Some suggestions are mystery trips, hobby nights, back to school bashes, progressive dinners, and several other fun ideas. One idea that seems to be quite successful is movie nights. These activities bring people together for something that most individuals like to do (86).

As with most organisms in the world, small groups have a cycle of development. Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh explain the “stages of group development” (164). Small groups will move through stages of life, and without proper sustainability and reproduction, the small group will find an end to its life. The stages of life for most organisms follow a simple pattern of birth, growth, maturity, decline, and death. Small groups, if not practiced biblically, can find their development similar to the common organism. Martin and McIntosh present seven stages of small groups (165).

The first stage of a small group is the dream stage. The dream stage involves three aspects. One aspect is an individual dreaming the idea to begin a small group. Another aspect is the sharing of the dream to begin a small group. A final aspect is gathering commitment from others to be a part of the small group (Martin and McIntosh 166).

The second stage of a small group is the decision stage. This stage takes place at the very first meeting of the small group. At this meeting, ideas are shared, full discussion takes place, and a final decision is made on whether to begin a small group or not (Martin and McIntosh 166).

The third stage of a small group is the delegation stage. In every group, members

take on particular roles or functions. Some will lead the group and others will host it. Someone becomes the timekeeper, always reminding the group when to move on or close for the evening. Many roles for individuals are available to share responsibility within the community of small groups, and in the third stage, these responsibilities are delegated to specific and willing individuals (Martin and McIntosh 167).

The fourth stage of a small group is the dedication stage. At this stage, a small group reaches the point where the members bond together. During this stage a sense of harmony and cohesiveness begins to form among group members. The resistance felt during the delegation stage will be gone. Group procedures are agreed upon, roles are defined, and personal opinions are openly discussed. The depth of sharing and cooperation will naturally fluctuate during the dedication stage. During this stage the group hopefully begins to trust one another enough to laugh and cry together (Martin and McIntosh 167).

The fifth stage of small group development is the decline stage. As in all life cycles, a period of decline is to be expected. Even in the best of small groups, the dedication will normally not last more than twelve to eighteen months before it begins to dissolve. This normal process should not be interpreted as a negative aspect of small group development. Naturally, people joined the group because it met some specific need in their lives. Individuals may have joined to make new friends, learn more about the Bible, or serve others. Throughout the weeks and months, people will experience growth in their personal and spiritual lives. Some may come to believe that their original needs have been met and that they are now ready to move forward. New problems in the group are often indicators that the group has entered into the decline stage. First, people may

begin showing up late for group meetings. Second, if work is to be completed outside of small groups, such as Bible study, people may come to meetings with incomplete work. Third, an increase in conflict between group members occurs (Martin and McIntosh 168).

The sixth stage of small group development is the dead-end stage. The small group enters this stage when the members decide they cannot continue together without some changes. They have literally reached a dead end and must make some decisions about the future (Martin and McIntosh 168).

The seventh and final stage is the determination stage. Three possibilities exist for a group that enters this stage. First, the group might decide to develop a new dream. Second, the group might decide to multiply. Third, the group might decide to disband. In regards to the third option, disbandment should occur with full closure and with an atmosphere and posture of love (Martin and McIntosh 168).

Small group ministry enjoys the potential to revolutionize a community of believers when practiced biblically. An error that many groups make is a closed-system small group. Leaders will establish small groups with a roster or a core team and not allow new individuals, couples, or families to join. The group establishes six to ten people and is content to move forward with that team and no one else. Small groups with a closed system will enter into the decline stage far more quickly than open-system small groups. Life needs oxygen to grow and survive. Small groups are similar in that they are living organisms that require change, seasons, and freedom. The groups that tend to thrive and grow are groups with an open-door policy.

Small groups are healthiest when they reproduce in order to grow and thrive as a community of believers. The commitment to a group does not need to be lifelong.

Launching a new small group out of an existing small group is not only healthy but also biblical. The biblical model of planting new churches and small groups are centered around the principle of reproduction. God calls for disciples to make disciples and he calls for churches to plant churches. The Apostle Paul illustrates this well in his relationship to John Mark, Timothy, Titus, Barnabas and others.

Churches need purpose. Ed Stetzer and Mike Dobson show the local church is not meeting the needs of many parishioners. The needs of the people varied according to Stetzer and Dobson's research, but the majority of their study is summarized in their data:

George Gallup found that 70 percent of Americans have said that the church is not meeting their needs. When asked what these needs were, six common responses arose:

1. To believe life is meaningful and has purpose;
2. To have a sense of community and deeper relationships;
3. To be appreciated and respected;
4. To be listened to and heard;
5. To grow in faith; and,
6. To receive practical help in developing a mature faith.

These needs can be met in a variety of ways but are best met in a nurturing small group. Small groups give people an opportunity to build significant relationships with a smaller number of people. The groups are one way to encourage the development of spiritual community or oneness. (150-51).

The local church is a location where needs should be met. Small groups are one means that can meet a majority of needs in a singular setting.

Stetzer and Dodson say, "Intentionally connecting people in community is not an option for the church. It is a biblical mandate—the essence of what it means to be the body of Jesus Christ" (151). Developing a system of small groups builds biblical community and unwraps God's gift of oneness among his people. Building community is a basic component of training for new church plants because the development of smaller

groups is vital to the life of the church (152). Small groups help identify new leaders, and those leaders were trained through an apprenticeship process.

James and Molly Scott present ten core decisions that the church needs to restore it to what the early Church was designed to be. They list these principles as core convictions regarding authentic transformation, which is necessary for small group ministry to be vibrant and life changing in the local church:

- Decision 10—Recognizing the reality of the American church
Focus—Examining the theological movements of the twentieth century and their relationship to the root of Christianity and their influence on the state of the church today;
- Decision 9—Recognizing the reality of the United Methodist Church;
Focus—Examining previous Methodist decisions and to reconnect with Wesleyan roots and the source of Christianity’s power;
- Decision 8—Reclaiming the scriptural and theological base;
Focus—Recovering the importance of what we believe and teach;
- Decision 7—Reinstituting guidelines for discipline;
Focus—The biblical mandate for rules, accountability, and order;
- Decision 6—Readdressing systemic issues;
Focus—A comprehensive ministry mind-set of holiness and unity determines how the church functions practically;
- Decision 5—Reconsidering clergy issues;
Focus—Establishing a standard of gifts, graces, and fruit for faithful ministry for both laity and clergy;
- Decision 4—Restoring the purposes of the local church;
Focus—The purpose of the church—what was lost and what needs to be reclaimed;
- Decision 3—Redefining the laity;
Focus—The role of the *laos*, the *people of God*, in biblical Christianity and in historic Methodism. (11-95)

These decisions are aimed toward leaders. They are drawn from the principles of John Wesley. Wesley takes these principles a step further:

Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of God on earth. (Scott and Scott 97)

Returning the church essentially to being a lay movement in which the ordained clergy are sometimes leaders but are more often trainers and supporters of the laypeople:

Decision 2—Returning to a belief and practice of sanctification;
Focus—The centrality of sanctification and its impact on salvation and church life;
Decision 1—Rebirth by the Holy Spirit; and,
Focus—The person and work of the Holy Spirit.(111-123)

Small groups provide benefits beyond the scope of their context, topic, or materials. Henry Cloud and John Townsend make the following statement regarding small group ministry:

The Bible teaches that all of life has consequences: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Galatians 6:7). We often see only the warning part of this passage, but the reality is that squarely facing real life and its consequences can be good and positive, not just painful and negative. Loving, responsible, and honest sowing can produce a good harvest for us. The rewarding consequences of being in a growing small group make it worth all the time we spend sowing our lives in them. (57)

Regardless of the author, small group ministry is a wonderful ministry for the local church to incorporate into their quiver of arrows to disciple the hearts of believers.

The benefits produced through small group ministry are many. One such benefit of small groups is connections. Small group ministry opens the door for individuals to connect within the group, outside the group, and with God. Other benefits that can flow through small group ministry include allowing members to see their problems as less overwhelming; individuals may see need and dependency as strengths as they grow in their relationships to God and humanity. They may resolve self-judgment and may develop warm and loving friendships (Cloud and Townsend 60-61).

Small groups have individual identity. In a small group ministry each group will be unique and special. Uniqueness in regards to small groups is healthy. The uniqueness

factor allows the group to be themselves and not feel caged to be something they are not. Leaders can offer great freedom to small group leaders through a releasing of freedom and liberty to develop the group according to the personalities and levels of maturity within the group they lead.

Dale Galloway reflects on his time as pastor when he mentions: “I knew that if I could cast the vision, and the people could catch it, we would move forward and see that vision become a reality” (28). Small group ministry requires vision in the same manner that discipleship requires vision. Galloway challenges people to keep free from twelve restrictive boxes. The boxes include small thinking, (e.g., ministry happening on Sunday, in one service only, the church being a building, in Sunday school only, all groups being on the same night, only pastor-controlled ministries, pastors attempting to be super stars and doing everything, comfort zones, and the phrase, “we have never done it that way before”). I have seen each of these boxes in full operation in local churches. The boxes will hinder growth and stifle creativity and outreach. Growing with small group ministry is an effective way to build the church and create community. The integration process of small group ministry is seldom quick, especially for an established church. New churches seem to be more effective in being community-minded through small groups. Regardless, small groups can be integrated with vision from the senior pastor. The church leadership will need to allow small groups to become the heart of the church and be a priority on the calendar and in the bulletin. Making small groups a high priority for ministry and a high priority with staff will prove to make small group integration a little smoother than forcing small groups through a department within a local church.

