

ABSTRACT

FORMISSIONAL WORSHIP: CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

by

Gregory B. Rosser

The purpose of this study was to measure the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class at Mount Vernon Nazarene University entitled Christian Worship. The scriptural foundation was the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-5), quoted by Jesus in the Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31). The curricular outline was *worship as* invitation, revelation, participation, formation, contextualization, incarnation, and integration. The instruments used to gather data from the students were two surveys and an online threaded discussion by the students during class. The surveys framed the class as a pre- and posttest, while the process element of the weekly postings was embedded between.

The research indicated a renewed awareness among the students of God's divine initiative in worship. Keeping God's word central was found to form worship leader and worshiper alike in preparation for, presentation of, and participation in communal worship. The participants affirmed that God's mission is realized as Spirit-filled leaders embody missional worship, moving outward from God's altar. The belief that through this inside out movement, each church speaks into a particular context was strengthened over the course of the class. The respondents endorsed more strongly that the integration of worship, mission, and spiritual formation leads the disciple to a lifestyle of *formissional worship*.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

When someone says, “Come go to our Saturday night worship service with us,” the visitor has no idea what is going to happen. Even the denominational sign over the door offers little insight. Since 1978, I have served the local church in worship ministries. In that time I have seen seismic shifts in understanding and practice: some I have embraced; others I have resisted.

Many churches have lost their equilibrium because their worship is in a constant state of flux, leaving them just a bit off-balance. The pendulum swings between attracting the seekers on one hand, to accommodating the saints on the other. Seeking to reach those that do not know Christ, worship may focus on mission, whereas seeking to make disciples through participation in the liturgy as the body of Christ may produce a focus on formation. While the missional and formational foci are appropriate, the problem arises when the church elevates or ignores one at the expense of the other.

Sources examined recognize this imbalance as well. Willow Creek Community Church, strong in mission and worship, was found to be deficient in spiritual formation, as detailed in *Reveal* (Hawkins and Parkinson). A recent *Leadership Journal* article centered on recovery of the monastic rhythms in the lives of individuals and their churches laments that formation and mission, while nonnegotiable, are incomplete (Meyer). Formation and mission, apart from worship, will always be incomplete.

I contend that *formissional worship* holds in unity spiritual formation, mission, and worship. The division of these elements leads to fragmentation. Worship is missional

(Labberton 14; Schattaer, “Missional Shape” 181; Schmit, *Sent and Gathered* 40) and formational (Kimball 35; Murphy 104; Witvliet 44; B. Peterson 28). Disciples are formed through worship and mission. Likewise, the church’s mission is that all would worship and be formed into his image (Bauckham 40; Stutzman and Hunsberger 100). Presenting such an integrative perspective to the community of faith encourages healthy, holistic growth individually and collectively via heart, head, and hands.

Having served in ministry for three decades, I have observed the widening gap between showing up and growing up. Therefore, modeling *formissional worship* is incumbent upon leaders in the church. Spiritual formation and mission cannot be viewed as worship add-ons for the devout. Indeed, worship apart from these elements can hardly be considered Christian worship.

Pastors embodying the life of *formissional worship* can effect change in the local churches, which, in turn, can change their communities, which, in turn, can change their cities—and ultimately change the world for the glory of his name. However, in order to impact the church for generations, the thinking of the present pastoral leadership must first change.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to measure the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class at Mount Vernon Nazarene University entitled Christian Worship.

Research Questions

In order to determine the effectiveness of the design and delivery of the class, I have identified three research questions.

Research Question #1

What were the levels of cognition, attitude, and behavior of the students regarding *formissional worship* prior to the class?

Research Question #2

Did the students experience significant change in cognition, attitude, or behavior regarding *formissional worship* as a result of participating in the course?

Research Question #3

What aspects of the class experience contributed most significantly to these changes?

Definition of Terms

As Adrian van Kaam writes, “Language is the house of formation” (Presentation). The words Christians choose and how they are used is important. While they may be familiar, a few key words need clarification for this study.

M. Robert Mulholland, Jr. succinctly defines *spiritual formation* as “the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others” (*Shaped by the Word* 15). The work of formation generally occurs as one practices his/her faith through channels, such as the classic spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, meditation, Bible reading, fasting, and silence), Wesley’s means of grace (e.g., the Lord’s Supper, Christian conferencing, and serving the poor), and liturgy/ritual. Spiritual formation is about neither amassing information nor following a prescribed curriculum but about enrolling in the ultimate school of lifelong learning. Other words used in referring to spiritual formation are formative, formation, and formational.

Mission is simply the embodiment of the gospel—allowing Christ to love through his disciples that they may be dispensers of God’s grace. To be missional is to be a “people who live into the imagination that they are, by their very nature, God’s missionary people living as a demonstration of what God plans to do in and for all of creation in Jesus Christ” (Roxburgh and Romanuk xv). A missional church is intentional in reaching out to the prodigals and outcasts, for it is “God’s kindness that leads us toward repentance” (Rom. 2:4b, NIV). Again Mulholland offers keen insight, saying, “Our primary calling is to be in Christ for the world—not vice versa” (“Incarnating the Word.”). When disciples abide in him, he can and will use them for his honor and glory. Apart from Christ, the true vine, disciples can do nothing. (John 15:1-5). Mission is more than evangelism or a social agenda; mission is joining God in his work to reconcile the world to himself. The church is a missional people because their God was and is a missional God (Bauckham 91-92; C. Wright, *Mission* 22-23).

Worship is not limited to what happens in churches on Sunday morning around the world. Churchgoers have lost the gravity of the word. As Paul writes in Romans 12, becoming a living sacrifice articulates the quotidian nature of worship. Hearing his invitation, worshipers bow low before the one true living God in adoration and obedience. True worship proclaims in word, in song, and in deed that Jesus is Lord. To acknowledge that he alone is Lord is to recognize that all other affections are secondary. Jesus is worthy of worship seven days a week—not just for an hour on Sunday. Loving God is more than a song or the recitation of any liturgy. Worship is authenticated as Christians love their neighbors.

The language of many Sunday gatherings has introduced an unfortunate

dichotomy as worship and teaching are spoken of as if they were competing. A pastor might hear, “I really enjoyed the worship today” (i.e., music), or, “The teaching was amazing.” As God reveals himself through his Spirit in the shared practices of communal worship, Christians respond in love and obedience.

Formissional worship is more than a melding of the words; it is a coalescence of the three constituent elements in a synergistic interplay. When functioning in harmony, the movement goes from events to lifestyle—from doing to being, from fragmentation to integration. The motto of the Church of the Nazarene Eurasia Region articulates this integration: “Transforming our world: *in Christ, like Christ, for Christ*” (emphasis mine; Church of the Nazarene Eurasia Region).

Ministry Intervention

I designed and taught the Master of Ministry (MM) class in Christian Worship for Mount Vernon Nazarene University (MVNU). The class is part of the required curriculum for all students in the MM track. The aim of the curriculum is to expand the students’ perception of worship beyond an *event* mentality. Worship as lifestyle naturally has missional and formational implications that enrich the weekly *event*, moving one toward integration—in theory and in practice.

From 25 February to 8 April 2013, the class met every Monday from 1 to 5 p.m. in a multi-site classroom. The class brought together eight sites with eight students in Mount Vernon, Ohio; three in Grove City, Ohio; two in Butler, Pennsylvania; one in Washington, Pennsylvania; one in Canton, Ohio; one in Toledo, Ohio; three in West Chester, Ohio; and, one in Wheelersburg, Ohio. I taught each session from the Mount Vernon campus while live streaming video connected all campuses on screen at each site.

The final class session, all twenty students came together at the main campus in Mount Vernon for lunch, a worship service, and class wrap-up.

The instruments used to gather data from the students were two surveys and an online threaded discussion by the students during class. The surveys bookended the class as a pre- and posttest, while embedded between them was the process element of the weekly postings.

Context

MVNU is one of eleven Nazarene institutions of higher learning in the US and Canada. The institution's connection to the denomination is strong. According to the official site of the international Church of the Nazarene, "The Church of the Nazarene is a Protestant Christian church in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. Organized in 1908, the Church is now home to more than 2 million members worshipping in over 26,000 local congregations in 156 world areas" ("About the Church of the Nazarene"). On the same site, core values are articulated saying they are a people who are "Christian, holiness and missional."

MVNU is located in Mount Vernon, Ohio—a sleepy little farming town nearer to Amish country than the big city of Columbus, both geographically and culturally. According to the most recent census data, the population is 14,375, of which 13,895 are Caucasian. The median age of residents is 37.1. Educationally, 80.2 percent have graduated from high school, while 18.2 percent have bachelor's degrees or higher. The average household income is \$29,801 ("State and County Quick Facts").

MVNU finds their constituency primarily in Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky. The educational zone is comprised of eight Nazarene districts, supporting the university

through prayer, student recruiting, and financial support. Fall 2012 reported 2,267 total enrolled, 1,756 of those were traditional students. Of those, 1,236 on-campus students, 471 were male and 765 female—85 percent of which were Caucasian. In addition to the traditional students, the remaining 511 students were located on satellite campuses or in graduate classes such as those I teach (“Facts and Figures”).

Methodology

This project employed an embedded, mixed-methods design comprised of 75 percent quantitative and 25 percent qualitative means of gathering data. I administered the pretest on the first day of class. The identical posttest was administered on the final day of class to determine the changes in their perceptions of worship.

I inserted a qualitative element between the pre- and post-intervention surveys to assist in mapping the individual stories of discovery in the learning process for each student. Weekly online postings by the students connected the class discussion and readings with their ministry context. Through these posts I was able to note affective and behavioral changes.

Participants

The participants for this study were students registered in the MM program at MVNU. Registered for the class in Christian Worship were sixteen males and six females for a total of twenty-two. The ages of the students ranged from 22 to 51; 5 percent were non-Caucasian. Some had been serving in ministry for ten years or more, while others had recently completed their undergraduate degrees. Still others were retooling for a second career. Only 20 percent of the class was serving in non-Nazarene churches. Many

of the younger students were serving as interns or staff members at larger churches.

Those serving as solo pastors were leading small to midsized rural churches.

As an adjunct instructor, I had nothing to do with selecting the students enrolled. Being the only section of this class offered, students chose the topic and not the instructor. All enrolled accepted the invitation to participate in the project.

Instrumentation

The researcher-designed, expert reviewed, quantitative surveys employed a six-point Likert scale administered by SurveyMonkey. The seventy-five-question survey offered participants the opportunity to respond: 1—strongly disagree; 2—disagree; 3—somewhat disagree; 4—somewhat agree; 5—agree; 6—strongly agree. Providing an even number of potential responses ensured the *centrists* would take a stand (see Appendix A).

The qualitative element consisted of an online threaded discussion in a closed group on Facebook. These postings were examined to find common themes revealing changes in attitude and behavior regarding *formissional worship*.

Variables

The dependent variables in the study were the survey responses revealing what the students coming in know and the change in their perception and practice concerning *formissional worship*. The independent variables were the material presented in class, teaching tools employed, assignments employed, and the peer interaction.

The intervening variables were student absences and technical problems disconnecting a satellite campus for segments of the class. My responses were to make sure the students received what they missed via class PowerPoint slides, notes from other students, and one-on-one conversations.

Data Collection

Late in 2012, I received permission from MVNU to conduct the proposed research surrounding the design and delivery of the MM Christian Worship class in the spring of 2013. Upon completion of my proposal hearing in February 2013, I notified the Institutional Review Board at MVNU that I would be proceeding with the previously approved research in PTW6013: Christian Worship. I administered the pretest via Survey Monkey on the first day of class and the posttest via SurveyMonkey on the final day of class.

The qualitative data was culled from a threaded discussion on a closed Facebook group. Weekly postings from each student and at least two responses to the postings of classmates were required.

Data Analysis

I used an embedded, mixed-methods design, employing two quantitative surveys: pretest and posttest. Employing *t*-tests, the statistics were analyzed in light of the pretest demographic information on each participant. I used these statistics to assess the changes in cognition individually and collectively regarding *formissional worship* as a result of the seven-week class I designed and delivered.

The qualitative tool employed during the seven-week period of instruction was a weekly assignment involving online posts. The analysis of this data was guided by a search for themes of changing attitudes and behaviors regarding *formissional worship*. Through this means I was able to identify the aspects of the class experience contributing most significantly to the changes in cognition, attitude, and behavior.

Generalizability

Delimitations of this study included keeping worship as the common denominator while considering the interplay of spiritual formation and mission. Therefore, an in-depth examination of mission or spiritual formation apart from worship were not part of this study. Its aim was a movement toward integration—an interdisciplinary approach to practical ministry.

A primary limitation of this study was the limited scope of data sampling, as all were students at a Nazarene University in the Midwest. No doubt, an intergenerational sampling in a local church context would have different findings. Likewise, working within a different theological and/or geographical camp may alter the findings.

Theological Foundation

The scriptural foundation was the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-5), which Jesus quotes in the Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31). I find the *Shema* to be the foundation of *formissional worship*: As stated in the New Revised Standard Version, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4-5, NRSV). This creedal statement was always on the lips of ancient Israel, reminding them of their relationship with the monotheistic God of promise. Its call was to absolute allegiance. For over a millennium, the faithful had recited these words. Then Jesus offered this revision:

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘*Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.*’ The second is this, ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have

truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any question. (emphasis mine; Mark 12:28-34)

While these words of Jesus are revolutionary, this two-pronged law of love is inextricably linked to the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:40).

The implicit ethical demands of the *Shema* are made explicit in the Greatest Commandment of Jesus. The addendum, “love your neighbor as yourself,” brings a palpable measure of one’s love for God. John strongly asserts that if Christians do not love their brother or sister, whom they have seen, then they are liars when they say that they love God (1 John 4:20). Paul writes in Galatians 5:14, “For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Becoming a disciple meant their love for God was apparent.

In Luke’s gospel, the response to such a demand was, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29), setting the stage for Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). Simply stated, a disciple cannot be rightly related to God apart from loving people he places in their path. Conversely, a disciple of Christ cannot be rightly related to God by simply being kind to others. The two are inseparable as one demonstrates the other.

However, as 1 John 4:9 states, God loved first. His love is the source and the means for any love shown by a Christian. Succinctly stated, loving and being loved by God catalyzes my love for others.

In considering *formissional worship*, I see these elements as worship and mission. Though an obvious oversimplification, the disciples’ love for God is viewed on the

vertical axis of relationships (worship) while their love for others is viewed on the horizontal axis of relationships (mission). Living in community, these relationships are fused in the journey toward Christlikeness (spiritual formation).