Family Systems

Dr. Murray Bowen originated the theory of the nuclear family emotional system, which “describes four basic relationship patterns that govern where problems develop in a family” (“Nuclear Family Emotional Systems”). According to Bowen, people’s attitudes and beliefs about relationships impact and directly affect how they live and operate in society, “but the forces primarily driving them are part of the emotional system. The patterns operate in intact, single parent, step-parent, and other nuclear family configurations” (“Nuclear Family Emotional Systems”).

Every family encounters times of tension, stress, and anxiety. Bowen contends that many clinical problems or symptoms develop during difficult times that tension is heightened and often continues for lengths of time. “The level of tension depends on the stress a family encounters, how a family adapts to the stress, and on a family’s connection with extended family and social networks” (“Nuclear Family Emotional Systems”). Stress is present in most relationships. The unfortunate component to stress is that stress produces tension. “Tension increases the activity of one or more of the four relationship patterns. Where symptoms develop depends on which patterns are most active. The higher the tension, the more chance that symptoms will be severe and that several people will be symptomatic” (“Nuclear Family Emotional Systems”). The four basic relationship patterns from Bowen’s theory follow:

Marital Conflict—As family tension increases and the spouses get more anxious, each spouse externalizes his or her anxiety into the marital relationship. Each focuses on what is wrong with the other, each tries to control the other, and each resists the other’s efforts at control.

Dysfunction in One’s Spouse—One spouse pressures the other to think and act in certain ways and the other yields to the pressure. Both spouses accommodate to preserve harmony, but one accommodates more. The interaction is comfortable for both people up to a point, but if family tension rises further, the subordinate spouse may yield so much

self-control that his or her anxiety increases significantly. The anxiety fuels, if other necessary factors are present, the development of a psychiatric, medical, or social dysfunction.

Impairment of One or More Children—The spouses focus their anxieties on one or more of their children. They worry excessively and usually have an idealized or negative view of the child. The more the parents focus on the child, the more the child focuses on them. He or she is more reactive than his or her siblings to the attitudes, needs, and expectations of the parents. The process undercuts the child's differentiation from the family and makes him or her vulnerable to act out or internalize family tensions. The child's anxiety can impair his or her school performance, social relationships, and even health.

Emotional Distance—Emotional distance is consistently associated with the others. People are distanced from each other to reduce the intensity of the relationship but they risk becoming too isolated.

The basic relationship patterns result in family tensions coming to rest in certain parts of the family. The more anxiety one person or one relationship absorbs, the less other people must absorb, which means that some family members maintain their functioning at the expense of others. People do not want to hurt each other, but when anxiety chronically dictates behavior, someone usually suffers for it. (“Nuclear Family Emotional System”)

The relationship patterns explain the separate infringements and dynamics of family systems. Every family has a story and unique experiences that become part of their individual deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).

A second system that is prevalent in families is the theory of triangles. A triangle is a three-person relationship system. Bowen says it is “considered the building block of molecule or larger emotional systems because a triangle is the smallest stable relationship” (“Nuclear Family Emotional Systems”).

According to Ronald W. Richardson, triangles rarely exist in isolation from the rest of the emotional system. Most triangles interconnect with other triangles in the system. As the anxiety level goes up in a system, more and more triangles will be recruited into the process in an attempt to get things settled down. Richardson uses the concept of repositioning to help alleviate triangular systems. He suggests if individuals

can modify and limit their part in a triangle to the extent that they can focus on just their part and do their part differently, they will greatly limit the destructive and divisive nature that triangles can create (116-19).

In regards to men within family systems, a seismic shift in American society as a whole is creating dysfunction in the average home. Garcia states that the secular approach focuses on the false assumption that people are victims of society and seeks to blame most problems on other factors such as abuse, disease, environment, or lack of training. Men, however, need to take responsibility for their own actions and destiny.

Within American households today, Garcia comments that 61 percent are fatherless (23). To have a nation full of absentee fathers is damaging:

- Approximately 63 percent of youth suicides are from fatherless homes;
- Approximately 90 percent of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes;
- Approximately 85 percent of all children who exhibit behavior disorders come from fatherless homes;
- Approximately 71 percent of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes;
- Approximately 75 percent of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes;
- Approximately 70 percent of all juveniles in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes; and,
- Approximately 85 percent of all youths in prison grew up in a fatherless home (23).

While fatherlessness plays a crucial and pivotal role in one's emotional development and health, the issue is also personal in how one views oneself. When individuals begin to accept God's meaning and purpose for their lives, they will become more emotionally healthy. When they value what God values and accept and live by God's commandments with his help, they will become more emotionally healthy. When persons recognize God's role in their lives as the Father to the fatherless, they are open to healing, grace, and strength from the Spirit who will move in a mighty way when given liberty.

Research Design Review

Individual interviews and surveys are employed to allow me to ask questions of participants in order to collect data. Structured surveys followed a form congruent with the research design. Open-ended questionnaires give participants more freedom in responding to questions, which helps to prevent the researchers from guiding the interviewees into specific answers. The interview and questionnaires are designed for both a lead/senior pastor and a director or pastor of discipleship and men's ministry.

The research requires an element of causal-comparative work to determine the cause of and consequences of a men's disciple-making ministry as compared to a church with no such program. Causal-comparative educational research attempts to identify a causative relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. However, this relationship is more suggestive than proven as the researcher does not have complete control over the independent variable. If the researcher had control over the independent variable, then the research would be classified as true experimental research.

The Minnesota State University Research Department notes that when conducting educational research, occasions exist when the researcher is unable to control the independent variable, where doing so would be unethical or where doing so would be too difficult. For example, someone attempting to find the effect of gender (male or female) on an educational dependent variable would not be able to manipulate gender experimentally and thus would use a causal-comparative research design rather than an experimental design for the research (“Ed 603”).

A primary instrument for this study is case study. A case study is an important type of ethnography, although it differs from ethnography in several important ways. When case study writers research a group, they may be more interested in describing the activities of the group instead of identifying shared patterns of behavior exhibited by the group. This research uses collective case study as it reviews multiple cases. Multiple cases are described and compared to provide insight into the impact and influence of men’s disciple-making ministries.

Robert K. Yin suggests six steps in utilizing case study as a form of research methodology. The first step in case study research is to establish a firm research focus to which the researcher can refer over the course of studying a complex phenomenon or object. The researcher establishes the focus of the study by forming questions about the situation or problem and determining a purpose for the study. The research object in a case study is often a program, an entity, a person, or a group of individuals. “The researcher investigates the object of the case study in depth, using a variety of data gathering methods to produce evidence that leads to understanding the case and answers the research questions” (qtd. in Soy).

Soy summarizes the key questions in which a case study seeks to answer:

Case study research generally answers one or more questions, which begin with *how* or *why*. The questions are targeted to a limited number of events or conditions and their interrelationships. To assist in targeting and formulating the questions, researchers conduct a literature review. (Soy)

Questions that begin with *how* or *why* are significant tools to assist the researcher in his or her study.

The second step of case study research is to select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques:

During the design phase of case study research, the researcher determines what approaches to use in selecting single or multiple real-life cases to examine in depth and to decide which instruments and data gathering approaches to use. The researcher must determine whether to study cases that are unique in some way or cases that are considered typical and may also select cases to represent a variety of geographic regions, a variety of size parameters, or other parameters. A useful step in the selection process is repeatedly to refer back to the purpose of the study in order to focus attention on where to look for cases and evidence that will satisfy the purpose of the study and answer the research questions posed. Selecting multiple or single cases is a key element, but a case study can include more than one unit of embedded analysis. (Soy)

The researcher focuses the data according to the plan of the project. A common difficulty in case study research is identifying appropriate data for the project.

The third step to a strong case study is in how the researcher prepares to collect the data:

Because case study research generates a large amount of data from multiple sources, systematic organization of the data is important to prevent the researcher from becoming overwhelmed by the amount of data and to prevent the researcher from losing sight of the original research purpose and questions. Advance preparation assists in handling large amounts of data in a documented and systematic fashion. Researchers prepare data to assist with categorizing, sorting, storing, and retrieving data for analysis. (Soy)

Preparation is significant to the researchers ability to properly analyze and interpret the data. A clear path of recording and analysis on the front-end of the research will allow for the interpretation to be palatable for the study.

The fourth step in a case study is to collect data in the field:

The researcher must collect and store multiple sources of evidence comprehensively and systematically in formats that can be referenced and sorted so that converging lines of inquiry and patterns can be uncovered. Case study research is flexible, but when changes are made, they are documented systematically. Maintaining the relationship between the issue and the evidence is mandatory. The researcher may enter some data into a database and physically store other data, but the researcher documents, classifies, and cross-references all evidence so that it can be efficiently recalled for sorting and examination over the course of the study. (Soy)

The process of collecting the data is significant to the study. The process of organizing the data is paramount. Proper documentation and systematically reviewing all points of data contribute to the success of the research.

The fifth step in researching by means of a case study is to evaluate and analyze the data:

The researcher examines raw data using many interpretations in order to find linkages between the research object and the outcomes with reference to the original research questions. Throughout the evaluation and analysis process, the researcher remains open to new opportunities and insights. The case study method, with its use of multiple data collection methods and analysis techniques, provides researchers with opportunities to triangulate data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusions. In all cases, the researcher treats the evidence fairly to produce analytic conclusions answering the original *how* and *why* research questions. (Soy)

The evaluation stage of research is the task of discovering the facts related to the research. The most difficult aspect of this stage is in the outcome: the result may be different than the desired outcome. Researchers are well advised to recognize the potential for new insights to develop through the study.