Through Photoshop and with the help of some skilled computer friends, I illustrated in the MM class the consequences of neglecting one or more of the elements of *formissional worship*. Using Salvador Dali's *The Christ of St. John of the Cross*, I altered the color saturations, showing the painting without red (worship), without yellow (mission), and without blue (formation). I also showed this painting as *only* red (worship), *only* yellow (mission), and *only* blue (formation). The lackluster masterpiece with primary colors missing was a graphic image of individual preferences or corporate neglect that alters God's synergistic design.

God's picture of the church has more colors than can yet be imagined. As the church is faithful in using the colors he has given, he mixes them to create glorious hues beyond what their minds can conceive.

Overview

Chapter 2 reviews literature associated with the *Shema*, *formissional worship*, *missional worship*, *formational worship*, *formational mission/missional formation*, and research methods. Chapter 3 includes discussion and explanation for the design of the study, research questions, population, instrumentation, data collection, variables, and data analysis. Chapter 4 details the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the conclusions derived from interpretation of the data, as well as practical applications of the conclusions and further study possibilities.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Introduction

Worship, spiritual formation, and mission have been domesticated in many churches. Reduced to “siloeed” programs (Lencioni 175), these distinguishing marks of the church are seen as competitors rather than allies. Best understood as a cord of three strands, total emphasis on any one produces a hollow parody.

The purpose of this study was to determine the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class entitled Christian Worship at the Mount Vernon Nazarene University in the Spring of 2013.

Theological Framework

The Shema is the foundation of *formissional worship*. God’s revealed purpose calls his people to obedience in practice—being diligent in the work of *spiritual formation*. While his preeminent holiness ignites passion and draws the church to *worship*, his communal priority fans the flame, animating them in *mission* before a watching world.

The *Shema*—Context

With the deliverance from the slavery of Egypt and forty years of wilderness wanderings behind them, the Promised Land lay before the Israelites. Moses, nearing the end of his life, gathered those born in the wilderness to remind them of the covenant God made with their fathers. However, in Deuteronomy 5:3 he boldly proclaims, “Not with our ancestors did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive

today.” Gerhard von Rad offers insight into this seeming contradiction: “It is the tremendous ‘here and now’ in the divine election that lies at the back of Deuteronomy’s attempt to re-comprehend the Israel that was now in the grip of an inner disintegration as the holy people of God” (70). The call is to be present in the moment.

As Victor P. Hamilton states, “The issue then is making past history present history. There are many generations, but only one law” (405). Literally *Deuteronomy* means “a repetition or copy of the law” (Barker 243). This book consists primarily of three messages by Moses: the history (chs. 1-4), the law (chs. 5-28), and the covenant (chs. 29-32; Miller, *Deuteronomy* ix). Moses re-presents the Decalogue from Exodus 20 at the beginning of his second address.

Those hearing Moses had followed him their entire lives. This way of life was all they knew. Now they stood at the threshold of a new day—the time had come to possess the promise. However, they had been this close before. The Israelites could easily assume an attitude of cynicism and petulance: “Been there, done that! Let’s quit talking about it and cross over already!” After all, many of them had long-standing family traditions of grumbling. However, they recognized the relationship Moses had with God and requested him to be their mediator. In Deuteronomy 5 the Israelites implore Moses to serve as their mediator:

Look, the Lord our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the fire. Today we have seen that God may speak to someone and the person may still live. So now why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any longer, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and remained alive? *Go near, you yourself, and hear all that the Lord our God will say. Then tell us everything that the Lord our God tells you, and we will listen and do it.* (emphasis mine; Deut. 5:24-27)

Being possessed by a fear of God, while recognizing their utter dependence, the Israelites pledged total allegiance.

Later in the same chapter God agreed that this requested mediation would be good: saying to Moses,

But you [Moses], stand here by me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes and the ordinances, that you shall teach them, so that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess. (Deut. 5:31)

Hearing from God was and is a prerequisite to speaking for God.

Moses was called to be God's mouthpiece to Pharaoh and to Israel. Tremper Longman, III imagines Moses saying, "Don't behave like your parents did in the wilderness. Obey God and live well in the land" (qtd. in R. Foster 247). His compassionate candor was reflective of God's "divine wistfulness" (C. Wright, *Deuteronomy* 91) for his people as seen in Deuteronomy 5:29: "If only they had such a mind as this, to fear me and to keep all my commandments always, so that it might go well with them and with their children for ever!" Spoken like a parent, God desires the best for his children.

Moses believed changed minds and hearts among the Israelites would come through an encounter with the one true living God. His words were not mere exhortation; he was preaching for decision (Deut. 30:19—choose life). William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. state, "Scholars commonly describe these speeches [of Moses] as *paranesis*—a style of speech that intends to persuade the audience to adopt a certain course of action" (350). Truly conversion was the aim.

The specific verses addressed in this paper (Deut. 6:1-9) are significant in that they contain the *Shema*, which serves as a "bridge between the Decalogue and...the

statutes and ordinances” (Miller, “Most Important Word” 18). Distilling the essence of the law, the *Shema* became an ancient Hebrew rule of life.

Beyond this designated passage, Deuteronomy records their journey to blessing: “*He brought us out from there [Egypt] in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors*” (emphasis mine; Deut. 6:23). However, sober warnings accompany this promise of prosperity, as detailed by Daniel I. Block: “Drive out the nations; do not intermarry; keep your commitment to Yahweh not just primary, but exclusive; beware lest your plenty dulls your desire for God; remember from whence your God has delivered you—and live in gratitude” (205-11). In this fine article, Block identifies the core issue:

He [Moses] will declare that the greatest threat to their [Israel’s] relationship with Yahweh is not posed by the enemies who live in the land, but by their own hearts and minds, which are prone to forget the grace of God. (205)

Though the *Shema* calls for all (heart, soul, and strength), time and again the story of God’s people reads, “[T]hey forgot what he had done, and the miracles that he had shown them” (Ps. 78:11). Moses understood that memory fuels hope.

Overview of Deuteronomy 6:1-9

The second address of Moses (Deut. 5-28) represents just over 70 percent of the whole of Deuteronomy. To say that this proclamation of the law and subsequent call to covenant loyalty are significant would be a gross understatement. The passage examined here (Deut. 6:1-9) is very early in this key message.

Seven sentences over these nine verses contain *ten imperatives*. (NRSV). This holistic call to action informs spiritual formation, worship, and mission (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Holistic Call to Action

Area Affected	Imperatives
Spiritual formation	Hear (v. 3); observe (v. 3)
Worship	Hear (v. 4); love (v. 5)
Mission	Keep (v. 6); recite (v. 7); talk (v. 7); bind (v. 8); fix (v. 8); write (v. 8)

However, as Israel heeds the call to action their obedience uniquely positions them to influence the nations. Adding a column alongside these imperatives, I see Richard Bauckham’s thematic trajectories of “blessing, revelation and rule” mirrored here as well (27).

Table 2.2. Bauckham’s Thematic Trajectories

Bauckham’s Trajectories	Area Affected	Verse	Imperatives
Blessing	Spiritual formation	3	Hear, observe
Revelation	Worship	4-5	Hear, love
Rule	Mission	6-9	Keep, recite, talk, bind, fix, write

Richard Bauckham’s “trajectory of blessing” traces the line from Abraham to all the earth. In Deuteronomy 6:1-3, Moses addresses a new generation entering a new land, calling them to be diligent in their obedience. The “trajectory of God’s revelation” is the path from Israel to all the nations. In Deuteronomy 6:4-5, the *Shema* is calling this new generation to “hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone” (Deut. 6:4). Lastly, in this movement from particular to universal, Bauckham offers his “trajectory of rule” as God’s kingdom over all creation (27). Deuteronomy 6:6-9 calls Israel to keep ever before

themselves, and therefore those encountered along the way, a sign that they live for another.

The movement in verses 1-4 seems to be from the outside in. God speaks, albeit through Moses, and Israel hears. The heart is the “receiver of this word from the outside” (Nelson 14). However, the movement reverses in verses 5-9 and is seen twice. In verse five the movement is from the inside out as the call to Israel is to love God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might. These concentric circles are mirrored in the verses 6-9 as the mission moves from the heart, to the family, to the community.

In an attempt to go deeper, I offer these five points extracted from Moses’ sermon at Moab: Verses 1-2 present a clear call to live into the promise; verse 3 sounds a call to diligence; verse 4 is a call to hear and obey; verses 5-6 underscore Israel’s call to undivided allegiance; and, verses 7-9 illustrate a call to pass on this way of life. This commentary is followed by a closer look at the *Shema* (vv. 4-5) as the centerpiece of the passage.

A Call to Live into the Promise

Embedded within God’s command, delivered by Moses, is a generational promise:

Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the Lord your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. (Deut. 6:1-2)

Variant readings of verse one are noted. The singular “commandment” is seen in the New Revised Standard Version, English Standard Version, and New American Standard Bible; while the plural “commandments” is seen in the New International

Version and King James Version. In the original Hebrew, *mitsvah* means “a command (human or divine); collectively the law” (Strong 71). Technically, both command and commandments are correct. The whole is implied in the collective-singular. The statutes and ordinances are the *fine print* of the law.

The authority of verse 1 is found in 5:31 where God told Moses, “Stand here by me, and *I will tell you* all the commandments, the statutes and the ordinances, that you shall teach them...” (emphasis mine; Weinfeld 327). Moses stood before the people delivering the very words of God.

Duane L. Christensen asserts, that Israel hearing the message delivered by Moses was “the necessary prerequisite for the blessing ‘that you may live and it may be well with you’ [Deut. 5:33] in the Promised Land” (135). Christensen continues, “[While the] primary function of the book of Deuteronomy in the life of ancient Israel [was] religious education... The paradigmatic teacher was Moses, whose primary objective was to instill the ‘fear of YHWH your God’ [Deut. 6:2]” (135). Israel was spiritually formed through the life of a God-fearing mediator. Serving as a conduit of religious education, Moses was faithful to speak what he heard.

Crossing the Jordan to the Promised Land is a dominant theme in Deuteronomy, seen over fifty times. However, the word *occupy* (*yarash*) means much more than simply moving in. It contains within it the necessity to “drive out the previous tenants and possess in their place” (Strong 52). J. G. Millar succinctly states, “In Deuteronomy, to speak of the fulfillment of promise is, in essence to speak of the land” (qtd. in Williamson 154). The land and the promise are inextricably linked.

Hebrew carries such rich word pictures. The imperative to “keep all his decrees and his commandments...” (Deut. 6:2) is direct and understandable yet rather pedantic. The original Hebrew (*shamar*) means “to hedge about as with thorns; guard, protect, attend to” (Strong 118). Therefore, as the boundaries are defined, the commandments keep and protect. Such is the work of *spiritual formation*.

A Call to Diligence

Moses recognized that living as a people of promise required diligence. A sense of entitlement can lead to delays in spiritual formation and detours in realizing the promise:

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you. (Deut. 6:3)

Although the same word *shamar* is translated as *observe* in this verse, the adverb *diligently* provides added emphasis. The call to hear and to observe is not a prescription for passivity. Rather, the imperative to *hear* (*shama*) is given with the expectation that the disciple’s diligent observation leads to willing obedience. (More will be explored on v. 4 in the section on the *Shema*.)

A slight variance between translations leads me to examine word meanings more closely. In the New Revised Standard Version, English Standard Version, and New International Version, verse 3 reads, “that it may *go well* [emphasis mine] with you,” while the New American Standard Bible and King James Version offer, “that it may *be well* [emphasis mine] with you.” In the original language, *yatab*, means “to be or make well” (Strong 49). Therefore, I find both to be accurate and take delight that I do not have

to choose between *well-being* (an inner health, regardless of circumstances) and *well-going* (victory over circumstances, implying God's blessing).

This *well-going* of God's blessing leads Israel into a "land flowing with milk and honey" (Deut. 6:3), "juxtaposed with the deprivations of the desert ..." (Merrill 162).

This idyllic word picture is found only in the Old Testament—primarily in the Pentateuch. According to the *NIV Study Bible*, this phrase provides the "traditional and proverbial description of the hill country of Canaan" (Barker 90). Remembering the faithfulness of the Giver of the promise can lead to *well-being*—even in the desert.

The connective *so that* can be troublesome. This phrase is not an if/then proposition. Christopher J. H. Wright reminds modern-day pilgrims that their obedience in no way *earns* God's blessing:

The final line of 6:3 recalls that the lush future in the land will be theirs because of God's faithfulness to the promise made to their forefathers. It was a gift of grace, but to be appropriated and enjoyed through obedience—a constant biblical pattern in both Testaments. (*Deuteronomy* 93).

The depths of God's grace cannot be plumbed apart from diligent obedience.

A Call to Hear and Obey

"Hear, O Israel..." is found five times in Deuteronomy—all within the second address of Moses (5:1; 6:3, 4; 9:1; 20:3). These words do not appear again until Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:4 in Mark 12:29. Viewing this verse through a liturgical lens, von Rad suggests that "Hear, O Israel!" was a call to worship (McBride 289). *Hear (shama)* is the imperative calling Israel to "take heed and prepare for action" as an obedient servants of YHWH, their God. Eugene H. Merrill goes so far as to suggest that "hearing

without obedience is not to hear at all” (162). In the fourth century, Ambrose suggested that disobedience is a direct result of not hearing:

The law says, “Hear, O Israel, the LORD your God.” It did not say “speak” but “hear.” Eve fell because she said to the man what she had not heard from the LORD her God. The first word from God says to you, “hear.” (Lienhard 283)

Apart from hearing there can be no obedience. When God speaks, the response of the hearer is indicative of their devotion, as their obedience is a benchmark of worship.

Hamilton traces a progression beginning in Deuteronomy 5, finding its climax in 6:4: “one law, one mediator, one LORD” (407). Interestingly, scholars debate little over “one law” or “one mediator,” yet much ink has been spilled over the meaning of “one LORD.” The translations that I examined offer varied interpretations (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Variant Readings of Deuteronomy 6:4

Wording	Translation
Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.	NRSV
Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.	ESV, NIV
Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one.	NASB
Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.	KJV

The primary issues center around verb placement and how the monotheistic claims should be translated, “alone” or “is one.” S. Dean McBride clearly articulates the dilemma:

On the theological level the question is whether we have a declaration of Yahweh’s “oneness,” the indivisibility of his person into semi-autonomous attributes, local manifestations and the like, or a declaration that Israel is to serve Yahweh exclusively, however many other “gods” there may be vying for the nation’s attention. (292)

Deuteronomy 6:4 can be seen as a corporate pledge of allegiance or a creedal affirmation of monotheism. While many opinions are voiced on either side, my reading has identified two strong advocates to anchor this debate: J. Gerald Janzen (“the LORD is one”—monotheism) versus Block (“the LORD is our God”—allegiance).

Janzen declares the immutable character of God, evidenced in his fidelity to the covenant as testimony of his “oneness” (281-82). As P. C. Craigie notes, this passage was a song that Israel already knew. The Israelites raised this monotheistic theme in Exodus after their God, YHWH, could not be stopped by the Egyptian gods: “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?” (169). Truly he is without peer.

However, this declaration, “the LORD is one,” can be found only in Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:29 as Jesus quotes this passage. John Oswalt suggests that whereas monotheism was implicit in the first commandment (“You shall have no other gods before me” [Exod. 20:3]), it is made explicit in the *Shema* (Alexander and Baker 847).

Examining the meaning of *ehad*, Janzen states, “God’s ‘oneness’ is the unity between desire and action, between intention and execution... [T]he divine ‘integrity’ consists in the unswerving dedication with which God pursues the divine purpose...” (287). The gods of the nations are no match for Yahweh who “wills and acts according to his good purpose” (Phil. 2:13). In God, an essential unity exists connecting divine attributes and activity.

Based on eighth century Hebrew inscriptions, Patrick D. Miller recounts multiple, site-specific Yahwehs. Writings were found referencing “Yahweh of Samaria,” “Yahweh of Teman,” and even “Yahweh and his asherah” (*Deuteronomy* 99). Moses is, therefore,

proclaiming both the one God above all rival gods *and* the *oneness* of Yahweh. Miller writes of the immutable nature of God's unity:

To confess, therefore that the Lord is "one" is to claim that the One who receives ultimate allegiance and is the ground of being and value is faithful, consistent, not divided within mind, heart, or self in any way. The reality of God in one time or place is wholly conformable with all other moments and experiences.... (100)

While YHWH transcends time and space, his *oneness* is proclaimed to a specific people, in a specific place, at a specific time.

As Hamilton so aptly states, "[The] concept of monotheism is not to be understood ontologically, but historically.... [A] god who is inconsistent is historically polytheistic" (407). Moses, speaking of the theophany, said, "To you it was shown so that you would acknowledge that the Lord is God; there is no other besides him" (Deut. 4:35). The church's theology is wholly dependent upon God's self-revelation through his word. C. Wright offers, "It is vital to see that, in OT terms, it is Yahweh who defines what monotheism means, not a concept of monotheism that defines how Yahweh should be understood" (*Deuteronomy* 97). Said differently, revelation defines theology.

By way of rebuttal, Block writes, "Janzen's claim that the *Shema* refers to Yahweh's internal integrity is forced, and to render *yhwh 'ehad* as 'Yahweh is one,' in almost any sense is illogical" (200). He goes on to say, "The question addressed here by Moses is not, 'How many is Yahweh?' or 'What is Yahweh like?' but 'Whom will the Israelites worship?'" (208). Moses sounds the warning in an attempt to prevent Israel from succumbing to a sloppy syncretism in the Promised Land. Miller suggests that the real question is not one of monotheism but "whether Israel's loyalties are divided"

(“Most Important Word” 22). God’s invitation and self-revelation call for Israel’s uncompromised participation.

Therefore, the call to *hear* and obey is focused on the One worshipped—“the LORD is one”—*and*, upon this call to commitment—“the LORD is our God.” Both arguments are valid, and a both/and solution does not diminish either side. As Miller writes, “I am more interested here in the meaning and implications of both and regard the ambiguity as desirable and probably unresolvable...” (“Most Important Word” 21). While most scholars prefer *or*, YHWH is a God of *and*.

A Call to Undivided Allegiance

Living into the promise of God through quasi-diligent obedience, the Israelites have seen his faithfulness. Paul explains, “If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. 2:13). In the adjuration to hear and obey the one God, the call to worship is sounded: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart” (Deut. 6:5-6).

The confession of Deuteronomy 6:4 leads to the command of 6:5 (“Most Important Word” 27). Said differently, C. Wright asserts that the commands of God are rooted in the character of God:

Biblical *imperatives* are characteristically founded on biblical *indicatives*.... [T]he indicative of God’s grace comes before and is the foundation and authority [Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone] for the imperative of the law and responsive obedience. [You shall love your God with all...]” (original emphasis; *Mission* 59)

Knowledge of Yahweh's undivided nature calls for a response of undivided allegiance—heart, soul, and might. Interestingly, Wright contends, “[B]iblical monotheism leads to doxology” (132). To love without reserve is to be a living doxology.

While Miller states that using the term *love* to define relationship to God is a Deuteronomic distinctive (*Deuteronomy* 101); Craigie contends, “[This] call to love is the central theme of the whole book of Deuteronomy” (169). Appearing first in Deuteronomy, “love the Lord your God” is found seven times (6:5; 11:1, 13, 22; 19:9; 30:16, 20). The remainder of the Bible finds the phrase only five more times: twice in Joshua and once in each synoptic as a quote from Deuteronomy 6:5.

Israel's loving of God was expressed not in feelings or emotions but in obedience and loyalty—“exclusive devotion” (Weinfeld 351). As William Moran writes, “This is a love that can be commanded” (qtd. in R. Wright 581). To love God is to serve God.

Such undivided allegiance demands *all*, not some. The Hebrew word *kol* means, literally, “the whole, all, any or every; everyone, everyplace, everything” (Strong 55). The all-inclusive nature of the word reveals the expected exclusivity. If God is given everything, nothing can remain for rival gods. Block contends that the division of humankind into three constituent elements—heart, soul, and might—far from being a psychological treatise, is an “emphatic reinforcement of absolute singularity of devotion to Yahweh as called for by the *Shema*” (Block 202). The call is for *all*, not two out of three. Josiah is the only king credited with such an undivided allegiance:

Before him [Josiah] there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him. (2 Kings 23:25)

Obviously the *heart* mentioned in this passage is not the organ that pumps blood through the body, nor is it the seat of the emotions. James K. Bruckner brings clarity as he writes, “*Lebab* is the seat of decision-making, the will, and understanding. It is the seat of mental-emotional well-being. It can be conceived as the *integration* of a person’s intelligence and passion. It speaks to the realm of the human will” (original emphasis; 6). As the center of one’s being, the heart is the habitation of all unseen: mind, emotions, and will.

If this triadic nature of heart, soul, and might were viewed as concentric circles, the soul would be the middle circle, containing the heart at the center. The literal meaning of *nepesh* is a breathing creature, vitality (Strong 80). C. Wright succinctly states, “[Soul] means the life of each individual, and applies to animals as much as humans” (*Deuteronomy* 99). To love God with *all one’s soul* meant laying down one’s life for this new king. Moshe Weinfeld connects the Jewish martyrological tradition with the *Shema* writing: “Jewish martyrs died with the words of *Shema* on their lips: ‘you shall love YHWH ... with all your soul,’ even if it means that he takes your life” (352). In light of these distinctions, one could assert that David’s song of praise, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name” (Ps. 103), moves from the soul into the heart.

The Hebrew word *meod* translated as *might* (*strength* in several translations) is a bit of a conundrum. Used in Deuteronomy 6:5 as a noun, this word is used everywhere else as an adverb meaning *greatly, exceedingly*. While Weinfeld suggests that “the implication of ‘might’ is two-fold: ability (i.e., power and strength), and means (i.e., wealth)” (339), C. Wright offers a creative literal translation: “with all your very-

muchness” (*Deuteronomy* 99). The addition of *might* at the end of this triad transposes the entire statement into a superlative. As McBride states, “*Meod* evokes the fullest ‘capacity’ of loving obedience to Yahweh which the whole person can muster” (304). Israel is challenged to worship YHWH, the God above all gods, with a love above all loves.

In Deuteronomy 6:6 Moses calls Israel to “keep these words ... in your heart.” McBride takes us back to verse 4 as he writes, “[T]hrough the act of hearing the demands of God are internalized or, in the words chosen by Jeremiah (31:33), ‘inscribed upon the heart...’” (302). To allow these words to sink into one’s heart takes time. One finds strength by soaking in “these words”—meditating, contemplating, and “thinking on these things” (Phil. 4:8). Moses knew such a response would not happen without keeping the commands ever before them.

A Call to Pass On This Way of Life

God, through Moses, called Israel to a monotheistic confession of undivided allegiance, rooted in loving obedience. Diligently hearing and obeying this God of promise was an expectation for succeeding generations:

Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut. 6:7-9)

Moses offers several concrete ways for Israel to keep the commands before them: recite (v. 7), talk (v. 7), bind (v. 8), fix (v. 8), and write (v. 9). The repeated use of *them* (twice in v. 7, twice in v. 8, and once in v. 9) refers back to verse 6: *Shema* and commandments. As noted earlier, the movement is centrifugal—away from the center. Beginning in the heart (v. 6), the movement is to the family (v. 7), and the community (vv. 8-9). This

outward motion illustrates Bauckham's movement of mission "from the particular to the universal" (46).

Whereas *lamad* in verse 1 means to teach, *shanan* (keep) in verse 2 is intensified, meaning to recite—"inculcate, teach diligently" (Strong 119). Weinfeld suggests that *lamad* could refer to "a rule of life" (Weinfeld 332). This command informs the church's understanding of such passages as, "It shall serve for you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that *the teaching of the Lord may be on your lips*; for with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt" (emphasis mine; Exod. 13:9). Framing verse 7 one sees the impetus of the Jewish ritual recitation of the *Shema* in the morning and evening: "Recite them [these words] . . . when you lie down and when you rise." At least two times per day these words were on the lips of the devout.

The saying, "what possesses the heart wags the tongue" (Ford and Deasley 536), is true. Conversely, what one repeatedly says affects the heart. Moses' desire that the heart be saturated in "these words" necessitated repetition. The Latin maxim from the fifth-century church, *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* means that what disciples say becomes what they believe, which becomes how they live. Even mindless repetition wears a path in one's belief system. Christensen declares, "Nothing is more important to the future of God's people than the communication of 'these words'" (142). As people worship, so they will live.

Verses 8-9 present some practices foreign to twenty-first-century culture: *phylacteries*—small leather boxes containing *these words* attached to the left arm and forehead, and *mezuzots*—small wooden boxes containing *these words* attached to a home's doorframe or gate. Addressing the wearing of *phylacteries*, Miller writes, "The

placing of them upon one's body is seen as a concomitant action to placing them on the heart; inward appropriation and external symbol are held closely together" (*Deuteronomy* 104). The Pharisees made these objects into *spiritual merit badges* as they grew in size and beauty, leading to a caricature of holiness through self-aggrandizement.

While Jewish culture reads verses 8-9 literally, some support a figurative reading of such texts: Deuteronomy 11:18-19; Exodus 13:9-16; Proverbs 3:3, 6:21, 7:3; and Song of Solomon 8:6 (Barker 254). Craigie suggests that whereas the *phylacteries* or *mezuzots* were tangible objects, the words were carried in the lives of the followers:

Whether taken literally or metaphorically, the signs described in vv. 8-9 indicate that the individual (v. 8), his home, and his community (v. 9) were to be distinguished in the character by obedience to the commandments as a response of love for God. (171)

The message of Moses called the Israelites to pass on this lifestyle of loving obedience before the people in tangible ways.

The *Shema*—A Closer Look

As Deuteronomy 5:6-21 is a restatement of the law given in Exodus 20:2-17, the *Shema* is an abbreviated restatement of Deuteronomy 5:6-21—a recapitulation of the recapitulation. Philip Schaff declares these verses to be the first creed in the Bible: "In the Old Testament the fundamental doctrine of Monotheism is placed as a command at the head of the Decalogue, Exodus 20:2-3, and put in the form of a dogma, Deuteronomy 6:4" (3). The shortened form of the *Shema* put it on the lips of the people.

This creedal statement is significant in Jewish life and culture. McBride provides an excellent overview of the historical development:

The liturgy associated with daily Temple sacrifice included the reading of four biblical passages which are separately entitled: the Decalogue, the *Shema* [Deut. 6:4; 6:4-5; 6:4-9], Deuteronomy 11:13-21, and Numbers

15:37-41.... When the public recitation of the Decalogue was discontinued sometime during the first century A.D., the *Shema* headed the liturgy and, in accord with the ancient practice of incipit titling, gave its name to the whole. (275-76)

Supposedly the *Shema* was “recited antiphonally in the time of Trajan (c. 53-117)”

(Weinfeld 353). The liturgical call and response would be

Leader: Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God;

People: The LORD alone.

Though the pagan gods of the day had similar hymnic-liturgical proclamations, the nature of the *Shema* is unique as it boldly declares YHWH, the God of Israel, to be the only true God. To give voice to such a claim was to assume the “yoke of the kingdom,” leading one to take up the “yoke of the commandments” (McBride 275; Weinfeld 350).

Various iterations of the *Shema* have been discovered. As F. W. Beare notes, “[T]he Shema was recited everyday, morning and evening, and was used frequently in the liturgy; but evidently, as with the Lord’s Prayer, frequency of repetition did not ensure uniformity in wording” (qtd. in P. Foster 321). Robert F. Shedinger’s examination of the second century writings by Justin Martyr finds the triadic heart, soul, and might without the soul. Shedinger considers the significance of such an omission:

It is still entirely possible that the medieval manuscript of Justin’s work does preserve an authentic second-century reading, while the manuscripts of the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and the Gospels all preserve later, corrupted forms of the *Shema*. (162)

Obviously the Gospels present us with several variant readings: Matthew 22:37—heart, soul, *mind*; Mark 12:30—heart, soul, *mind*, strength; Luke 10:27—heart, soul, strength, *mind*. The Greek influence presents a heart-mind dichotomy. Bruckner provides an excellent table comparing original language from the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint,

Mark, and Luke. He proposes that these words “provide us with an interior geography...”

(4). Pauline allusions are numerous (e.g., Rom. 3; 1 Cor. 6:17; 8:6), though no direct quotations are found.

In the Old Testament, the primary echo of the *Shema* is Zechariah 14:9.

Resonating with Bauckham’s “trajectory of God’s revelation” from Israel to the nations (27), Block writes of the promised monotheistic worship among the nations:

After almost a thousand years of history in which the *Shema* proved to be “more honored in the breach than in the observance,” after the horrors of destruction and exile,... we hear [from Zechariah 14:9], “Yahweh will be king over the whole earth. On that day Yahweh will be the [the only] one, and his name the only name.” (208-09)

The monotheistic echoes of *Shema* continued to call Israel to hear and know that they serve the one true God.