The sixth and final step is preparing the report:

Exemplary case studies report the data in a way that transforms a complex issue into one that can be understood, allowing the reader to question and examine the study and reach an understanding independent of the researcher. The goal of the written report is to portray a complex problem in a way that conveys a vicarious experience to the reader. Case studies present data in very publicly accessible ways and may lead the reader to apply the experience in his or her own real-life situation. Researchers pay particular attention to displaying sufficient evidence to gain the reader's confidence that all avenues have been explored, clearly communicating the boundaries of the case, and giving special attention to conflicting propositions. (Soy)

Evidence is paramount to every study. The sixth step communicates the evidence of the research in a systematic and logical way to communicate and explain the results of the study.

The presentation of data provides the reader the results to the research. The system to present the data is a significant decision for the research because the strength of a study is in the researchers ability to clearly communicate the outcome of the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

The problem is that men in this nation are struggling in life, in marriage, and in their relationship with Christ. The statistics show that too many men are failing in their roles as husband, father, and even as Christian. Nobody seeks to fail on purpose, and men would certainly fit into that grouping. I am convinced that many churches today have lost touch with their men, leaving the men to go through life on their own, rather than with the aid and help from the local church.

Many churches have also been weak, as a whole, in discipling men to become like Jesus. The church needs to reemphasize discipleship; thus, the purpose of the research was to show the impact that a men's disciple-making program has on the health and vitality of two Assembly of God churches with an average attendance of over 250, its members, and its community, particularly in comparison to two Assembly of God churches with an average attendance of over 250 with no such program.

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

The following three research questions guided the scope of this dissertation.

Research Question #1

What is the impact of the existing men's ministry of the churches studied?

This question is answered through individual case studies of twenty men from each of the four churches. The challenge to this question is that a systematic and methodological means of measuring the impact of a ministry in a person's life does not presently exist. This realm of research has only become a point of interest in recent years.

Therefore, the study will surround itself with the stories of how men are being changed and have been changed through their home churches' disciple-making ministries. A researcher-designed questionnaire gave men the opportunity to share from their own story and experience how a men's ministry has directly influenced them (see Appendix A). The questionnaire looked to answer specific questions, such as their community and church involvement, the state of their relationship to God and to their family, their commitment to their pastor, their level of education, and their commitment to the commandment of the tithe.

Research Question #2

What is the contrast of a church with a vital men's ministry and one without a vital men's ministry?

Each pastor of the four churches for this study received a survey (see Appendix A). I created this survey and tested its usability prior to administering the survey to each of the four churches. The research was built on the belief that a men's disciple-making ministry would have a positive impact on the church, the pastor, the individual men and their families, and on the community. I developed a model of what constituted a men's disciple-making program to make a clear distinction between the two churches that proved to exhibit a men's disciple-making ministry with the two churches that did not have a men's disciple-making ministry. The survey is created with an open-ended questionnaire portion as well as a more specific guideline for precise information.

Population and Participants

The participants were four primary pastors of Assembly of God churches. Two of these pastors lead churches with men's disciple-making programs while two lead churches that do not presently have such programs. These pastors were not randomly selected but were chosen with the preconceived notion of willingness to participate and a prior relationship. Therefore, these pastors were selected using a criterion-based method. Because of the relationship I have with these four pastors, I had some knowledge of whether their respective churches had a men's disciple-making ministry or not.

Design of the Study

The research relied heavily on case study. Participant observation was used throughout the whole project. I administered a questionnaire that featured both an open-ended format as well as a more structured format relevant to specific and targeted responses related to time, commitment, and impact.

The study centered on four churches. Each church provided twenty participants. I administered a questionnaire to these eighty men that allowed them freedom in expressing in their own words how they have been directly impacted by the men's disciple-making ministry in their local churches; if such a program exists. The case study gave specific answers to objective questions and the study gave answers to questions that were subjective in nature.

Instrumentation

The instrument was a questionnaire that was electronically submitted to each of the eighty participants of this study. This questionnaire provided answers regarding the

health and vitality of the individual, particularly in regards to family, marriage, and community/church involvement.

Variables

The dependent variable was the role of the senior pastor in understanding, participating, and leading a men's disciple-making ministry. Whether the church had such a ministry is a variable explored in the research, but the primary dependent variable was how the senior pastor plays a role as leader of the ministry to men.

Independent variables were the demographics of the church, especially as they relate to men. The percentages of men divorced, tithing, and involved in the community played contributing factors in the effectiveness of the men's disciple-making programs. Another independent variable is in the area of counseling. Pastors are unique in their availability and accessibility to provide pastoral counseling. Therefore, in seeing how many hours per month are spent counseling, counseling hours will be a variance dependent on the pastor's personal preference.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability in the case of this research suggests consistency. One method used to estimate consistency is the inclusion of multiple case studies. This research incorporated multiple case studies to find commonality and consistency in the results of the questionnaires and interviews.

To avoid the threat of social desirability bias and bias in question wording, questions were written in ways that did not suggest a desired or most sensible answer. The purpose of this research was to determine the effects of men's disciple-making programs. The questionnaires were prepared in such a way as to remove leading

questions or questions that provoke the individual to supply certain answers to prove my hypothesis.

Data Collection

Before formal contact with the pastors and churches, announcements regarding the project were made at both district and national meetings of the General Council of the Assemblies of God in September 2008 and January 2009. I also discussed this project at length with Patrick Morley, Chairman and CEO of Man in the Mirror, Inc., and Charles Brewster, President and CEO of Champions of Honor, Inc.

With the support of different ministries and the men's ministry of the Assemblies of God, I began to locate and secure the four churches in which I would focus for the primary research for this study. I sent each senior pastor a letter or request (see Appendix B). After securing four willing churches to participate, I administered questionnaires and began phone interviews with the pastor and men's leader, where applicable. I kept detailed notes of all phone conversations and all e-mail correspondence. The pastors then proceeded to fulfill my request of completing in detail the questionnaire that I supplied to them.

In regards to the focus groups, I met with two separate groups of four Assembly of God pastors. I brought with me an assistant to take notes and keep detailed observations from the group's discussion. These meetings each lasted approximately ninety minutes and provided depth to the research and study, especially as it relates to how a men's disciple-making ministry contributes to the life and ethos of a church.

Data Analysis

I analyzed and interpreted the results of the surveys and questionnaires with the assistance of the research and reflection team. I implemented a personal tracking system to discover the results and outcome from each question.

Early on in making field observations and in processing the data from the initial interviews, I read the growing data looking for recurring themes or categories around which to base further reflection and observation. I defined preliminary categories and I coded the data in order to make the amount of information more manageable. The final step of analysis included comparing and contrasting the results of the questionnaires between the churches with a men's disciple-making ministry and with those churches without a men's disciple-making ministry.

Ethical Considerations

The problem associated with this project required the involvement of men and, in some cases, their spouses to engage in a short series of interviews, the completion of a questionnaire, and, in some cases, a follow-up survey. The individuals who agreed to participate are referenced by a number rather than name to allow them to remain anonymous throughout the project. The participants signed a consent form prior to entering into this study, allowing me the opportunity to publish and distribute the results to churches, men's ministries, and denominational leaders to help in substantiating the claim that a vital men's disciple-making ministry does contribute to the health and vitality of a local church and those influenced by the church. At no time are the participants' names used, even in my own journals and reports.

I have kept all questionnaires and surveys confidential. I preserved anonymity of respondents to questionnaires by asking participants to code the response form to keep confidentiality exercised to the highest level of integrity. The responses to the focus groups were provided with the names of the participants kept anonymous.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

Churches have struggled to create, develop, and sustain a men's disciple-making ministry. A common thought among pastors is that the effort that is needed to develop such a ministry does not produce the return in terms of impact in an individual's life. Recently, a denomination sent out a men's ministry thought suggesting that determination and endurance are key terms in men's ministry. The thought may be accurate, but without providing the reader with information that suggests men's ministry is worth the endurance and determination, the concept of men's ministry not producing desired results will inevitably continue the trend of pastors leaving men's disciple-making ministries as a secondary task.

The study sought to show and evaluate the impact that a men's disciple-making program has on individuals. Specific attention was given to differentiate between churches with a men's disciple-making program and churches without such a program. The study data was obtained from four case churches through multiple telephonic interviews, on-site observations, and relevant surveys. The surveys collected from each church provide the primary data for this study. The data was analyzed to determine the overall impact that a men's disciple-making ministry may have on an individual's life.

Two research questions guided this study: (1) What is the impact of the existing men's ministry of the churches studied? (2) What is the contrast of a church with a vital men's ministry and one without a vital men's ministry? This chapter presents the findings

for each research question in the order asked. In Chapter 5 the conclusion to the research questions are synthesized together and addressed theme by theme.

Participants

The identity of the four churches remain confidential; however, all are Assembly of God churches in Florida, Tennessee, and Michigan. Each church has a weekly attendance greater than 250 people, and two of the four churches had a men's disciple-making program at least five years prior to this study.

The total population for this study was eighty men. Twenty men from each of the four churches being researched participated in this survey involving the overall impact of men's ministry in the lives of individuals. The ages of the men surveyed varied from 25 years of age to 65 years of age; the majority of the men were over 40 years of age. Beyond the requirement of an age boundary, no other factor determined the selection of men for this study.

Research Question #1

The first research question sought the impact of the existing men's ministry of the churches studied. To answer the question, Churches A1 and A2 were compared to the four primary themes that form the conceptual framework from the literature. Consideration was given to Churches B1 and B2 in relation to research question 1; however, an overall limitation of men's discipleship programs in their specific churches would prohibit a full exploration of the impact on an individual's life.

Research question 1 examined the impact of the existing men's ministry in two specific Assembly of God churches. An open-ended questionnaire given towards the end

of the general survey helped establish a baseline for the overall impact the men’s disciple-making program was having on individuals.

The open-ended questionnaire asked questions regarding the individuals length of involvement in the men’s disciple-making ministry, the direct impact they have recognized in their lives and family, how the ministry has affected their relationship to the local church (i.e., tithing, volunteering, leading), what area of men’s discipleship has impacted them the most in terms of specific aspects of the ministry, and how the men’s disciple-making program has influenced them in specific areas of their lives.

Of the forty individuals surveyed within the two churches with a men’s disciple-making ministry, each man responded to the open-ended questionnaire. In relation to Question 26 (How has being a part of the local men’s ministry impacted your relationship to Christ), the responses varied with the most prominent answer being a closer walk with Christ (CWC) and with other men. Other responses included being encouraged to be a better man, husband, and father, having accountability with others, and enjoying fellowship with other men (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Impact Men’s Ministry Has on One’s Relationship to Christ

Church	Accountability	Fellowship	Encouragement	CWC
A1	04	03	00	13
A2	00	04	04	12
Totals	04	07	04	25

Question 27 (How has being a part of the local men’s ministry impacted your relationship to spouse and/or family) received an overwhelming response to the impact

that a men’s disciple-making program has been having on individuals relationship to their wives. Two men specifically commented on the impact that the program has provided in aiding them in their priorities in relation to life and family. For Church A1 two individuals commented that the program was negative in relationship to their family. Their reasons for this claim were similar—a time factor. These two individuals thought the commitment to the program kept them away from their homes and separated them from their spouses during the Sunday school hour at their respective churches. Church A2 had no such negative response with their men suggesting the men’s disciple-making program gives them truths and help in their relationship to their wives and families. Table 4.2 shows the men’s responses to Question 27. For Church A1 the only answer received, other than the two negative ones, dealt with the individual’s relationship specifically to his wife. For Church A2 the answers varied between their relationship to their wives (Wife), being a better father (Father), and being a better leader in the home (Leader). The negative answers from Church A1 are reflected as loss of time (LT).

Table 4.2. Impact Men’s Ministry Has on One’s Home Life

Church	Wife	Father	Leader	LT
A1	14	00	00	02
A2	06	02	02	00
Totals	20	02	02	02

Question 28 (How has being a part of the local men’s ministry impacted your relationship to Church) provided significant insight to the impact men’s ministry has on men and their commitment to the church. When evaluating the participating churches

with a men's disciple-making ministry, an on-site interview at Church A1 and seven telephonic interviews with Church A2 provide the data to assist the researcher in determining the impact a local men's ministry. The purpose of these interviews was to establish that these two churches met the minimal requirements for consideration as a church with a men's disciple-making program.

The response to Question 28 from Churches A1 and A2 suggest that men's disciple-making ministries do impact men in relationship to the local church. Both pastors commented that volunteerism rose, tithing increased, and counseling was reduced within eighteen months of launching a men's disciple-making ministry. The pastor at Church A1 commented on the personal impact his men's leadership team has had on his life. He looks forward to the monthly gatherings and enjoys the time of fellowship with the men of his church. The pastor also mentioned that since the establishment of a men's ministry nearly twenty years ago he has seen the quality and quantity of leaders rise greatly. Table 4.3 shows positively that churches with a men's disciple-making ministry will see an increase in volunteerism. The men commented overwhelmingly that they are more active in ministries. The men tithe regularly and have gained a greater understanding of the mission of the church in part because of the men's disciple-making ministry. The responses to Question 28 volunteered more often (Vol), tithed regularly (Tithe), had an increased level of leadership (Lead), and had a clearer vision for the church mission (Mission).

Table 4.3. Impact of a Men's Disciple-Making Program in Relation to the Church

Church	Vol	Tithe	Lead	Mission
A1	13	06	02	04
A2	12	08	00	00
Total	25	14	02	04

The results for Question 28 show a number greater than forty. The reason for the higher number is due to the fact that the responses from the men surveyed in Churches A1 and A2 produced multiple answers. The majority of men stated that volunteering and a higher level of involvement was a direct result from the men's disciple-making program, yet they also commented extensively on their renewed commitment to tithing and leadership. Thus, Table 4.3 reflects their answers as given on the questionnaire.

Question 29 (What has impacted you most in terms of changed life at your church) allowed the individual to share components of the men's disciple-making ministry that most affected or impacted their lives. In the questionnaire the following examples aid the individual in understanding the objective of Question 29: ministry involvement, preaching, relationships developed, and discipleship programs. The responses do not need to fall into a specific category.

The responses from the men were balanced into several categories. The primary aspect of the men's disciple-making program that most impacted individuals surveyed was relationships with other men that developed. The ministry of the Word and a higher involvement in ministry were also significant factors impacting those surveyed. Table 4.4 shows the results of Churches A1 and A2. Their responses breakdown into six categories: preaching, relationships, prayer, ministry, involvement, missions, and worship.

Table 4.4. Impact of Specific Ministry within Local Church

Church	Preaching	Relationships	Prayer	Min. Inv.	Missions	Worship
A1	07	11	02	09	02	00
A2	04	08	03	03	02	02
Total	11	19	05	12	04	02

The results reflect the individual's response. Some of the individuals surveyed commented on the questionnaire an equally positive impact from multiple factors. As the results indicate, the relationships built between men seemed to provide the most significant impact across the board among the forty men surveyed between Church A1 and A2. The results indicate that in addition to the relationships developed between men, their individual involvement in the ministry has given them a high level of satisfaction and affected their lives.

Question 30 (If you are presently in a regular men's discipleship group, how has it influenced your life) received less measurable results than the previous four questions. A large portion of this question was accomplished during the telephonic and on-site interviews. The most common responses were that a regular men's discipleship group strengthened and built up the individual faith of the man surveyed and that the men's small group they attended provided a system for accountability through which the men surveyed found peace and strength. One individual boldly asked for more groups to be offered. During the on-site interview, I was able to hear the men from Church A1 share the stories that came from their weekly group meetings. One individual shared that the leader of the group started the meeting by saying, "Today we are just going to pray." After making the statement, the 55 year old man lay face down on the floor for the next

forty-five minutes praying and seeking God’s face. The individual was deeply blessed and strengthened by this courageous example of godly leadership. Another individual said, “You never know what will happen at the meeting. We have seen men cry, shout, laugh, and have enormous breakthroughs in life.”

The responses from Question 30 are summarized into four categories: stronger faith (Faith), peace about seasons of life (Peace), freedom from addictions (Freedom), and accountability (Acct). Table 4.5 summarizes these findings.

Table 4.5. Impact of Men’s Group within Local Church

Church	Faith	Peace	Freedom	Acct
A1	10	01	00	09
A2	09	03	02	06
Total	19	04	02	15

During the on-site interview with Church A1, the men shared at length regarding the groups their church has offered men throughout its twenty years of men’s ministry. A few individuals in the meeting were present from day one of the launch of the men’s disciple-making program. One individual in the interview session commented on the impact of the men’s small group in his own life:

This group has been a life-saver for me. They have been there when I lost my wife, my job, and my hair. I do not know how I would have endured these last seven years without these men pouring into me every week.

Another individual stated that his business grew because of the group. He shared, “The men in the group gave me ideas and insights into how I could do my work better. Their counsel helped build my business.” Another person said, “I missed two group meetings in

a row and I got eight phone calls the next day. I was about to give up on church and God; those phone calls strengthened my faith and now I lead a group.” The testimonies of the men’s interview bear witness to the impact of small groups.

The results demonstrate a significant correlation between the two churches that function with a men’s disciple-making program. Although determining accurately the full impact of the ministry is spiritually immeasurable, the data suggests that men have similar needs and desires, and a men’s disciple-making ministry potentially will meet certain needs.

Research Question #2

Research question 2 examined the contrast between the two churches with a vital men’s disciple-making program with the two churches without a vital men’s ministry. I used participant observation, an open-ended questionnaire, a survey, and semi-structured interviews to establish any difference between the overall life of individual men within a local church with a men’s disciple-making ministry and the men within a local church without such a program.

The research found that men consistently in a men’s disciple-making program found significance and self-worth through life-giving masculine relationships. The research also found that men consistently in a men’s disciple-making program showed a more sensitive awareness to their relationship with Christ and with the church.

Question 5 asked, “Would you be interested in a monthly meeting on family issues (i.e., parenting, relationship to wife, etc.)?” The results for this question were similar across the board regardless of church (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. Monthly Meeting Interest

Church	Yes	No	% for Yes
A1	18	02	90
A2	17	03	85
B1	18	02	90
B2	16	04	80

Question 19 asked the men, primarily of churches without a men's disciple-making program, whether or not they would be interested in attending a men's small group. Only five men out of forty surveyed replied they would not be interested. The numbers from Question 19 suggest that as many as seventeen men in twenty in a local church would potentially be interested in a men's small group.

In the semi-structured interview at Church A1, I discovered a large percentage of men that were involved in their churches men's ministry testified that their men's group significantly impacted their lives.

In the semi-structured interview at Church B1, I asked the twenty men where they go for help with personal struggles, family issues, or work issues. Seven of them mentioned their dad, six mentioned a friend, five mentioned they really did not have anyone to go to, and only two mentioned their pastor. The only parameter to the question that was given was that the person they selected was to be an individual other than one's spouse. Using the same question during the semi-structured interview at Church A1, the responses differed. Nine individuals commented they go to a friend, seven individuals mentioned their pastor, and four mentioned a family member, specifically their dad. I followed the question with an additional clarification question to the nine who responded they go to a friend for help or advice with personal struggles, family issues, or work

issues. I asked them if their friend was in their men's small group. Eight of these individuals answered with a yes.