The debate of personal versus propositional truth is addressed squarely in the *Shema*. C. Wright asserts, “[T]he truth in human experience is *both propositional and personal*.... Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is one whole sentence; nothing could be more ‘propositional’ than 6:4 and nothing more ‘personal’ than 6:5” (*Deuteronomy* 95).

Therefore, the movement is from the outside in. Whereas the propositional truth is heard by the masses, the individual applies the personal truth—albeit in community.

In summation, I offer these insightful words of Patrick D. Miller:

For the oneness of the reality that grounds existence, God is what keeps life from being chaotic and divided beyond the limits of human management. In the face of the multiple pulls and dimensions of human life and experience, human existence is held together and in order by that one and absolute object of our allegiance and loyalty. We do not find conflicting claims on our ultimate allegiance, only on secondary interests and loyalties. It is possible to deal with these secondary claims if we have a sense that our ultimate and full allegiance is directed toward one alone. *The demand of the Shema is, therefore, finally not just a demand. It is also what makes human life possible.* All claims on human life are relativized

and subsumed within the one total claim of God so that *the demand is ultimately the gift of grace*. (emphasis mine; *Deuteronomy* 104)

Without a sense of center, life makes no sense. God has revealed to his people that he alone occupies that center. Graciously, the *Shema* serves as a tether to the divine center.

The Jesus Creed

Pious Jews would recite the *Shema* two to three times per day (Krouse 490; Hirsch and Hirsch 27). Therefore, one can reason that Jesus learned the *Shema* as a child in his home (McKnight, *Jesus Creed* 90). However, debate continues among scholars as to the usage of this confession among the early Christians. Joachim Jeremias proposes that the Lord's Prayer supplanted the *Shema* in ritual worship, whereas Birger Gerhardsson believes the *Shema* continued on in the liturgy as a renewed historical thread (Krouse 488).

Jesus' restatement of the *Shema* in the New Testament brings two major shifts: loving others *and* God, plus a new understanding that loving God means following Jesus (McKnight, *Jesus Creed* 11). The explicit inclusion of loving others addresses the tendency of religious people to become so focused on the vertical relationship that they neglect the horizontal. The call to discipleship is a call to love one's neighbor (Hirsch and Hirsch 63).

Clearly this creedal revision is reflective of the life and ministry of Jesus, who said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). The Greatest Commandment in no way abolishes the *Shema*; rather, it reveals the way in which it may be fulfilled—in Christ. Jesus tells his followers the way to love God with every fiber of their being (i.e., heart, soul, mind, and strength) is to follow him and love their neighbor. Simply put, in loving others one is

spiritually formed. (McKnight, *Jesus Creed* 9). This revision of the *Shema* is a succinct description of “what true worship means” and the “disciple’s basic orientation to the world” (Hirsch and Hirsch 63).

In Judaism the monotheistic rhetoric of the *Shema* stands in opposition to the Trinitarian view of the Godhead and, therefore, the divinity of Christ. For the Christian, the “fundamental truth” of the *Shema* is incarnated in Jesus Christ, while the “fundamental duty” of the *Shema* is made possible by his Holy Spirit (Craigie 168).

By forsaking all rivals, his Spirit is loosed in surrendered hearts. Apart from the sanctifying power of his Holy Spirit, believers have no hope of becoming this conduit of holy love. However, Paul writes, “Hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5). Surrendering to Jesus reveals the disciples’ love for God. All genuine love involves surrender of heart, soul, mind, and strength. Therein, identities are transformed (McKnight, *Jesus Creed* 202-04).

Curriculum Overview

Everyone worships. Many pursue ecstatic experiences, preferring the gifts to the Giver. Sadly, some substitute religion for relationship, modeling an individualistic, self-referenced piety. Still others give themselves to an ideology or cause in their quest for meaning, bowing to a lesser god. However, neither passion, nor piety, nor practices will sate the hunger for being rightly related to God in worship.

Christian worship is decidedly distinctive in that God is both the object and the subject of worship (Webber, “God”), giving *more than* answers (Eph. 3:20-21).

Paradoxically, the transcendent God is immanent in worship, giving himself (Gal. 1:3-5;

Eph. 5:1-2; Phil. 2:1-11). To provide structure for the MM class as Christian worship was examined, I constructed this working definition: Christian worship is faith in the Triune God, “expressing itself in adoration and obedience” (D. Peterson 283), enacted in community as a divine “call and response” (Dyrness 2), and comprised of invitation, revelation, participation, formation, contextualization, incarnation, and integration. These seven constituent elements as seen through the lens of the *Jesus Creed* provide the outline for the Master of Ministry class (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Seven Elements from the Jesus Creed

Passage	Element
Hear, O Israel	Invitation
The Lord our God, the Lord is one	Revelation
You shall love the Lord your God	Participation
With all your heart, soul, mind, and strength	Formation
You shall love your neighbor	Contextualization
As yourself	Incarnation
There is no greater commandment	Integration

Worship as Invitation

The invitation to worship is God’s divine initiative. He wants all to join in the perichoretic dance of the Trinity that has been going on since before time began. The self-deferential nature of this relationship defines the Godhead. Through the lens of John’s gospel, Mark Shaw articulates the Triune coalescence as “full equality, glad submission, joyful intimacy, and mutual deference” (qtd. in Seamands 35). The Trinity ever live to bring honor and glory to the other. Therefore, worship is not predicated on

the creation of humankind (Hill). The preexistence of worship denotes all are joining a dance in progress. One's participation is elicited by God's prevenient grace.

When Christians gather on Sunday morning, the invitation is to *join* the heavenly worship, not create it. This Trinitarian understanding reflected in the liturgy is one of the basic tenets of worship (Webber, *Ancient Future Worship* 31-32). Marva Dawn finds accessible "on ramps" provided in the liturgy:

[B]y God's gracious invitation and Christ's intercession and the Spirit's enabling we are welcomed to learn of the Trinity through the biblical narratives passed on by faithful witnesses. Gathered in the community of saints, we are formed by the truth taught in worship's music and word to be Church so that out of our Christian character will flow the witness of our words and deeds for the sake of the world. (69)

Sadly, in the narcissistic culture of the twenty-first-century, the self-referenced worshiper presumes to invite God into his or her orbit, saying in essence, "Here I am. Come into my presence. Bless me." Nevertheless, God is the initiator.

Worship as Revelation

God's invitation is evident as the *Shema* begins with the admonition to hear. Gathered as his people, listening precedes response (Ault 183). Proverbs says, "If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame" (18:13), yet God's invitation to hear is a promise that he will speak. The proclamation that YHWH is the one true God follows the admonition to hear. In this monotheistic revelation, the impotence of idols and rival gods is unmasked (Hirsch and Hirsch 63, 76).

I have always heard, "If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus." The transcendent Triune God is revealed as the immanent Christ—Emmanuel. Though Christian worship is Trinitarian, Christ is the centerpiece of the gathering. Believers worship the Father, *through the Son*, in the Holy Spirit. As such, Christ is the mediator

and leading worshiper before the Father. Apart from this Trinitarian understanding, worship reflects a functional Unitarianism, and there is no access to the Father (Torrance 20).

The early Church understood the necessity of a Christology rooted in the Trinity. The pervasive Christological heresies facing the early Church generally understood the divine nature of Christ to usurp his humanity. The Council at Chalcedon (AD 451) crafted a creed declaring Christ's two natures to be "unmixed, unchanged, undivided, and inseparable" (Walton 28).

Jesus was neither a spiritual being having a human experience, nor a human being having a spiritual experience. He was fully God *and* fully man—deity embodied. His resurrection was a physical resurrection as was his Ascension. Therefore, his scarred body is leading worship in the presence of the Father. Visualizing the worshipping Christ provides deeper insight into the believer's worship of the Father, *through the Son*, in the Holy Spirit.

John's experience on the Isle of Patmos perfectly illustrates this gateway to worship—God's invitation and revelation. After addressing the seven churches, Revelation 4:1 reads, "After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, '*Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this*'" (emphasis mine; Kennedy). Responding in obedience, John is illumined by the Spirit, catching a glimpse of the exalted One upon his throne.

By his Holy Spirit, God is revealed, and his presence is experienced in Christian worship gatherings. However, as Lester Ruth observes, attenders come with different

expectations. While some expect to experience God in the music, others hear him in the word (Scripture reading and preaching), and others sense him in the Lord's Supper ("Rose" 104).

Throughout the gospels, Jesus said, "Whoever has ears, let them hear." As with ancient Israel, so with the Church today—the call is to hear. God is revealed in the midst of his people.

Worship as Participation

As stated previously, worship is a call and a response, beginning and ending with God (Dyrness 2). Paul's doxology proclaims, "For *from him and through him and to him are all things*. To him be the glory for ever. Amen" (emphasis mine; Rom. 11:36). God's divine initiative elicits the disciple's participation *with* Christ in worship.

One's response to God's invitation and revelation, is found in the liturgy. As James B. Torrance so aptly states, "Whatever else worship is, it is our liturgical amen to the worship of Christ" (14). Literally, *leitourgia* means the work of the people. Worshipers are all to be active participants. Worship is easily experienced vicariously through the work of the professionals on the platform. However, "people who come into this experience cannot remain passive or indifferent. The spiritual space of worship *puts them in play*" (emphasis mine; Dyrness 5). As such, they become "participant learners" (Ault 177).

To many, liturgy is associated with formal churches, complete with candles, bells, and smells. Donald E. Saliers writes, "Liturgy is not simply doctrine well dressed and ornamented" (qtd. in Anderson and Morrill 6); rather, it provides the overall shape with specific points of engagement in worship gatherings. As John D. Witvliet says,

“Liturgical participation quietly but powerfully sculpts the soul” (“The Cumulative Power” 52). Though the liturgical shape is not prescribed in the Free Church or Pentecostal traditions, the order naturally gravitates toward a familiar formula (Hirsch and Hirsch 86). Every church has a liturgy.

Nancy Ault suggests, liturgy can be a reflection of postmodern fragmentation or consumerism (176). However, the purpose of the liturgy is not to recycle the life-consuming story of twenty-first-century culture but to proclaim the life-giving alternative story of God. Even in telling his story, the liturgy can be self-absorbed. Lester Ruth asks, “Are we a ‘personal-story church’ or a ‘cosmic-story church’?” (“Rose” 100). The Church’s liturgy is to be centered in God’s story of creation, fall, redemption, and re-creation—not self-improvement. Christian worship gatherings are to be shaped by the rhythm of the liturgical year—not by the civic calendar, school calendar, or greeting card companies.

Obviously, the church must be aware of the surrounding culture. However, beginning with a self-referenced liturgy, worship is reduced to wishful thinking. N. T. Wright in his essay “Freedom and Framework, Spirit and Truth: Recovering Biblical Worship” offers the hopeful alternative:

Christian liturgy is itself an act of humility, of response, of obedience... And the fact of using a liturgy which is not of our own making, which God’s initiative is built into the very structure, in which *we share the wisdom and prayer of previous generations and other cultures, is itself a sign of humility, a sign that we know we are responding to God’s grace, not taking the initiative ourselves.* (emphasis mine; 188)

Incorporating ancient liturgies or cross-cultural expressions of faith serve to remind the worshipping community that the Church is so much bigger than their local gathering.

This participation exemplifies Martin Luther's *priesthood of believers*; this engagement illustrates Robert E. Webber's "worship does God's story" (*Ancient Future Worship* 29) as each worshiper takes their place in the narrative. Jeremy Begbie's musical example of "the rhyming of the past and the future through the present" (35) illuminates the mystery of liturgy. Remembering the past and anticipating the future, the aim of the liturgist "must be to create the possibility for every person present to become actively engaged in the [present] encounter with God" (Dawn 200). In God's wisdom, this liturgical encounter locates the believer in time and space, in a particular community (Ault 176; Boone 18-19).

In communal gatherings disciples participate in the worship of God by singing. However, for some attendees, music is a point of disconnect, leading them to come thirty minutes late each week, while for others the music defines their worship experience. John Wesley's "Rules for Singing" give insight into the prominence of congregational singing in the Wesleyan tradition (Bible 2). Throughout God's word one sees the call to sing (Exod. 15; 1 Chron. 16:23; Ps. 96; Ps. 149; Isa. 42:10; Jer. 20:13). Pastor Rich Nathan of Columbus Vineyard says, "We sing because God commands it—and he is worthy!" While not the sum of the worshiper's participation in the service, singing is, nonetheless, an essential element.

In communal worship the believers participate through the readings (Scriptures, creeds, or liturgies), testimonies, and offerings (Ps. 96:7-8). They participate in the passing of the peace, the prayers, and communion. They participate as active listeners to the sermon, and all of these acts of worship are done *together*.

Therefore, liturgical participation “cannot be private, but it *must* be personal, both personal *and* communal. Because it is *our* experience it is also *my* experience.... [The liturgy] must elicit this kind of active participation, this kind of desire for formation” (original emphasis; Hovda 138). Though it may sound oxymoronic, these points of ritual engagement can be winsome, drawing the worshiper in. The believer’s response to God’s invitation and revelation is to participate fully.

Worship as Formation

People are formed by the architecture and proxemics of the worship space. In the twenty-first-century church, function is generally given priority over aesthetic considerations, so beauty is seen as poor stewardship. The design of the chancel informs the worshiper as to whether the word or the sacraments are seen as primary. The presence or absence of art, technology, banners, and flags in the worship area tacitly train those attending in establishing worship mores.

Bound by space and time, all are influenced by the rhythms of time. Sacred rhythms are seen in the liturgical calendar. The macro-view reveals two seasons: redemption (sacred time—Advent to Pentecost) and response (ordinary time—Pentecost to Advent). Those seasons correspond to the “premise and the response of the *Jesus Creed*: God’s love for us (Sacred Time) and our love for God and others (Ordinary Time)” (McKnight, *Jesus Creed* 267). Formation occurs in remembering the liturgical year and perhaps using a lectionary tool to ensure a complete view of the Scriptures.