During the on-site semi-structured interview at Church B1 (4 September 2009), I found that less than 40 percent of the men were involved in any capacity within the church at the present time. The ministries and/or programs in which the men did volunteer were the music team, youth leadership, and ushering. Each of the other ministries in which they were involved included their spouses.

During the on-site semi-structured interview at Church A1 (26 January 2009), I found that slightly more than 60 percent of the men volunteered or participated in a ministry in some capacity in their local church. The ministries were similar in context to Church B1, but unfortunately the pastor believed these numbers to be slightly skewed in large part because these were active church partners who regularly give of their time to the service of the kingdom of God.

Finally, a telephonic interview with the pastor from Church B1 gave insight into the difficulties of discerning and identifying leaders in the local church:

Finding quality leaders is difficult. Recently, I sent a letter to nine men to consider allowing their name to stand to be a Deacon in our church. Only two agreed to this request. Four of the men replied they did not feel "ready" for such leadership.

In contrast, the pastor of Church A2 shared, "We have seen such growth in our men that in 2008 we formed a committee of elders that would serve. It is from the committee of elders that we determine who will be our deacons." He credits men's ministry for training and discipling men to grow in faith to such an extent that he created this committee to utilize the leadership within his church.

Summary of Major Findings

The following major findings are discussed in Chapter 5.

1. Men, as a whole, desire relationships with other men in the context of godly fellowship.

2. Regardless of age, men encounter the same daily struggles in life, faith, vocation, and family. These men seek wisdom and encouragement.

3. Men's disciple-making ministry contributes to the development of godly men, godly husbands, godly fathers, and champions of the faith.

4. Developing and sustaining a vital men's disciple-making ministry requires determination, endurance, a system/structure within which to work, and strong leadership.

5. Men's disciple-making groups have significant effect and impact on individual lives and on individuals' families.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

This research project was based on the conviction that men's disciple-making programs can contribute positively to the lives of men. The problem analyzed the impact that men's disciple-making programs have on a church by way of the individual man within the church. In general, men's disciple-making programs can be effective. This study compared two Assembly of God churches with men's disciple-making ministries and two Assembly of God churches without men's disciple-making ministries. Interviews, observations, and questionnaires provided the data. The data was analyzed to determine the significant impact that men's disciple-making ministries have on individuals. The four churches were compared and analyzed to determine if a church with a vital men's disciple-making ministry has a greater impact on the men in its local congregation. The research questions are answerable and those findings are summarized briefly in this chapter.

Men in Relationship

The research shows evidence that men desire relationships with other men in a biblical context of healthy masculinity. Question 26 of the questionnaire asks, "What do you or would you personally like to accomplish through your involvement in Men's Ministry?" The responses among the four churches were identical. The number one objective for men to receive through a vital men's disciple-making ministry is a closer walk with God. The second objective for men to receive through a vital men's disciple-making ministry is fellowship with other men. Culture tends to portray men as the gender

of *loners* rather than the gender of company. Based upon the research for this study, men desire masculine relationships.

In an interview with a subject from Church B1, the subject stated, “I have never had a true friend before I became involved in a men’s small group.” Another individual from the same church commented that a father and an uncle abused him as a child. His perception of men was unbalanced and tainted because of this treatment. Through the small group he reluctantly joined, he began to develop healthy masculine relationships that has allowed the Holy Spirit to heal many wounds created throughout his horrific childhood experiences.

An individual from Church A2 shared that he has always enjoyed masculine relationships but has determined they were far from healthy. In his past, he shared he was prone to alcohol, adultery, gossip, and an extremely foul mouth. He believed that unless he talked a certain way and acted similarly to his peers that his friends would reject him. He said, “The men’s small group has showed me what true friendship is supposed to be.” He has allowed God to heal, forgive, and sanctify him. He is a new creature in Christ and the group leader for his small group.

A vital men’s disciple-making ministry functions appropriately for men to engage in biblical masculinity and develop genuine and healthy male relationships. The research in this project suggests that all men desire male friends, but in the context of Christianity and discipleship, those friendships are available through life-giving relationships.

A second question confirms men’s desire for healthy masculine relationships. Question 10 asks, “What topics I would like to hear addressed.” This question was followed by a list of topics including coping with fatigue, resisting sexual temptation,

planning retirement, handling stress, changing careers, mentoring, developing relationships on the job, balancing home, work, and ministry, maintaining proper ethics, and avoiding the success obsession. The top selection from each of the four churches surveyed was mentoring on slightly more than 25 percent of all surveys received. The fact that mentoring is so deeply desired among men suggests two possibilities. First, men desire mentoring because they feel the need for leadership, counsel, and godly wisdom in their lives. Second, men do not think that other men are living correctly and would like to play a role in leading and guiding other men. Regardless of which suggestion led the individuals to highlight this specific answer, mentoring is a significant component to masculine relationships. Question 10 solidifies the inquiry many pastors and leaders make regarding men having a need or desire to fellowship with other men.

Seeking Wisdom

Question 20 of the survey asks, “What would you like to see happen during a men’s study/focus group?” The response that received the most attention was for a group that discussed “how to deal with problems at home or work.” The survey strongly suggests that men are in a trial as they move through life. The balancing of work and family is difficult without either one encountering difficult and trying seasons. A common misconception regarding men’s disciple-making programs is that all groups and studies focus on sexual morality and temptations. Unfortunately, men are tempted and many do struggle regularly (as many as 20 percent of Christian men are regularly viewing pornography; Gallagher 90) and are in need of wisdom, encouragement, and strength in the area of sexual morality and temptation, a focus on sexual purity is not the predominate aspect to men’s discipleship. Sexual morality and temptation is a

component, but not necessarily the chief or predominant component. The predominant focus for men's discipleship is helping men survive their lives and routines.

According to Barna as many Christians will divorce as non-Christians (34 percent versus 33 percent; qtd. in Morley, "Factors" 1). Hendricks and Hendricks note that four out of five students in evangelical churches will drop out of church by their senior year in high school (qtd. in Morley, "Factors" 2). These numbers are alarming and substantiate this study that men are, as a whole, struggling in their roles as heads of household. The individuals surveyed for this study are seeking guidance and wisdom in their roles as fathers and husbands. Men's discipleship, according to Churches A1 and A2, can assist men in redefining significance and learning practical tools to lead in the home.

I found men looking for guidance and wisdom to be encouraging. As a pastor, I find too many men who will not admit to needing help and counsel in certain areas of their lives. By and large, men do not like to exhibit any weakness. This survey has proven that men in the twenty-first century are at a place of desperation in their personal lives and that they are calling out for help. When men begin to ask for help they enter a place of desperation, men will be open to joining and participating in a men's disciple-making ministry.

In analyzing each of the eighty surveys, Question 10 serves as a key marker to the truth that men are seeking wisdom and counsel. Thirty-seven of the men surveyed commented that they would like to hear topical teachings/seminars that address an aspect of vocation and/or work. This survey was completed in the final two months of 2009. In analyzing the surveys, attention should be given to the state of the United States' present economic situation. The economy may be a variable to the survey in the context that

work and job situations have shifted remarkably in the last five years. The economy has brought men to a level of uneasiness that many working today have not felt. This outside variable may contribute to the overall evidence that men are seeking counsel in the areas of work, vocation, and family responsibilities.

Champions of Faith

I have been an advocate that men's discipleship can assist men to become stronger in their personal relationships to Christ. Based upon the on-site interviews and discussions the belief in men's discipleship assisting me in their relationship to Christ is true. Evidence to the truth that men's discipleship can assist a man to become stronger in their personal relationship to Christ came in the form of an informal discussion with the spouse of one of the subjects in Church A1:

My husband has always been a good man and a churchgoing man. This last year, however, as he became focused on a discipleship program that he was in, I saw growth in nearly every area of his life. His worship went to a new level; our relationship went to a new level; and, his involvement at church went to a new level. It has been great to see the change and growth in his life.

The reports from wives are always encouraging. The wives attest to true life change because they witness any changes first-hand. Similar to the first testimony, a second wife from Church A1 shares the following regarding her husband:

My husband has become the true spiritual leader in our home based in large part because of the discipleship program he has been committed to over the last six months. He leads our devotional time, prays with a stronger passion, and makes sure we do not skip church.

I take pleasure in hearing about men leading their families in times of prayer and devotions. Another wife in the same room shared the miracle the Lord did in her marriage when her husband became a disciple:

My husband used a discipleship program as a last resort. I was ready to walk out the door and leave him. He asked for two months and said he would commit to counseling and a men's discipleship program. Our marriage was saved and he has never been the same.

Disciple-making ministries impact men in multiple ways. Pastors love seeing men in discipleship groups and wives love seeing their men changed because of their discipleship group.

Meekness is a very masculine virtue. Christianity is a very masculine faith. The unfortunate scenario is that culture attempts to define meekness as weakness and Christianity as a grandma's religion. This is far from the truth. Men's discipleship has and continues to equip and strengthen men to exude biblical masculinity in the church, the home, and the workplace.

During a telephonic interview with the pastor Church A2, he endorsed the theory that men's discipleship is making a positive impact spiritually on the lives of the men in their groups. He has seen more men involved in leadership and a greater dimension to worship as more men become part of the worship and praise team.

Structured Leadership

Systems are designed to get individual specific results. Regarding the conclusion about the importance of the senior pastor's involvement, Kotter's article "What Leaders Really Do" cites the personal involvement of the CEO (i.e., senior pastor) as a key implementation factor for success (85-96). This study found when a senior pastor is involved the success factor is more likely. In the two churches with effective programs, both senior pastors considered themselves the ultimate leader for the men's ministry, the vital force behind vision, and the guardian of the program. Their sense of ultimate, personal responsibility and commitment was possibly the most important implementation factor in the

success of their programs. Their commitment rose above the level of job responsibility to a sense of calling or, perhaps, even life purpose.

A second main conclusion is that churches with effective programs have a strong vision to make a disciple of every man in their churches. The two pastors from Churches A1 and A2 viewed the entire male population of congregations as men needed for their men's ministry. The pastor of Church A2 even includes his deacon team and his usher team as part of the overall men's ministry of the local church. The pastor of Church B2 views men's ministry as the small group of men that would join him once a month for a breakfast. The vision for a men's disciple-making program is an all-inclusive vision. The theme *no man left behind* was prevalent in both Churches A1 and A2.

Churches A1 and A2 incorporated leadership into their men's ministry. The senior pastor of each church was the program champion, but in each case an associate provides direct supervision and administration to the ministry. Both churches had key leaders (non-staff) who provided leadership stability to the program. Each church incorporated a men's leadership team made of five to seven men who function as the men's ministry board. They are responsible for enlistment, planning, execution, and marketing every aspect of the men's ministry in their respected churches.

In contrast, Churches B1 and B2 did not have a senior pastor who championed the men's ministry program, and both churches utilized one individual as the oversight for men's ministry rather than a team approach with staff support. The contrast gives insight to the overall lack of a vital men's disciple-making program in Churches B1 and B2.

Men's disciple-making programs are hard work and take a leadership team with a program champion to build and sustain them for any length of time. A church that does

not have a sustainable ministry planning model may find its best efforts failing to maintain momentum.

Small Groups

The final major finding for the study is that small groups do have a significant impact on a man's life. I was pleased to discover that thirty-three of the forty men surveyed between Churches A1 and A2 stated that their men's small group contributed in a positive way to their lives. Small groups are becoming more and more essential to the health and vitality of men's discipleship. As the research shows in Chapter 4, men have an interest in developing stronger relationships with godly men. Small groups are a significant mechanism to allow relationships to build and strengthen.

The on-site interview with Church A1 gives significant evidence to the question if small groups are worth the effort. In 2006, Church A1 launched a church-wide small group ministry. The very first Sunday that small groups were in effect their citywide attendance was 220 individuals. Less than half of these were men. In the spring of 2007 immediately following a men's rally at their local church, the men's leadership team launched a men's small group ministry with eight groups meeting around the city. The pastor of Church A1 said, "Nearly fifty men were in a small group around the city. We were delighted, but we were ecstatic when the following Sunday rolled around and our church-wide small group ministry jumped by nearly twenty-five men." The men realized the impact of a small group ministry and did not limit themselves to the men's only group, but ventured into other groups as well.

The pastor of Church B2 shared during a telephonic interview that his men seem to be reluctant to start a men's small group. He discovered through this research that

seventeen of his twenty men surveyed commented they would be interested in joining a small group.

Culture and society has painted a poor reflection of today's Christian man. The culture shows a Christian man as weak, incompetent, and isolated as portrayed by several current sitcoms. The opposite appears to be more accurate. According to the research of this project today's Christian men are strong, able, and discovering new significance and worth through biblical masculine relationships.

In early 2009, the pastor of Church B1 launched a men's workout group. Each meeting begins with prayer and is immediately followed up with one hour of working out with each other to contemporary Christian music. The pastor commented how the five men in the group have become better friends, spiritually stronger, and physically healthier. Small groups look different in each situation. Groups exist that focus on biblical studies, devotional readings, and godly living. Groups also exist that are based on camaraderie, fellowship, and projects. Either style of group can impact and influence men as evidenced in the findings of Chapter 4.

The pastor over Church A2 uses small groups seasonally. He has discovered that men love the group, but he cautions that monotony and routine can infiltrate the group and limit its growth. He discovered that the men thrive when given six to ten-week goals and then a few weeks to regroup before a fresh launch after another event geared to create and capture momentum. The method utilized in Church A2 follows well the model developed by Man in the Mirror.

The pastor of A1 takes a slightly different approach to men's small groups. Their groups meet twice a month for one-year straight. In the course of the year, the men are

challenged to go through the Champions of Honor model. This model challenges the men to read twelve biblically masculine resources in the course of a year. At the close of the year, the church sponsors a large men's event that celebrates the commitment to discipleship. A few weeks later, they relaunch the program. The men from A1 spoke highly about this model. One commented through tears that this is "the proudest he has ever been of himself" when he completed the discipleship program.

Small groups build relationship between men and with God. Small groups challenge men to become stronger Christians, better husbands, and better fathers. Small groups keep the momentum of discipleship under the authority and leadership of the local church. Small groups are biblically based, and small groups have a positive impact on men.

Implications of the Findings

This study provides some good groundwork for defending the belief that men's discipleship programs have a positive impact and influence on the life of a man and his family. This study also provides denominational leaders with a resource survey for their pastors and evidence that men's small group ministry is profitable in terms of growing godly men in the local church.

The greatest contribution of this study was the contrast between two Assembly of God churches with men's disciple-making programs and the two Assembly of God churches without such a program. The data clearly showed that within the model and structure of a men's disciple-making program, men are more engaged in volunteering within their church, they are in life-giving relationships that hold them accountable, and they exude a deeper interest in knowing Christ.

Limitations of the Study

Using only two Assembly of God churches with men's disciple-making programs is far from comprehensive. The population and subjects adequately needed for research to reflect the absolute impact of a men's disciple-making program is far greater than the forty subjects surveyed from the two churches. The initial design for this study concerned the impact of an effective men's discipleship program on the health and vitality of a local church, the members, and community, particularly in comparison to a local church with no such program. Future work is needed to understand the relative positive impact of a men's discipleship program and what difference such a program has in a tangible and measurable way.

This project looks in detail at the positive impact that a men's disciple-making program has but is limited in context. Further study is recommended in measuring the effectiveness of a men's discipleship program. The study should revolve around the principle of significance more than numbers.

The study initially sought to uncover far more than feasible within the confines of this research. Looking at all surveys, I have discovered that significant research needs to continue in all four churches. To uncover fully the impact that a vital men's disciple-making ministry has on a man would take a long-term commitment to gauge the change and sustainability of a man's life who is directly involved with the program and a man who is not directly involved with the program. In the context of this realm of study, one could then begin to decipher how many men out of a given population directly involved with men's discipleship tithe, keep a healthy marriage, rear God-fearing children, and become leaders in their local churches. As men's discipleship continues to be a factor of

debate among pastors, substantial evidence remains necessary to argue the true lifelong impact that being disciplined makes in an individual.

Unexpected Observations

One of my greatest surprises during the course of study was that regardless of a formal structure of men's disciple-making programs within a local church, men were in the process of discipling one another. It was a wonderful observation to discover the significant amount of individuals surveyed who valued accountability and relationships with other godly men. While Churches A1 and A2 incorporated a system for men to connect in life-giving relationship, I discovered that the men of Churches B1 and B2 accomplished the mission without a system within to operate which. In essence, the men developed their own system to engage one another in creating opportunities to connect.

A second unexpected observation gave evidence that a system or structure for discipleship allows communication to function far more effectively. In sending out the surveys for this study, Churches A1 and A2 easily distributed the surveys to the men and were able to collect them quickly and without much delay. For Churches B1 and B2, both pastors struggled in getting them to the men and were both delayed in retrieving them and returning them back to me. A leader for the discipleship program of men seems to be able to streamline communication and reach men more effectively and keep one another accountable more than the two churches without a structured men's disciple-making ministry.

A third unexpected observation was the interest in both pastors from Churches B1 and B2 for developing and sustaining a vital men's disciple-making program within their

local churches. I have outlined a process to accomplish such a goal in my recommendations.

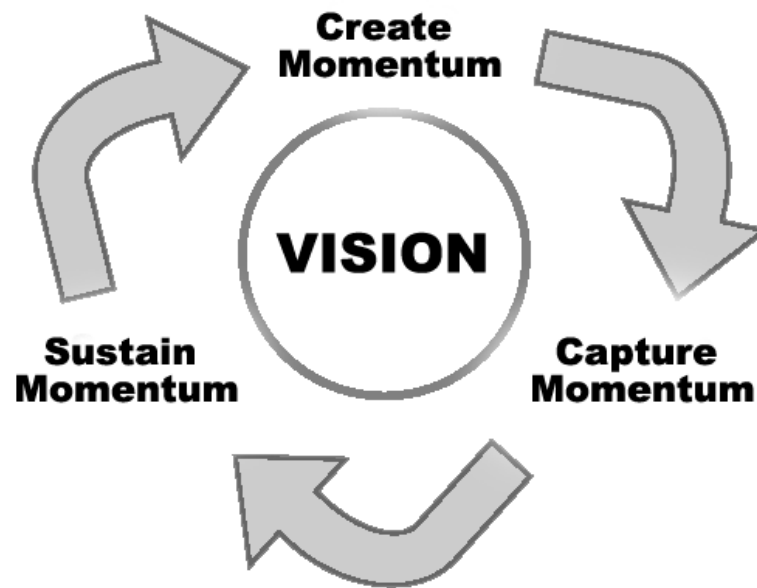
A final unexpected observation was the number of men who desire small groups for learning how to live life. A preconceived notion is that men do not want to admit weaknesses or an inability to handle life's stress and difficulties. This study showed with clarity that men are looking for help. One individual in Church A2 said, "I thought I had all the answers. The problem was I didn't have all the questions. This group has helped me learn new questions to ask." Many of the individuals surveyed in this study desire wisdom and knowledge in multiple key areas of life:

It is refreshing to complain in my group about the horrific day I just had only to hear that someone twenty years my senior say, "I have been through that before, and rest assured you are going to be okay."