The credal, confessional, and communal nature of the liturgy shapes the worship of the church, molding its congregants into the image of Christ. Worshipers are, therefore, formed corporately and individually. Dawn, reflecting on 2 Corinthians 3:18,

observes, “The more we look at God, the more we become like God” (117). A. W. Tozer calls this singular focus the “gaze of the soul” (85-98). However, God is more than the object of worship; he is also the subject of worship as Robert Webber notes:

Because God is the subject who acts upon me in worship, my participation is not reduced to verbal response or to singing. Rather, my participation is living in the pattern of the one who is revealed in worship. God as the subject of worship acts through the truth of Christ proclaimed and *enacted in worship to form me by the Spirit of God* to live out the union I have with Jesus by calling me to die to sin and to live in the resurrection. Worship forms me and transforms my life to do God’s purpose in this life in this world, to the glory of God who created me in the first place, and re-created me and the whole community of faith to be the people of his own glory in this world now, and in the life of the world to come, forever. (emphasis mine; *Divine Embrace* 238-239)

The work of the Spirit is paramount in this matter of formation. The objectified, manageable deity of my own making has been consumed in the fire of the Holy Spirit and, like Isaiah, “I am undone” (Isa. 6:5 KJV). As the subject of worship, God is an active participant.

The Latin maxim, *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* asserts that what comes from the worshiper’s mouth (what they say, pray, or sing) becomes what they believe, which charts the course for how they live their lives. The songs of worship are critical to the disciples’ formation as they are “our sung creeds,” popularizing theology (Ault 183). The repetition in the liturgy is formational. However, a mindless incantation produces a topiary holiness—shaping the outside, while the inside remains unchanged. Whereas piety leads to bondage and legalism, God’s Holy Spirit brings freedom and transformation.

Understanding the aim of spiritual formation to be likeness, not mere imitation (Mulholland, “Incarnating the Word”), one must learn the steps by heart before joining

the perichoretic dance. The worshiper is a lifelong learner of the two-step: experience, understanding, experience, and understanding. While this formational two-step demands cooperation on the part of the worshiper, the Spirit leads. Robert Taft suggests that in the liturgy “we remember, and remembering we celebrate and celebrating we become what we do. *The dancer dancing is the dance*” (emphasis mine; 272). The believer is formed in worship through participation.

Traversing these roads can be daunting, and worshipers can easily find themselves, or their community, in the ditch on either side of the road. Thankfully, others have passed this way before. The testimonies of the saints, living or dead, are assets in formation. These reminders of God’s faithfulness can enrich the communal worship.

Historically, experience preceded understanding in the early Church as seen in Augustine’s three-tiered catechism. The *seekers* would attend the gatherings on the Lord’s Day to hear the preached word. However, they would be dismissed before weekly communion. If they chose to become disciples, a rigorous Lenten catechetical process ensued (e.g., memorizing Psalms, The Apostles’ Creed, and The Lord’s Prayer and renouncing Satan.). At the dawn of Easter, the *petitioners* (also known as *kneelers*) were baptized, reenacting the rising of Jesus on this Day of Resurrection. Afterwards, the white-robed *risen* receive their first communion. The mystagogical teachings (e.g., explaining the deeper truths of the sacraments) followed the sacramental experience for the *faithful* (Blevins “Missional Catechesis” 144-45).

Whereas experience precedes understanding, practices precede experience. Spiritual formation requires the participation of the disciple. Alvin Dueck speaks of “worship as practice” (238) and James K. A. Smith writes, “We are made to be such

people by our immersion in the material practices of Christian worship” (33). While worshipers mature in their faith through engaging in spiritual practices (e.g., reciting the creed), the practices are primarily for the benefit of the community (Dyrness 110).

Alan Hirsch contrasted the Hellenistic approach of “thinking your way to a new way of acting” with the Hebraic approach of “acting your way to a new way of thinking” (“Continuing Education”). My understanding of formation in worship is clearly the Hebraic path.

As participant learners, the rituals, songs, symbols, gestures, stories, and priorities of the collective are assimilated both consciously and unconsciously (Ault 179). Formation originates in the *doing*, as experience precedes understanding.

Worship as Contextualization

The movement from formation to incarnation requires a contextual transition. Years ago I was part of a worship team that provided music for a large international youth gathering in Mexico. The team sang in several languages, but I only speak English and a little French. The songs were all memorized and presented. However, for me it was a rote exercise of repeating nonsense syllables. Without understanding the lyrics presented, embodiment or incarnation of the message was greatly impeded, yet each heard the Good News in their own language.

Since Pentecost the message of Christ has been translatable, unlike the Hebrew of Judaism and Arabic of Islam. Ostensibly, contextualization is more than a matter of linguistics. The cultural language of Boston is very different than that of Birmingham or Boise—and more so in Bangkok, Barcelona, or Beirut. The music, stories, dress, and architecture are literally and figuratively worlds apart:

[W]hile it must not conform itself to this world, worship has always to situate itself within that world, finding its voice in the language of the day and in its genuine spiritual longings, even as it presents a rhetorical vision of an alternative world that God in Christ is bringing into being. (Dyrness 16)

Kathleen Norris writes that while the vernacular can support the weightier words of worship, the colloquial cannot (308). Navigating these waters can be difficult, particularly in a unfamiliar culture. However, Webber's method of identifying the elements of worship—content, structure, style (*Worship: Old and New* 149-51)—reminds one of the nonnegotiable core of Christian worship. Regardless of the diversity of a “culturally embodied” liturgy, unity is found because of the unchanging content—God's story (Saliers 211).

Though counter-intuitive, in order to speak to the margins, believers must nurture their connection to the center. At the center is the person of Jesus Christ, not a liturgy or an idealized experience of worship. Whereas Jesus is always pushing boundaries outward toward contextualization, the tendency of the church is to remain the same, thereby growing exponentially irrelevant (e.g., pre-Vatican II Masses in Latin or much of the pre-twentieth-century musical offerings). Reaffirming the words of Norris, contextualization calls worshipers to embrace the vernacular and eschew the colloquial. Achieving this balance is hard work, and mistakes will be made. If worship is to be missional, then contextualization must make worship a haven of hospitality.

Mark Pierson reimagines the worship leader as a curator, arranging the worship experience in a way to maximize impact. He suggests, “The context is more important than content when it comes to worship” (145). While context matters, to value relevance over content is to open the door to weak theology, syncretism, or heresy. Pierson admits

that he has overstated the argument and later says, “The content, the story, is what makes our worship Christian” (146). However, content cannot be considered alone, lest the public reading of the Scriptures be in the original languages. The challenge is to present the content faithfully in a contextually appropriate manner.

In this transitional movement, one’s eyes are opened to the necessity of embodying the gospel; application will no longer suffice. Contextualization will not occur apart from repentant leaders of worship—musicians and pastors. Any who think that culture is neutral have always been part of the dominant culture (Guder 113). As worship leaders bow in humility, the Spirit illumines their incarnate example.

Worship as Incarnation

In this postmodern milieu, believers are called to remember (*anamnesis*), retelling the stories of God’s deliverance in Christ. *His story* supplies the narrative of Christian worship. As such, *anticipation* of the fulfillment of God’s promised reconciliation of all things creates a people of hope leaning into his proleptic kingdom.

Worshippers come to the table and there proclaim the mystery of their faith: “Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again!” (*Book of Common Prayer* 363). Purportedly Jarislov Pelikan says, “If Christ is risen, nothing else matters! If Christ is not risen, nothing else matters!” (qtd. in Ruth, “Biblical Foundations”). His resurrection is the hinge of history. If he does not live, Christians are people without hope and death is inevitable. If he lives, Christians live abundantly, eternally.

Echoing Pentecost, the centripetal force of worship draws believers to his table, just as the centrifugal force of worship sends believers from his table. Dawn beautifully articulates this outward movement: “We cannot keep our generous God as our Infinite

Center without wanting our neighbors to be immersed in his opulent splendor, too” (323). From the center believers move outward as an embodiment of worship.

On a recent vacation, my wife and I visited an Episcopal church in Jacksonville, Florida. I recall the pastor comparing physical food to the spiritual food of the Eucharist. While the physical food ingested by the body becomes part of the individual, each person becomes part of the spiritual food eaten from his table. Addressing fifth century catechumens, Augustine said, “[B]e what you see, and receive what you are.... If you receive worthily, you are what you have received” (qtd. in Murphy 141). Spiritually, the communicant is enfolded into the Body partaken. As believers partake frequently, they “become the story” (Dyrness 107).

The mystery proclaimed in Colossians 1 is that as Christ is in believers, they are in Christ. John 15 states that if they remain in him, he remains in them. Kenneth C. Ulmer writes, “Christ working in us produces worship that works out of us” (“Transformational Worship” 186). As previously mentioned, the primary calling as followers of Christ is to be *in Christ* for the sake of the world. Only secondarily are disciples called to be in the world for Christ (Mulholland, “Incarnating the Word”).

Gordon Lathrop recalls a sermon, in which the pastor referred to the Sunday school song, “Into my heart, into my heart, Come into my heart, Lord Jesus”:

He will come, as he promises. But when he comes, he will bring with him all those who belong to him. That is a great crowd. If it is truly Christ who comes, your heart will be filled with all the little and needy ones of the earth. Such is always the outward turn of Christian mission. (202)

As he is risen to reign, so his disciples are risen to serve. Don E. Saliers says, “To join Christ in his ongoing prayer for the world is to be plunged more deeply into the densities of social reality, not to be taken out of them” (qtd. in Byars 101). This embodied worship

is “participation in willing God’s will” (Thompson 10), which is the believer’s reasonable worship (Rom. 12). Therefore, as disciples live incarnationally their worship no longer ends at noon on Sunday:

Worship is nothing more nor less than love on its knees before the beloved; just as mission is love on its feet to serve the beloved—and just as the Eucharist, as the climax of worship, is love embracing the beloved and so being strengthened for service. (N. Wright, *For All God’s Worth* 9)

Possessed of an eschatological hope and empowered by his Spirit, worshipers embrace this Eucharistic life. In Jesus’ hands the believer becomes bread for a dying world—taken, blessed, broken, and given.

Worship as Integration

As the pastor pronounces the blessing, many leave and return to the *real world*. The pervasive busyness leads to a sense of fragmentation. Henri J. M. Nouwen characterizes one’s life as “filled but unfulfilled,” necessitating a movement from “the many things to the one thing” (Nouwen 29, 42). That seemingly elusive “one thing,” that singular longing, can be found in worship. In Old Testament parlance, the way to *shalom* (peace) is the path of *Shema* (loving God above all else). Loving God with heart, soul, mind, and strength is a call to integration (N. Wright, “Freedom” 188).

Jesus told his disciples that their love for God was shown by how they loved their neighbor (Matt. 22:37-40). Any movement contrary this call to embodied worship is a movement toward *disintegration*. Unwittingly, the church through over-programming and shifting emphases has contributed to disintegration. Disciples get so busy doing good things that they neglect the main thing: being *in Christ* for the world, which is the essence of worship. Webber writes, “Our spiritual life then, is union with God fulfilled in a life of contemplation and participation in God’s vision for life in this world. *Contemplation and*

participation, it turns out is our worship of God” (emphasis mine; *Divine Embrace* 16).

As contemplation leads to participation, so worship leads to mission.

Traditionally, a worship service ends with a blessing/benediction. This *sending* is the point of integration. As the pastor pronounces the blessing, “we depart to serve under His [God’s] smile and favor, invigorated by His Spirit” (Boone 64). The God of the universe, creator, sustainer, and redeemer (Col. 1), invites all to *join* him in worship, *join* him in prayer, and *join* him in mission.

Toward Integration

Departing from the weekly gathering, worshipers are faced with two options: to leave their worship cloistered in this holy space or to carry their worship across the threshold and into the world. N. T. Wright challenges the worshiper to continue in worship, writing, “True worship is not world-denying, but world-changing” (“Freedom” 189). Those living a lifestyle of worship see the integration of community (Gal 3:28) and the whole creation (Rev. 4-5; Rom. 8).

Incarnational Ministry—A Three-Legged Stool

Addressing the interplay of worship, mission, and spiritual formation is paramount in this research. As a pastor, worship leader, director of Christian education, or a missionary, I must recognize the relationship of these elements. Jesus modeled and taught this holistic ministry.

Reciting the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-5) and Leviticus 19:18, Jesus presented what is commonly called the Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:30-31). This commandment and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) offer the matrix in which incarnational ministry takes place.

From the Greatest Commandment, the loving of God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength is a clarion call to full devotion and absolute obedience. Concentrating on Jesus' incarnational mandate, "Love your neighbor as yourself," I see the priorities of a disciple as loving God (worship), loving neighbor (mission), and loving self enough to look beyond self (formation).

I recognize loving God to be *worship, mission, and formation* and loving neighbor to be *worship, mission, and formation*. Growth in grace as disciples give themselves in love (*kenotic* Christlike love) is *worship, mission, and formation*. The divisions are artificial as persons are one in essence. However, considering the many parts may serve to identify a potential holistic balance.

By adding the Great Commission into this matrix, I believe a sense of movement, yet unity, is evidenced. The Greatest Commandment to love God completely is the essence of devotion to him as seen in the *Shema*. As Mulholland suggests, the second being like the first, should be translated, "Another way to say the same thing is, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (*Shaped by the Word* 29). Consequently, worship *must* move one to mission (see Figure 2.1).

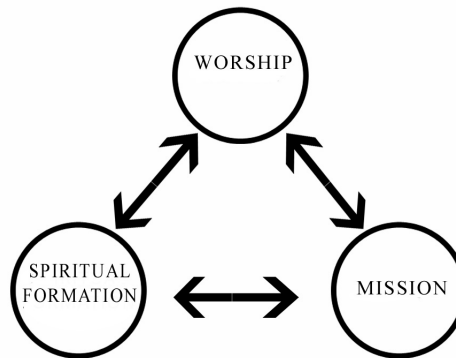


Figure 2.1. The Relationship among worship, mission, and spiritual formation.

Interestingly, the Great Commission was given after the disciples had worshiped him (Matt. 28:17), showing the primacy of worship. In these verses disciples are called to make disciples (v. 19), which succinctly states the mission of Christ for his followers. In verse twenty Jesus charges his disciples to “teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” The Lord himself articulates the necessity of formation. Therefore, the mission leads the worshiper into the work of formation. The goal of this formation is that they would become worshipers of the risen Christ. As Ron Man says, “The greatest love we can show to our neighbor is to help him become a lover of God; that is a worshiper.” (1). A mature disciple draws the attention of the new believer to God’s divine initiative and encourages him or her to respond in worship.

Figure 2.1 reminds me of a three-legged stool. If any leg is nonfunctional, the whole stool is nonfunctional. All are essential. One cannot worship rightly without attention to mission and spiritual formation; neither can one be effective in mission by neglecting worship or spiritual formation; nor, can one be spiritually formed apart from

worship and mission.

The arrows in Figure 2.1 go both ways. The relationship is not assumed to be linear, always moving from worship to mission to spiritual formation to worship. The pathway of incarnational ministry can be rather circuitous.

Worship, Mission, and Spiritual Formation—in Community

Incarnational ministry embodied as *formissional worship* is inauthentic if not experienced in community. In twenty-first-century culture, Christians are led to believe that they can worship alone (via television, Internet, worship CDs, or anonymously in a multi-site location or megachurch), be involved in mission alone (“I sponsor a child in Haiti”; “I give to Bread for the World”), and be formed alone (via teaching podcasts, online courses). Considering such virtual discipleship, the words of Thomas Merton offer insight: “The tragedy of modern man is that his creativity, his spirituality, and his contemplative independence are inexorably throttled by a superego that has sold itself without question or compromise to the devil of technology” (129). No technology can replace people’s inherent need for others to journey alongside them.

Jason Byassee takes an interesting look at Craig Groeschel’s LifeChurch.tv. As a virtual church, they offer a “virtual lobby where they can interact with other participants,... ‘Experience Island’ where people can connect of spiritual matters,... ‘mysecret.tv’ offering online confessional,... and ‘LifeKIDS’ for children” (1-3). However, this disembodied expression of the church has serious drawbacks, among them the lack of administration of sacraments, life passages (e.g., weddings, and funerals), and human contact. Murphy suggests that for confession of sin to be more than lament, both a context and a community are required (180).

My friend David Bunker made this post on Facebook a few months ago:

[T]he self is communally constructed.... I am only conformed to the likeness of our Lord when I am in relationship with others and the reality of my sin and the beauty of my glory dawn upon my deepest parts. This is real conversion.... [T]he constant search for fresh stimulation is the way a consumer society forms me. I want more. Be it actual goods or even spiritual experiences. Give me more and give me more when I want it. Being steadfast is a concept that is foreign to most of us today.... Okholm says it well, *“the irony is that we must stay in the same community in order not to stay in the same relationship with God.”* (emphasis mine)

Therefore, worship, mission, and spiritual formation take root in the soil of community.

Maturing disciples recognize their need of each other as “iron sharpens iron” (Prov.

27:17). Hebrews 10:25 admonishes, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another....” Graphically, *community* encircles all three areas (see Figure 2.2).

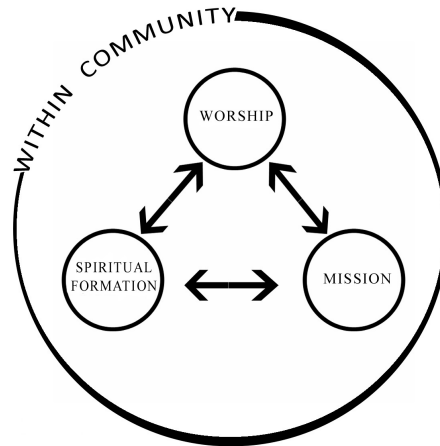


Figure 2.2. Worship, mission, and spiritual formation—in community.

Paul writes to the Ephesians, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and

Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (4:4-6). Through God’s Spirit the church is a unified body held together in love (Eph. 4:16; Col. 3:14). As Ryan K. Bolger says, “The church is a relational community before it is an institution” (“Contemporary Perspectives” 178). Each member contributes and is shaped by the collective in worship, mission, and spiritual formation.

Formational Worship

Often in Wesleyan circles, gathering for worship is equated with personal piety, as if going to church made one holy. Wesley refutes such pious posturing proclaiming, “no holiness but social holiness” (Jones, Wainwright, and Yarnold 604). This declaration suggests that one’s worship is short-circuited apart from a manifestation beyond the four walls of the church.

Formational worship imagines the neglect of mission, in the midst of worship and spiritual formation. This church loves to gather and sing songs of praise and worship to Jesus. Eager to master the word, they take notes during the preaching. They fast as a congregation every Friday and have done every congregational curriculum, promoting spiritual maturity. Their love for one another is evident, but it does not extend beyond the walls of the church. An endless loop between worship and spiritual formation (see Figure 2.3) sets them to “pacing the cage” (Cockburn).

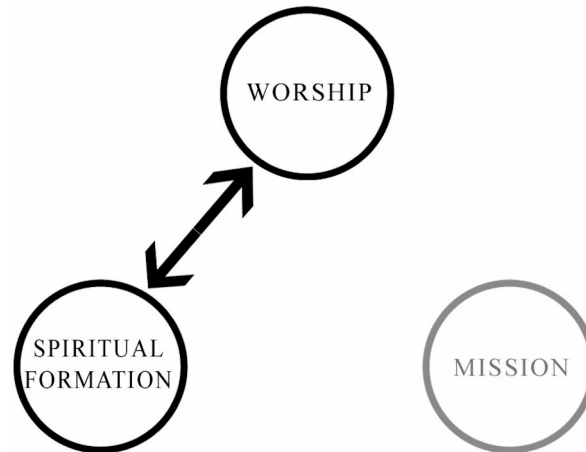


Figure 2.3. Formational worship.

Such selective perception is not new. Israel’s practices did not always testify to its faith in YHWH in the cultural milieu. Cultic observance apart from obedience before the people angered God (Firth 11). The prophet Amos writes, “I despise your festivals.... I will not accept your offerings,... and your songs are noise. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (5:21-24). Jon Forman has written a contemporary song based on this text calling the church to mission (justice and righteousness) instead of a show.

The disciple’s highest and best offerings of worship in conjunction with spiritual disciplines are but a “noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Cor. 13) because the call is to *love* (Deut. 6:4-5; Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:30-31). Jesus and the prophets warn against honoring God “with our lips while our heart is far from him” (Isa. 29:13; Jer. 12:2; Matt. 15:8). Ironically, separating mission from worship in order to concentrate on spiritual formation guarantees a malformed spirituality.

However, strong advocates for the work of formation in worship (pedagogical) and worship as formation (praxis) are found. While both have merit, I consider them to

be incomplete. Likely, the writers limited the scope of their research to address this single point of connection. Briefly, I consider three sources: Debra Dean Murphy, Marva Dawn, and Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang.

Debra Dean Murphy. From the outset, Murphy describes worship as formative and catechetical, saying, “[T]he formative power of worship must be maintained as the center from which all other catechesis emerges” (20). While catechesis may be presented as “didactic, experiential, and praxis-oriented” (218), worship is the formational arena. Succinctly, the author recapitulates the primacy of teaching in worship, “Worship catechizes, and worship is the matrix and milieu from which all other catechesis takes place” (217). Undeniably, the worshiper is shaped and formed in corporate worship.

However, the sanctuary is not a classroom and the liturgy is not the lesson plan. John Westerhoff points out, “[One does not] speak of teaching *by* or *with* the liturgy, thereby reducing the liturgy to didactic act. To *use* the liturgy is to do it violence” (original emphasis; qtd. in Murphy 103). Through the worshiper’s deference to the liturgy, he or she is “made *available* to the working of the Holy Spirit” (original emphasis; Murphy 218). Therefore, catechesis occurs through the repeated participation in the liturgy. The worshiper is formed in the doing.

Habituation on the part of the worshipers in corporate spiritual practices leads them to an experience of love and action—a “doxological catechesis” (Murphy 20, 141, 218). The truth of God revealed in a catechetical liturgy “is not a thing to be grasped but a way of life to be embodied” (217). The worshipping catechumen does not possess the truth, rather, he or she is possessed by the Truth.

The author has a strong section on the formational aspect of the sacraments. Clearly Murphy is an advocate of the Hebraic mind-set of “acting your way to a new way of thinking” (Hirsch, “Continuing Education”). According to Murphy in *Teaching that Transforms*, formational worship occurs in the participation of the worshiper.

Marva Dawn. Dawn offers three fundamental criteria for assessing what is done in worship: “that God is the Infinite Center, that worship upbuild the Body, and that believers be nurtured in faith and life” (202). Admittedly, these are strong criteria, yet mission is conspicuously absent.

The author makes clear the omission, saying, “[W]orship is *for God*, in contrast to evangelism, which is *for the unbeliever*” (original emphasis; Dawn 122). Whereas the lines have been clearly drawn, Dawn offers the caveat that “good worship *will be* evangelistic, but that is not its primary purpose” (Dawn 123). Evangelism (mission) is viewed as an outgrowth of worship’s “public equipping for our role as disciples in the world” (Dawn 310-11, 324), as “worship immerses us in God’s reign” (Dawn 276). Seemingly, worship is the classroom forming the believer for mission.

The author’s “catechumenal formational process” (Dawn 241) is seen in the chapter titled, “Forming the Character of the Church’s Children by Nurturing Their Minds” (252). At times cognitive development seems to be the means and end for the author. Clearly understanding is deemed more important than experience. However, Dawn offers an experiential counterpoint, saying, “[W]orship trains us together in the habits and practices of faith” (185). The formational value of communal worship is strongly affirmed.

In worship the church learns how to be the Church (Dawn 256). This “Churchbeing” (335) becomes a witness “for the sake of the world” (349). I find Dawn to be very strong in formational worship, yet her engagement with missional worship seems to be underdeveloped. Whereas Murphy models the Hebraic approach, I see Dawn aligning with the Hellenistic approach of “thinking your way to a new way of acting” (Hirsch, “Continuing Education”). Nevertheless, one cannot know God apart from his gracious invitation and revelation.

Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang. Parrett and Kang begin with a response both to Murphy and Dawn, suggesting that they have “blurred the lines between worship and formation” (337). Nevertheless, worship and formation are deemed inseparable as “worship itself is presented as intrinsically formational” (339). Parrett and Kang propose a static ordering of worship, formation, and outreach (mission), stating, that “[T]he formation of believers is an altogether appropriate secondary agenda” (339) for worship gatherings.

New Testament examples are offered of worshipers being malformed in worship (1 Cor. 11:17, 30) and transformed in worship (2 Cor. 3:18). The authors also provide insights into the instructional and formational work accomplished through ritual behavior in the Pentateuch. Of particular interest was the example of the Passover festival (Exod. 12:26-27) as formational worship (Parrett and Kang 340).

Parrett and Kang use Paul’s admonitions about singing (Col. 3:16; Eph 5:18-19) as a reminder of the formation occurring in congregational singing:

Our hymnody, it turns out, is both worship offered to God and instruction, or exhortation, directed to one another. The fact is, even if the songs we sing are directed Godward, the words leaving our lips fall on the ears of all

those present, including our own. We are all formed—again, for good or for ill—by what we say and sing in our gatherings. (341)

The authors' understanding of formation underscores the aforementioned fifth-century Latin maxim, *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* meaning what disciples say becomes what they believe, which becomes how they live.

While Parrett and Kang present a more holistic view than Murphy or Dawn, I find the static ordering of worship followed by formation and then outreach to be troubling. In all three views, worship as an event (i.e., communal worship, corporate worship, worship service) is primary, while worship as a lifestyle is secondary. In addition, the predominant theme was that disciples are formed in worship, preparing them to engage in mission (i.e., evangelism, outreach). I concur with Witvliet's contention that "worship both reflects and shapes worldview and way of life. And much of this formative power happens very quietly" (51). However, I believe one cannot be truly formed apart from serving.

Missional Worship

In this iteration, the church is stuck in the endless loop of worship-to-mission-to-worship, while neglecting the matter of spiritual formation (see Figure 2.4). Admittedly, this perspective is more of an activist model. These people are not mere hearers of the word—they are doers (Jas. 1:22).

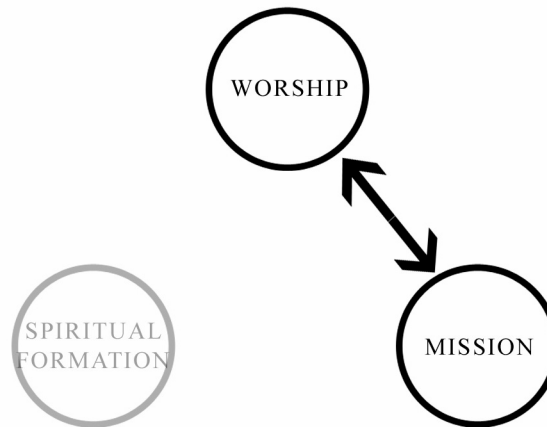


Figure 2.4. Missional worship.

Missional worship forms the worshiper to inhabit God’s story: “Context-shaped liturgy does not shape missional people.... [According to Lesslie Newbigin this represents] a ‘false contextualization’” (qtd. in Lovas 354-55). To disregard spiritual formation while pursuing mission and worship is to be sentenced to a life of being and doing without ever becoming.

Missional is used to characterize any outward focus, though many variants exist in philosophy and praxis. To some it means viewing all ministries and programs through an evangelistic/church-growth lens. Such churches have replaced seeker language with missional language as adding numbers is the priority. Therefore, even though the missional moniker is employed, such a church is primarily attractional.

Others would understand missional as a focus on *being* the church beyond the walls on Monday through Saturday. Such churches seek to equip and deploy their attenders, making the institutional priority to be sending disciples into the world. As this movement can lead to a decentralization of the church, some have equated anything *missional* with the emerging church (McKnight, “Five Streams” 38). As a subset of this

salt-and-light-in-the-world understanding of missional, some attach a specific activist agenda, political and social justice (Billings 56-57).

The growth of evangelicalism in the first half of the twentieth century saw the local church as the venue of transformation. The missional energies were invested in getting the unconverted to church where they could experience God. Sadly, as Michael Horton notes, “many of our best efforts to reach out to the unchurched have actually been far more effective at unchurching the church” (qtd. in Parrett and Kang 336). However, worship remains to be viewed primarily through an attractional lens, describing something Christians do when they come together. Nonetheless, the focus of such gatherings can be reflective of a missional agenda.

Again, several people have addressed this worship and mission connection while minimizing the role of spiritual formation. The intent is not to communicate that these examples are *rudderless* or spiritually malformed. In the following examples, the role of worship and mission is explicit, whereas the role of spiritual formation is implicit.

Willow Creek Community Church. When I think of churches that are intentional about connecting their mission and worship, I think of Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago. Under the leadership of founding pastor, Bill Hybels, the church has reimagined weekend worship as church for the unchurched, targeting the pre-Christian seeker. Traditional worship and equipping for the “new community” (i.e., believers) occurs midweek. Drawing 10,000-15,000 to weekend services, many churches have subscribed to their methodology.