Each church pastor shared with me toward the end of the study that they are interested in starting a group or launching more groups because their men have asked for such a thing.

Recommendations

The primary recommendation pertains to the purpose of this study, which was to provide evidence that a men's disciple-making ministry will positively impact the men within a local church. To be effective in fulfilling the Great Commission, leaders and pastors alike are to disciple men. The problem is that the men's disciple-making programs have been unsuccessful in many churches due to a variety of factors. A key factor in why men's disciple-making programs have been unsuccessful is a lack of sustainability, which is directly related to a lack of key leadership and vision for a men's disciple-making program.



Source: Morley, Delk and Clemmer 24.

Figure 5.1. The create, capture, and sustain model in a church-based men's discipleship program.

Leaders are looking for a plan to develop men's disciple-making programs. I found reaching men to be a difficult, albeit a rewarding, task. The model strongly suited for most any church is centered on with vision, implementation, reproduction, and sustainability. This model was developed by Morley in 1996. The first phase and central element of this model is vision. This element incorporates implementation factors related to leadership, vision, people, and planning. The research found that a vision for men's ministry was a central factor to success. The senior pastor is the principal keeper of, and champion for, the vision of discipling every man in the church. The vision should be expressed in language that inspires, encourages and motivates a commitment to the ideal of discipleship. Men respond to motivation although men often lack a desire to commit long-term.

Prior to or during Phase 1, Morley suggests addressing the following key implementation factors in order to ensure success:

- The personal involvement of the senior pastor,
- The long-term commitment of the senior pastor,
- The full support and commitment of the senior leadership team,
- A capable, trained program champion committed to long-term results,
- A capable, trained program team committed to long-term results,
- A compelling vision to make a disciple of every man in the church,
- A vision focused on men’s discipleship to ensure the greatest result,
- Develop commitment by inspiring people to become true believers in the vision,
- Make the church a safe environment to dialogue about the program as well as participate in the program,
- The church makes a formal decision to implement a men’s discipleship program,
- Design a pilot program to build momentum,
- A strategic plan that is developed and recorded, and
- The necessary resources, including structures, staff, time, budget, and training. (“Factors” 105-06)

These suggestions are key factors for implementing a men’s discipleship program. Each suggestion is the result of experience, trial and success stories from churches across the United States.

The second phase that begins execution is creating momentum for men’s discipleship. This phase incorporates factors related to men’s ministry, discipleship, small groups, and family systems. To create momentum the church is wise to begin with an event or conference or rally to attract men and create fresh momentum. This can be a weekend event, an all-day event, or even an evening event.

Throughout Phase 2 and all subsequent phases, Morley recommends dealing with the following implementation factors:

- Expecting and making adjustments along the way,
- Building in a contingency for taking more time than expected,

- Having the senior pastor publicize program benefits to build church-wide commitment,
- Identifying and processing individual and organizational resistance effectively,
- Throughout, planning for how the program will become a part of the church's routine and, therefore be sustained. ("Factors" 106-07)

The second phase is contingent on the successfully implementing phase one. Vision casting is key to creating momentum that will generate the results that the leader or pastor desires. In each of the four churches, the pastors shared independent of one another. A common experience between each of the four pastors is when the ministry is shared publicly and purpose is clear the men will show up. The opposite is also true that when vision is lacking and purpose is unclear the men who choose a different option than to be at a men's ministry function.

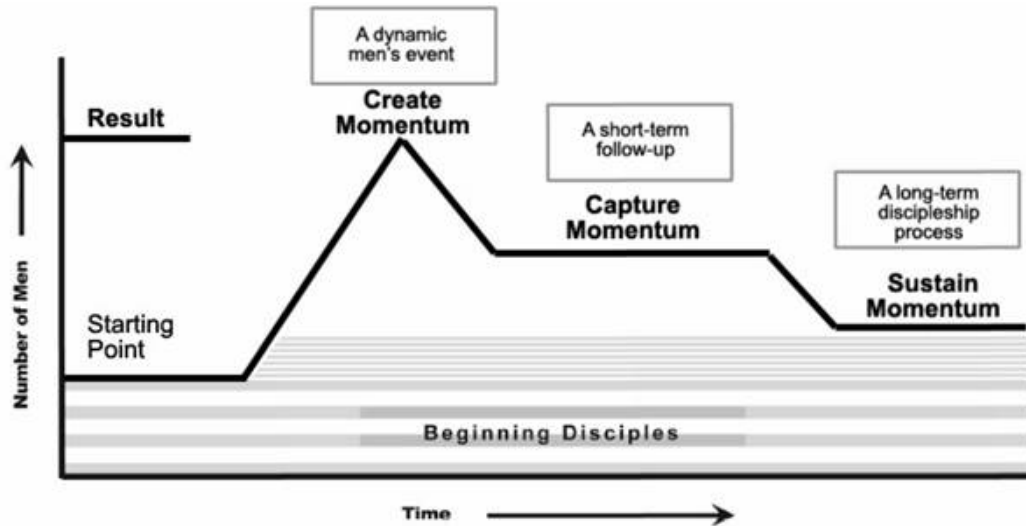
The third phase of the model is capturing the momentum. The two Assembly of God churches with vital men's discipleship programs began their ministries with short-term commitments with an option for further involvement. Church A1 launched their program with a weekend conference and challenged men to a once-a-month meeting for a year. Throughout the year the men would be challenged to engage in different resources to develop their faith, their family, and their character. This was a success. Church A2 launched their program with an evening rally on a Friday night. During the rally they challenged men to be in a weekly small group for six consecutive weeks and work through a book written in masculine context for them. This was a success for them as well.

The fourth phase of the model is sustaining momentum. This phase pertains to planning, communicating, executing, and sustaining. Once inertia has been converted to momentum and captured, it must be sustained. The fourth phase is where the small

groups mentioned in Phase 3 play a crucial role. This phase is always a challenging step, but with proper leadership, structure, and execution the men can naturally flow into a specific group. The discipleship process occurs within the small group.

The final phase of the model is repeating the cycle to keep men's discipleship visible within the church and may assist in routinizing the program. Notice the arrow in Figure 5.1 points from *sustain momentum* back to *create momentum*. A key concept of the model is the assumption that some men will fall by the wayside every time an additional level of commitment is requested. In other words, attrition is expected. The goal of this cyclical model is that every resolution will increase and sustain momentum. A men's discipleship program will have quantum leaps and setbacks. The repetition of this cycle allows for some drop-off in involvement and for events necessary to attract new men to join into the rotation.

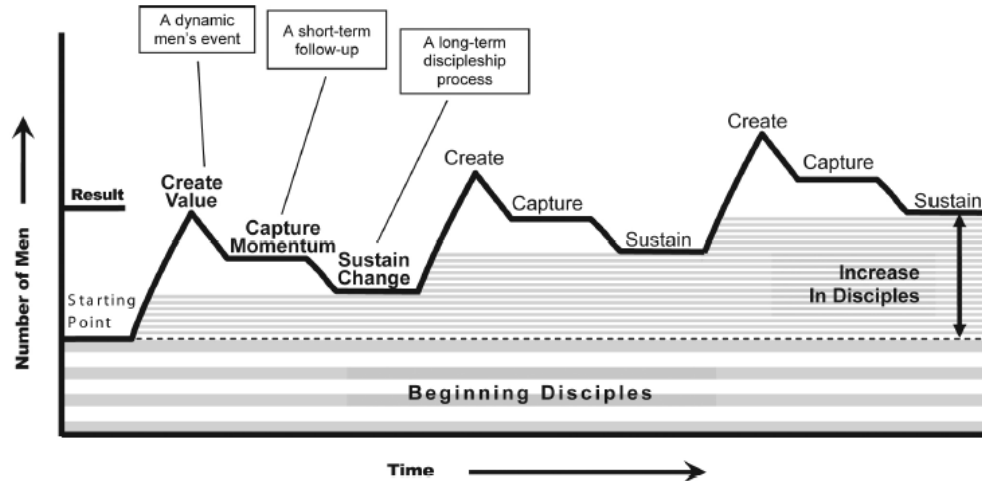
Figure 5.2 depicts a linear representation of one repetition of the cycle. An unfortunate component to this strategy is men will inevitably drop out or select a different ministry involvement. Men serve in a variety of areas within the local church. Some men in the church will choose a different ministry to focus their time and talents at different seasons and stages of the year and their lives. The principle of some men dropping away from the men's small group is not surprising: it is normal. The important factor to the Morley model is in viewing the cycle as a whole rather than a snapshot. Figure 5.2 illustrates that after the completion of one cycle a net increase occurs in the number of men who are becoming disciples. Viewing the cycle as a whole encourages the leader rather than discouragement overwhelming him.



Source: Morley, “Factors” 109.

Figure 5.2. A linear representation of one cycle of the create, capture, sustain model.

Figure 5.3 illustrates three repetitions of the create, capture, sustain model, and depicts how the create, capture, sustain model is an incremental change model to bring about sustainable growth in a church’s men’s discipleship program. One advantage of this model is that men who were not prepared to start a discipleship cycle can reconsider each time the cycle repeats. Also, men who drop out of one cycle can be reengaged during a subsequent cycle.



Source: Morley, “Factors” 110.

Figure 5.3. A linear representation of three consecutive cycles of the create, capture, sustain model.

While this model may have drawbacks, it seems to generate the involvement pastors are seeking when implemented properly. A key stage throughout this process is in the curriculum and resources used in the individual groups to sustain the momentum. Furthermore, men are goal-oriented individuals and the use of objectives can be profitable in enlisting men to join in the discipleship process.