The seeker service mentality is an interesting melding of missional (the church exist for others; their primary agenda is to reach the unchurched) and attractional (come

to us—we do church well). Typically, missional is understood to be the church sent, whereas attractional is the church gathered. However, excellence is paramount at Willow Creek. The logistics of service production demand people come to their venue—not unlike going to the theatre. Philosophically, the missional agenda is the impetus. However, in practice the church relies on the attractional impulse. Consequently, I see Willow Creek as a church with a missional agenda packaged in an attractional box.

Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson. A study of the Willow Creek Community Church's health was completed in 2007 and revealed some sobering facts. Of the six-thousand surveys completed, given the options of *exploring Christianity, growing in Christ, close to Christ, or Christ-centered*, “more than 25 percent...described themselves as spiritually ‘stalled’ or dissatisfied’ with the role of the church in their spiritual growth [formation]” (Hawkins and Parkinson 47). While the weekend services were engaging, apparently “church activity made no direct impact on growing the heart” (Hawkins and Parkinson 36). Perhaps the medium obscured the message.

Willow's missional movement was from the outside in and their worship was co-opted by the seeker agenda. In the midst of rearticulating mission and worship, spiritual formation was neglected. When confronted with this neglect, the leadership addresses the issues head-on:

Historically at Willow,... our message has been the same: “We know what you need, and we can meet those needs for you...” *We have created an unhealthy dependence and inappropriate levels of expectation among those of you who call Willow home.... We have been wrong.* (emphasis mine; Hawkins and Parkinson 64)

The goal at Willow Creek is that the all believers (new converts and seasoned saints) would become spiritual self-feeders (Hawkins and Parkinson 65). The proposed relational

connection to aid in the spiritual formation of the faithful is morphing from that of a “spiritual parent to spiritual coach” (Hawkins and Parkinson 65). Hopefully, Willow Creek Community Church can equip and deploy an army of personal spiritual trainers to help their worshipers “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). Many lives have been transformed through the ministry of this innovative church.

Handt Hanson. In *Mission-Driven Worship* Handt Hanson proposes a threefold schema of worship comprised of welcome, equip, and send (Hanson 29). Within this rhythm, Hanson declares that “[mission-driven] worship should be God-focused and people-related, not the other way around” (Hanson 67). Indeed, when worship is people-focused and God-related, the church is investing in church growth, not the *missio Dei*.

Edward Sansom Williams. As a strong advocate for missional worship, Edward Sansom Williams expresses “the essential unity of mission and worship” (11) with three overarching points of connection:

The triune God is the *source* of the church’s life uniting its worship and mission. The Kingdom of God is the *purpose* of the church’s life uniting its worship and mission. The Incarnation is the *pattern* of the church’s life uniting its worship and mission. (original emphasis; 3)

By implication only do I see the matter of formation addressed in this fine dissertation. Certainly, the Incarnation as the pattern is formational as worship and mission working together shape the disciple into the image of Christ. Zealously connecting worship and mission, Williams neglects spiritual formation (i.e., discipleship). Briefly he addresses spiritual practices “that draw people into the worship and mission of the triune God” (Williams 43). Ostensibly, these practices represent a vague spirituality serving to recruit and retain adherents to missional worship.

Interestingly, in response to the pairing of the love of God and love of neighbor, Williams writes, “[S]uch a collapsing of worship into mission is surely an inadequate way to relate the two” (16). Seeing worship and mission as inextricably linked, but retaining their distinctive roles, he proposes they “have the same purpose: to proclaim in word and deed the reality and promise of God’s Kingdom” (Williams 27). While Williams’ call to missional worship needs to be heard, I find it to be incomplete.

Thomas H. Schattauer. Citing J. G. Davies’ seminal work from 1966, *Worship and Mission*, Schattauer recalls the improbability of considering worship and mission together. Fifty years ago these seemingly incompatible elements were “placed in isolated compartments without the possibility of cross-fertilization and without the question of their unity being raised at all” (qtd. in Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 1). Moving from this siloed, separatist view, Schattauer presents three potential connective journeys: *inside and outside*, *outside in*, and *inside out* (“Liturgical Assembly” 2-3).

First, the author presents *inside and outside*, representing an alternating movement. In worship the believer is spiritually empowered to carry out the mission, from which they return weekly to worship. “Worship serves the purpose of mission” (Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 2).

Second, the model of *outside in* is considered. This model describes Willow Creek and the seeker-targeted services. As mission has become the “principal purpose of the church’s worship” (Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 3), “the sacred precinct of the liturgy” (Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 2) has been co-opted.

Third, Schattauer presents his preferred view, *inside out*. This outward movement is the essence of incarnational ministry. As Douglas S. Hardy says, “As Christ is formed

in us, we are *reformed* for mission” (original emphasis; 183). When the church gathers for worship, they are participants in the *missio Dei* (Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 3). The worshiping church is the church in mission. However, the obedient worshiper will move with the Spirit from the inside out.

Said differently, these models of missional worship could be articulated as mission *from* worship (inside and outside), mission *in* worship (outside in), or mission *as* worship (inside out). Schattauer’s third iteration is very balanced, making a strong case for “liturgical formation” in the continuation of worship from the *inside out* (Schattauer, “Liturgical Assembly” 7-13).

Clayton J. Schmit. With both an article and a book titled *Sent and Gathered* (the subtitles and content are distinctive), Schmit focuses on the inside-out movement presented by Schattauer. Clearly, the author believes strongly that “the liturgical sending is a pivotal action connecting the inward adoration of God to the outward service of God” (Schmit, *Sent and Gathered: A Worship Manual* 55). Beginning with the end and moving forward to a new beginning, the cyclical movement is noted.

Schmit’s article employs “a musical metaphor for missional liturgy” (Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 121). The classic fourfold order of worship (Cherry 46) is aligned with the four beats of a measure: beat one, the downbeat, is the gathering; beat two is the engagement with the word; beat three is the gathering at the table; and, beat four, the upbeat, is the sending (Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 123). Musically and eschatologically beat four leads to a new downbeat. Inherent within beat four is a sense of anticipation (Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 127).

Understanding the sending at the close of corporate worship as beat four “means that the liturgy must make clear that God’s people are not dismissed only to gather next week but are sent to perform God’s mission in the world” (Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 121). Disciples live missionally between beats four and one—this embodiment is their worship. Schmit calls this movement between the upbeat and the downbeat “*the living liturgy of discipleship*” (original emphasis; Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 128). T. S. Eliot beautifully articulates this rhythm:

What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from. (58)

Eastern Orthodox refers to this living out of the liturgy as the liturgy after the liturgy.

Inasmuch as beats two and three represent the word and the table, Schmit’s view of worship is quite balanced, acknowledging the necessity of formation:

Renewing worship for mission requires that we attend to all aspects of our worship life together, planning them with discipleship in mind, and executing them with intention and excellence. When our gatherings are filled with inspiration and spiritual nourishment, our sendings may burst like levees and flood our neighborhoods with God’s love. (“Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 129)

As Schmit’s titles imply, his emphasis is on the church *sent* in worship and *gathered* in mission.

Rich Nathan. Columbus Vineyard is the largest church in the Vineyard movement, drawing over nine-thousand every weekend. Decidedly multicultural, the church has people from 104 different nations attending. Their 40,000 square-foot community center runs an after school program for immigrant children. Many of the children enrolled are Somali, from Muslim families that will not attend the weekend services (Beaty).

Not surprisingly, the worship gatherings of this church can be characterized as Spirit-filled excellence. The music is extraordinary in spirit and presentation. The sermons are biblically centered, challenging, yet engaging. Communion is observed every service, and there are multiple Scripture readings—often in foreign languages.

As part of a their twenty-fifth anniversary celebration, founding pastor Rich Nathan presented a sermon series reminding the church of its core values. On the weekend of 23 September 2012, he preached a message on the necessity of worship *and* mission. Giving multiple examples, Nathan illustrated how contemporary society prefers *or*. However, he showed the “genius and power of *and*”: God is three *and* one; Jesus is God *and* man; his Church is called to love the Lord with heart, soul, mind, strength *and* our neighbor as ourselves. Drawing from Psalm 96, Nathan admonished his listeners to be a church that worships *and* witnesses: worship (vv. 1-2), witness (vv. 3-6), worship (vv. 7-9), and witness (v. 10).

Stanley Hauerwas. Whereas Rich Nathan advocates embracing the tension inherent in the worship *and* mission model, Stanley Hauerwas moves a step beyond saying, “When we consider worship, evangelism, and ethics we need to remove the “and” to see the true integrated view (106). According to Hauerwas, at the nexus of this integration is “what Methodists call holiness” (104). He continues, stating, “from Wesley’s perspective Christian worship is evangelism, because worship is converting work” (104). Worship is missional, as the church moves from the inside out.

Formational Mission/Missional Formation

Without a doubt, this typology is the most troubling. A clearly articulated mission is the standard to which people are being “spiritually” formed. Inasmuch, as worship is

marginalized, one cannot help but wonder whose mission is the driving force (see Figure 2.5).

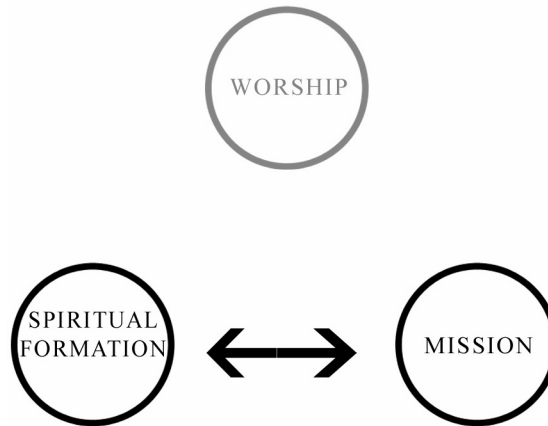


Figure 2.5. Formational mission/missional formation.

If one were to remove *spiritual*, as the modifier of formation, the understanding of formational mission would be foundational in every corporation across the land. Every business has a mission and their employees are expected to align themselves (i.e., be formed to) to the stated mission. Certainly, part of this engagement could be interpreted as worship, since the adherent bows to the corporate agenda. However, mercenaries in the guise of company men or company women, abound.

For some, missional formation is an altruistic endeavor. The *evangelist* actively seeks converts for his or her cause (e.g., Red Cross, Humane Society, American Cancer Society). These are worthy causes and their advocates are good people. However, the good cause can easily subsume worship, becoming one's first love. As David T. Koyzis observes, ideology easily becomes idolatry (7-41).

Sadly, this model is found in the church as well. Investing heavily in forming others to their mission, some in the emerging church are dismissive of the centrality of worship. Safe Space in Telford, England, was founded in 2006. They are a self-proclaimed “emerging/missional community... [whose] DNA consists of three elements in relationship: community, pilgrimage, and mission” (Gray-Reeves and Perham 53). I see nothing in this description that is distinctively Christian—perhaps that is the intent. Obviously, the group gathers to worship inasmuch as they claim their liturgy can be “used as therapy” (53).

When the experience of the collective outweighs God’s word (Ps. 119:89-94), doctrine becomes self-referenced. Context usurps content. Consequently, such self-referenced doctrine may be used to form undiscerning followers to a lesser mission. R. Paul Stevens offers a stern warning, proclaiming, “Doctrine that does not lead to doxology is demonic” (246). Neither formational agendas nor missional strategies can fill the void created by the abrogation of worship.

As mentioned in the introduction, an article in by Keith Meyer centers on recovery of the monastic rhythms in the lives of individuals and their churches, laments that formation and mission, while nonnegotiable, are incomplete (42-4). Apart from worship, formation and mission will always be incomplete.

Formissional Worship

As the elements are deemed to be interdependent, I have brought the circles representing worship, mission, and spiritual formation together. This coalescence, graphically illustrates the nexus of *formissional worship* (see Figure 2.6).



Figure 2.6. Formissional worship.

Historically, worship, formation (teaching), and mission (evangelism, outreach) have been understood to be “the three great tasks of the church” (Parrett and Kang 336-37). Understanding the origin as one’s *sent-ness* (Schmit, “Sent and Gathered: A Musical Metaphor” 128-29), worship becomes a missional lifestyle embracing formation.

Leading liturgical scholar Robert E. Webber has written extensively on all of the elements of *formissional worship*, albeit in separate volumes. He writes about the specifics of worship (*Worship Is a Verb; Worship Old and New; Ancient-Future Worship; and Ancient-Future Time*), the interplay of worship and mission (*Ancient-Future Faith; The Younger Evangelicals; and Who Gets to Narrate the World*), and the role of spiritual formation in worship (*The Divine Embrace*).

Of this synergy, Webber writes, “God’s family pursues God’s purposes for the world and participates in God’s vision in the world by showing the world what a community of people in union with God is to look like” (*Divine Embrace* 163). Being formed into a lifestyle of communal worship before a watching world is missional.

Alan Hirsch is a contemporary voice that aligns with *formissional worship*. He is strongly missional (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping of Things; Hirsch, Forgotten Ways*) and undeniably formational (Hirsch and Hirsch, *Untamed; Frost and Hirsch, Faith of Leap*),

while acknowledging the necessity of worship (Hirsch and Ford). *Right Here, Right Now*). However, he writes from a missional hermeneutic (mission), whereas I write from a liturgical hermeneutic (worship). Both of us tend to examine the whole through a single lens.

Although many of the aforementioned authors (e.g., Webber, Hirsch, Parrett and Kang) may not use the words *worship, mission, and spiritual formation*, the meaning and movement is the same. Hardy writes, “When as believers in the triune God, and members in the church of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit, we participate in *worship, discipleship, shared life, compassion, and witness*, we are being *reformed for mission*” (original emphasis; 183). Hauerwas’ designations of worship, evangelism, and ethics (106) are paralleled in the triad of worship, mission, and formation presented here. I see in these models the coalescence of the constituent elements, leading to integration as the pathway of holiness.

Isaiah 6 illuminates the path as one sees holiness revealed (vv. 1-5), imparted (vv. 6-7), and lived (vv. 8-13). This outbound movement of revelation and response is mirrored in worship (vv. 1-5—“I saw the Lord,... Holy, Holy, Holy.... I am undone”); in spiritual formation (vv. 6-7—“A seraph touched my lips with a coal from the altar.... My guilt and sin are consumed”); and in mission (vv. 8-13—“I heard the voice of the Lord:... ‘Here am I, send me....’ ‘Go’”).

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, “worship is a central point of integration” (Dyrness 138) in one’s spiritual formation, missional engagement, and imagination. Dyrness rightly asserts, “The expectations of everyday life have colonized the experience

of worship” (139). The culturally eroded imaginings of the worshiper only restrict his or her worship, making it smaller.