Postscript

This study has been the culmination of ten years of reflection on the subject of men’s discipleship. I came into the employment of Man in the Mirror, Inc., in 2000 and quickly gained a passion and interest in men’s ministry. In 2003 I became the Assistant National Director for the Assemblies of God National Men’s Ministries. As I traveled the nation speaking, writing, and consulting leaders and pastors on men’s ministry, I developed a great heart to see men equipped and resourced to become the men who God has called them to

become. I discovered that my role in that process was to encourage and aid pastors to launch, develop, and sustain a men's disciple-making ministry in their local church.

Today, I serve as Executive Vice President for Champions of Honor, Inc. The goal of Champions of Honor is to challenge men to go through the Champions training to be commissioned as ministers to men. By completing the Champions five-step process, they will be honored as Champions of Honor with the presentation of a sword. The sword is a symbol of their accomplishment and preparedness to go to battle for their souls, their families, their churches, and their communities.

My deep hope is that pastors and leaders will catch the vision and see the need to reach men for Christ. This study confirmed that men's disciple-making programs could make a significant difference in a person's life. The best part is that when the difference is made in a man's life the trickle-down effect will reach his spouse, his children, his friends, and his coworkers. I believe a revival can spark this nation if leaders and pastors disciple men and engage them to be champions for Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX A

MEN'S SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE

Men's Ministry Survey/Questionnaire

Background Information

1. Age 25-29 30-39 40-49 50-59
2. Marital Status: Single ____ Married ____ Number of Children ____
3. Type of Work: _____
4. Which of these issues are most important to you? (Check two most important)
 Finding a job Relationship to wife Job security Male roles & identity
 Balancing work, home & ministry Parenting skill Retirement
 Reaching other men Spiritual life

A Man and His Family

5. Would you be interested in a monthly meeting on family issues? (Parenting, relationship to wife, etc.?) Yes No
6. When would be the best time for you to attend that meeting?
 Saturday morning Weeknight—Which Night? _____
 Sunday morning Sunday night
7. What topics would you like to see addressed? (Check two)
 Keeping the romance alive in your marriage Disciplining your children
 Surviving the teenage years Being the spiritual leader at home
 Handling conflict Communicating with your wife
 Other _____

Men in the Marketplace

8. How can we best help you integrate your Christian faith into your job?

- Monthly meeting with a speaker
- Weekly small group meeting to discuss the issues
- Monthly small group meeting to discuss the issues
- 3-5 week seminar on ethics, relationships on the job, etc.

9. Best time for these small groups or seminars

- Weekday morning
- Weekday evening
- Saturday morning
- Sunday evening

10. Topics I would like to hear addressed: (check top 3)

- Handling stress Coping with failure Changing careers
- Mentoring Relationships on the job Planning retirement
- Sharing your faith with work associates Resisting sexual temptations
- Balancing home, work and ministry Avoiding the success obsession
- Keeping your ethics edge sharp

Men and the World

11. Would a short-term missions trip be of interest to you? Yes No

12. What type of short-term missions trip would interest you the most?

Construction Project Business Trip (i.e., giving seminars in Eastern Europe)

Athletic trip (i.e., basketball in the Philippines) Medical trip

13. What would be a good length of stay for such a trip?

Weekend 1 week 2 weeks 3 weeks one month or more

Retreats

14. If we would begin to have retreats as part of the ministry would you be interested? Yes No

15. What type of retreat would interest you most?

Teaching type Adventurous type (canoeing, camping, fishing, etc.)

Spiritual and personal renewal Networking with other men

16. And the length of the retreat?

One night Two nights

17. How far would you be willing to travel for a retreat?

30 minutes 1 hour 2 hours 3 hours More than 3 hours

Man to Man

18. Are you currently attending a men's Bible study group? Yes No

19. If you are not in a group, would you be interested in attending a men's small group? Yes No

20. What would you like to see happen in that group? (Check two)

- Study the Bible Talk about problems at home or work
- Pray for one another Discuss how you integrate your Christian faith and your work and family life

21. Which would you prefer for meeting?

- Every week for one hour Every other week
- Once a month for three hours

22. When would you prefer to meet?

- Early morning before work Lunch hour
- After work in the evening Over the weekend

Men's Conference

23. Would you be willing to assist in our church's Men's Ministry? Yes No

24. If yes, what are your areas of potential interest?

- Publicity Organize events (retreats, golf outings, etc.)
- Work in the kitchen Lead Small Group
- Do telephoning Work with work projects
- Marketplace Ministries

25. What do you or would you personally like to accomplish through your involvement in Men's Ministry? (Check two)

- A closer walk with God Fellowship with other Christian men
- An outlet to vent problems or frustrations More involvement in the church
- A chance to meet other men Other _____

Past Experience

26. How has being a part of the local men's ministry (conferences and/or groups) impacted your relationship to Christ?

27. How has being a part of the local men's ministry (conferences and/or groups) impacted your relationship to spouse and/or family?

28. How has being a part of the local men's ministry (conferences and/or groups) impacted your relationship to church? Please make note of ministries you are presently involved in and if you tithe regularly.

29. What has impacted you the most in terms of changed life at your church? (i.e., ministry involvement, preaching, relationships developed, discipleship programs, etc.)

30. If you are presently in a regular (monthly or weekly) men's discipleship group, how has it influenced your life? (i.e., dealing with addictions, temptations, seasons of life, etc.). Discuss.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE LETTER OF INQUIRY TO SENIOR PASTORS

Dear Pastor _____,

Thank you for taking time on the phone with me as I shared my vision for this important project. My goal is to help substantiate the claim that a vital men's disciple-making program in local churches can potentially have great impact on the men and be a blessing to the church and pastor.

As stated previously on the telephone, I am asking that you would distribute a survey/questionnaire to no less than twenty men who are in your church and between the ages of 25-55. This questionnaire is designed to qualify the impact that discipleship programs can potentially have on a man's life. I am looking for the stories. I am searching for changed lives. I also desire to aid you in seeing how we can disciple men more effectively. This project is to help us see where we can better serve men and thus reach their families.

My heart in this project is to provide you with feedback on how discipleship can greatly enrich the men of your church. There will be a separate survey for you as the pastor to complete. I ask that each survey remain confidential and no name be written on the survey.

Thank you,

Andrew D. Templeton

APPENDIX C

CHURCH A1 STRATEGY FOR MEN'S MINISTRY

Notes taken during on-site meeting January 27, 2009

Leadership Structure:

- Senior Pastor: Champion for Men's Ministry
- Equipping Pastor: Provides administrative leadership and vision
- Lay Leader: Works with Equipping Pastor to plan events and organize groups and meetings
- Team Member: Disciples others and leads small groups

Primary Focus of Ministry

- Men's Sunday school class
- Men's Prayer Group
- Two large events per year
- Men's Small groups
- Men's work groups
- Missions Building Teams
- Ushers

Approach and Strategy

- Events serve as catalyst for recruitment and energy
- Small groups serve to sustain momentum and disciple through the Champions of Honor, Inc. curriculum

APPENDIX D

CHURCH A2 STRATEGY FOR MEN'S MINISTRY

Notes taken during personal interview on September 26, 2009

Leadership Structure:

- Part-time Associate Pastor: Provides administrative leadership and vision
- Team Member: Disciples others and leads small groups

Primary Focus of Ministry

- Men's Sunday school class
- Men's Prayer Group
- One fall event per year
- Men's Small groups
- Men's work groups
- Missions Building Teams
- Ushers

Approach and Strategy

- Events serve as catalyst for recruitment and energy
- Small groups serve to sustain momentum and disciple through the Champions of Honor, Inc. curriculum
- Sunday school is primary outlet for men's discipleship
- Sunday school class works the men through curriculum and recruitment is built into Master Plan of Sunday school attendance drives

The senior pastor endorses the men's program, but is not the champion for it. He rarely shows up for events, but will promote them on Sunday. This church has a functional and stable men's ministry, but is far from where it could potentially be.

APPENDIX E

THE CHAMPIONS CURRICULUM

The goal of the Champions Training is to be commissioned as a minister to men. By completing the Champions five-step process, you will be recognized as a Champion of Honor with the presentation of a sword. The sword is a symbol of the accomplishment and preparedness to go to battle for the soul, the family, the church, and the community.

The resources used for this model include

- *Men's Relational Toolbox*—Gary Smalley, Greg Smalley, and Michael Smalley
- *The Champions Playbook*—Chuck Brewster
- *Dead Men Rising*—Chuck Brewster
- *The 21 Day Fast*—Bob Rodgers
- *Wild at Heart*—John Eldredge
- *Real Man*—Ed Cole
- *Courage*—Ed Cole
- *Strong Men in Tough Times*—Ed Cole
- *Communication, Sex and Money*—Ed Cole
- *Defiled*—James Marocco

APPENDIX F
COMMUNICATION DATA

Church A1

The on-site interview was conducted during a regular men's ministry team meeting on 27 January 2009. During this meeting I was able to interview the senior pastor, the lay leader for men's ministry, and five members of their leadership team. I also had the opportunity to meet some of the wives who were married to members of this team. My dialogues were informal and conversational.

Church A2

Though multiple telephonic discussions took place, the primary dialogue and interview was on 26 September 2009. The interview was with the part-time associate pastor whose portfolio includes men's ministry. He is the champion for their church and the key individual who has launched and helped grow their ministry to men.

APPENDIX G

PASTORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How is your church structured in regards to leadership?
2. Discuss the state of discipleship in your church.
3. Do you have a vision or passion for discipleship? How do you define discipleship?
4. Are small groups operating in your church? Are there groups specifically for men?
5. Does your church have a men's ministry?
6. Do you have a leader for men's ministry? If so, who is the leader?
7. Is men's ministry worth the effort in your opinion?
8. How can the church reach men more effectively?

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