Miroslav Volf espouses a bivalent view of Christian worship comprised of adoration and action (208). Although the activities are separate, they are interdependent (209). Adoration apart from action leads to quietism, while action apart from adoration degenerates into activism. Volf contends, that, “[A]uthentic Christian adoration cannot take place in isolation from the world” (209). As Christ dwells among the marginalized, there he is adored, animating the worshiper:

Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. (Heb. 13:15-16)

Volf suggests that in this verse the believer sees the call both to adoration (v. 15) and action (v. 16).

In the midst of this dynamism, Volf sees instruction (formation) working in harmony with adoration (worship). While adoration is instruction, the inverse is also true: “Every authentic Christian instruction which does not include (at least implicitly) adoration is deficient; it communicates knowledge without transmitting corresponding allegiance” (210). Worship is formational and spiritual formation is an act of worship.

A living example of instruction, including adoration, is offered in Romans 12.

Paul elucidates spiritual formation as worship:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom. 12:1-2)

Worship is no longer confined to sacred space. *Formissional worship* is lived out daily in the life of the disciple offering the sacrifice of praise (worship), the sacrifice of good deeds (mission), and offering his or her body as a living sacrifice (spiritual formation).

Research Design

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of the curriculum design and delivery, I employed an embedded, mixed-methods design. I administered an identical pre- and post-intervention questionnaire. The seventy-five-question, researcher-designed, expert-reviewed, quantitative surveys employed a six-point Likert scale administered by Survey Monkey.

During the seven-week class, students posted weekly to an online group. As Colin Gray and Keith Smyth observes, “Online social networking tools offer clear advantages for ... time-limited professionals” (1). As most of the students were also serving full-time in ministry, I thought that such a presence would be advantageous. After discussing options with Information Technologies at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, I determined that a closed group on Facebook would provide all that the class needed in a user-friendly, secure site.

While the quantitative research was weighted to deliver the primary data, the “nested qualitative study” (Bartholomew and Brown 8) examined how the students were “experiencing the intervention” (Creswell 558), contributing significantly to the overall findings. Three open-ended questions on the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire provided an additional qualitative thread.

Summary

Perceiving worship to be a stand-alone event, the matters of mission and spiritual formation are relegated to ancillary programs or elevated as rivals. To place worship in the orbit of mission or spiritual formation is to make that which is primary peripheral. The *Shema* clearly identifies the one God who is worthy of worship. The primacy of worship orders all else in the Christian's life.

However, to reduce mission to a program subsumed by worship is also misunderstanding. As Schattauer suggests, worship enriches and enlivens mission as one lives "from the inside out" (3). Isaiah 6 illustrates formation and mission beginning at the altar. As disciples live from the center, cooperating with the means of grace, they are spiritually formed into the image of Jesus.

The various iterations combining two of the three emphases produce typologies that are attractive but incomplete. Missional worship can lead to an activist lifestyle, enticing Christians to glory in their works. In comparison, formational worship can lead disciples to glory in their piety, whereas, formational mission/missional formation can lead adherents to glory in a cause. However, wholeness is found at the nexus of *formissional worship* where the disciple reflects the *gloria Dei*.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

The problem of reducing worship to an event ending at noon on Sunday leads the church toward a fragmented view of spiritual formation. Seeing mission as worship and vice versa leads the disciple toward integration of life and ministry. This paradox is the essence of *formissional worship*. A move away from this nexus is a move toward *dis-integration*.

The purpose of this study was to measure the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class at Mount Vernon Nazarene University entitled Christian Worship.

Research Questions

In order to determine the effectiveness of the design and delivery of the class, I employed three research questions. Questions one and two were addressed by asking identical questions before and after the intervention. A threaded discussion during the seven-week class provided the data for question three, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

Research Question #1

What were the levels of cognition, attitude, and behavior of the students regarding *formissional worship* prior to the class?

The pretest, measuring the students' understanding of *formissional worship*, was administered on the first day of class: 25 February 2013. In addition to the seventy-five-question survey, an extensive demographic profile was included.

Understanding *formissional worship* as the nexus of three constituent elements (spiritual formation, mission, and communal worship) necessitates an examination of the various iterations. Therefore, Research Question One identifies the respondents' pre-class understanding of formational worship (8, 15, 27, 29, 32, 45, 58, 63, 65, 72, 75), missional worship (9, 22, 24, 28, 41, 46, 56, 59, 61, 66, 71), missional formation/formational mission (7, 16, 31, 34, 54, 60, 73), and *formissional worship* (4, 13, 18, 33, 43, 49, 53, 64, 70, 74).

Research Question #2

Did the students experience significant change in cognition, attitude, or behavior regarding *formissional worship* as a result of participating in the course?

The same seventy-five-question survey used as a pretest was administered as a posttest on the last day of class: 8 April 2013. The different responses to the same questions revealed the changes in understanding and attitude regarding *formissional worship*. The designations from the pretest remain unchanged as Research Question Two is addressed.

Research Question #3

What aspects of the class experience contributed most significantly to these changes?

A closed Facebook group was used as a forum for discussion between the weekly classes. According to the syllabus, each student was required to generate a weekly posting connecting the topics covered that week through readings and lectures with their local ministry context. In addition, each student was expected to respond to a minimum of two other posts by classmates. Through this discussion, common threads were

identified, revealing the aspects of the class serving to catalyze change in attitude and behavior toward *formissional worship*.

Population and Participants

The participants for this study were students enrolled in the Master of Ministry program at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Registered for spring 2013, the class in Christian worship consisted of sixteen males and six females for a total of twenty-two. As an adjunct instructor, I had no role in the selection process for the students in this class.

The ages of the students ranged from 22 to 51, averaging 32.8 years of age; 10 percent were non-Caucasian (one African-American and one Brazilian); and, 30 percent were female. Some had been serving in ministry for ten to twenty years, while others had recently completed their undergraduate degree. Still others were retooling for a second career. Very few of the students were serving in non-Nazarene churches. Some of the younger students were serving as staff members at larger churches. Those serving as solo pastors were leading small to midsized rural churches.

Design of the Study

Worship is both a communal event and private practices lived out in a doxological lifestyle. The liturgical event is embedded in a missional lifestyle, leading to a spiritual formation that values adoration and action. Believing that some find the siloed models (Lencioni 175) leading to programmatic solutions preferable to the paradox of *formissional worship*, I examined the points of connectivity among worship, mission, and spiritual formation in praxis.

Pre-Class

First, I posted the syllabus on Moodle for all the students to secure texts and begin preparation. Second, the Director of the MM program sent a group e-mail to all the enrolled students in Christian worship, encouraging them to participate in this research project. Third, I e-mailed each student individually an explanation of the project and the informed consent document, describing their voluntary involvement with the understanding that neither their names nor their church's names will appear in the final document. This groundwork all occurred before the first day of class.

First Day of Class

Fourth, on 25 February, the first day of class, I administered the pretest, consisting of the seventy-five-question survey and extensive demographic information. Due to the nature of the virtual classroom, a paper document was not feasible. Therefore, I used SurveyMonkey to assure anonymity and to allow multi-site responses. After an opening devotional and introductions, I explained the necessity of the pretest and administered the tool, allowing forty-five minutes of class time for the completion of the survey. Afterwards I gave a class overview, explained assignments, and lectured on worship as invitation.

Weeks Two through Six of Class

Fifth, I observed and participated in the threaded discussion on the closed Facebook group throughout the seven-week class. Sixth, I taught weeks two through six every Monday from 1 to 5 p.m. On week two the class focused on worship as revelation (in concert with worship as invitation from week one), considering God's divine initiative in worship. On weeks three and four the curriculum examined worship as participation

and formation, dealing with connections of worship and formation. Finally, on weeks five and six the class discussed worship as contextualization and incarnation, dealing with connections of worship and mission.

Last Day of Class

Seventh, everyone came together on campus on 8 April for the final class. The class ate lunch together followed by a brief worship service, ending with communion. I then lectured on worship as integration, bringing the all of the facets considered in weeks one through six together in an integrative model: *formissional worship*. As the class came to a conclusion, I employed the exact same survey given in week one as a posttest, allowing thirty minutes of class time. SurveyMonkey was used again as the means of administration.

Post-Class

Eighth, the Facebook group remained active for two weeks following the final class as students offered closing comments. Ninth, the data was gathered from SurveyMonkey, revealing cognitive and attitudinal changes regarding *formissional worship* in the students as a result of this seven-week class in Christian worship. Tenth, the threaded discussion was examined for common themes and progressions of thought identifying changes in attitudes and behavior among the students regarding *formissional worship*.

The pre- and posttests framed the seven-week-course providing the quantitative data, while the threaded discussion continued throughout the class providing the qualitative data. These tools comprised an embedded, mixed-methods design of 75 percent quantitative and 25 percent qualitative.

A closed Facebook group served as the qualitative element between the pre- and post-intervention surveys. Through the weekly postings the students identified points of consonance, resonance, and dissonance with the readings, guest lecturers, class discussions, and assignments. This open peer discussion tended to connect the students' academic work with their ministry assignment. As a member of the group, I was able to observe cognitive and affective changes.

Instrumentation

This study used three instruments to collect data: the researcher-designed, expert reviewed, quantitative pre- and post-intervention surveys employing a six-point Likert scale administered by SurveyMonkey; a demographic survey; and, weekly postings on the Facebook group. The quantitative data provided a breadth of findings unparalleled in the other instruments. However, the qualitative data was considered independently, not merely as support for quantitative findings.

The demographic survey provided personal information (e.g., age, race, marital status, ministerial role, and years in ministry) as well as information regarding the students' ministry context (e.g., attendance, average age of congregants, rural/urban, role of sacraments, and staff). In order to get a true read on the congregation, I stayed away from words such as traditional, contemporary, and liturgical as these mean different things to different people. Instead, I listed several items describing their worship space and practices, asking the participants to *check all that apply* (e.g., stained glass, stage lights, creeds/responsive readings, choir, praise band, and pulpit). This approach provided a more accurate comparison among the churches studied.

The quantitative pre- and posttest consisted of seventy-five questions based on a six-point Likert scale. In addition, three open-ended questions were included asking the participants to define worship, mission, and spiritual formation. By examining the changes in these definitions, the curricular influence was noted in the coalescence of the constituent elements.

The qualitative element consisted of an online, threaded discussion in a closed group on Facebook. These postings were examined to find common themes revealing changes in attitude and behavior regarding *formissional worship*. Each week I designated the topic or discussion: invitation, revelation, participation, formation, contextualization, incarnation, and integration. As the readings, lectures, and class assignments were lenses through which the students examined their ministry context, the discussions were not 100 percent on task.

Expert Review

The development of the instrument used for this research went through multiple layers of examination before being used in the class. First, I began to group questions under the headings worship, mission, and spiritual formation. I then started crafting questions examining the relationships among these three primary elements: formational worship, missional worship, formational mission/missional formation, and formissional worship. Second, I revised the questions in these seven groups to bring balance and to provide potential negative responses.

Third, I asked Dr. Randie Timpe, Assistant to the Provost at MVNU to examine my questions. Dr. Timpe is very knowledgeable in these matters, as a peer reviewer for

The Journal of Psychology and Christianity and *The Journal of Psychology and Theology*.

Fourth, after implementing the changes suggested by Dr. Timpe, I took the survey to the monthly meeting of my Research Reflection Team (RRT) where every word of every question was scrutinized. Some questions were deleted, some added, and many revised. On the team are pastors and educators with backgrounds in worship, spiritual formation, and mission. Once again, I had Dr. Timpe review the work of the RRT.

Fifth, I took the latest iteration of the survey and e-mailed it to fifty colleagues and friends around the world to offer feedback. This group included pastors, chaplains, educators, administrators, businessmen, psychologists, and professors from Nazarene, Methodist, Wesleyan, Brethren, Lutheran, Baptist, Vineyard, and independent churches. Obviously, many were friends because I heard back from thirty with more helpful comments. Of the thirty responses, nineteen had earned doctorates. Once again, the instrument was sharpened through this diverse body.

Sixth, this refined document was sent to Dr. Janet Dean, professor of psychology at Asbury University. As she is often employed by Asbury DMin students, I knew she would be familiar with the expectations. After exchanging e-mail drafts, I came up with a copy that she thought would be appropriate for the proposal hearing.

Seventh, I took the non-randomized instrument to the proposal hearing on 15 February so that the committee could see the division and balance of topics covered in the questions. I also brought the list of thirty reviewers. They offered no need for revisions other than randomization.

Eighth, I randomized and coded the questions for analysis after the pre- and posttests (see Appendix A). I then loaded the questions into SurveyMonkey for the students to have access to the survey.

Variables

A variable that must be considered in a curriculum design and delivery is the perspective of the instructor. While my aim was to present a truly integrative view of *formissional worship*, I must acknowledge that my experience led me to view this model through a decidedly liturgical hermeneutic. Another instructor may offer a more missional or formational approach to the integrative view.

Independent variable(s). The independent variables were the material presented in class, teaching tools employed, assignments required, and the peer interaction. Considering worship alone would present variables of music, liturgy, word, and sacraments. Using an interdisciplinary approach, as the class examined the interplay of worship, mission, and spiritual formation, numerous potential variables were noted.

Dependent variable(s). The dependent variables in the study were the students' cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in perception and practice concerning *formissional worship* as measured by the comparison of pretest and posttest survey responses. The threaded discussion identified dependent variables relating to connecting points among the primary elements of worship, mission, and spiritual formation.

Intervening variable(s). The intervening variables were student absences, students changing venues, technical problems disconnecting a satellite campus for segments of the class, and dominant personalities in class and threaded discussion.

Meeting on Monday afternoons through Lent, to Palm Sunday and Easter, the church calendar had a direct impact on the class as well.

Reliability and Validity

The researcher-designed instrument employed in the research grew out of the curriculum design, addressing the interplay of worship, mission, and spiritual formation. Teaching the MM class in Christian worship for the fourth time, the design of the class has evolved. The model of *formissional worship* has been conceived in over thirty-five years of staff ministry and born in the classroom.

As mentioned previously, a diverse group of thirty colleagues examined the quantitative pre- and post-survey. Two of the reviewers are uniquely qualified with a background in psychology and formulation of such instruments. Imbedding the qualitative, threaded discussion between the pre- and posttests strengthens the data, providing a sense of discovery from the students.

The seventy-five-question survey utilized a six-point Likert scale: 1—strongly disagree; 2—disagree; 3—somewhat disagree; 4—somewhat agree; 5—agree; 6—strongly agree. The instrument was designed to identify the areas of change in the students' perception of worship as communal event, personal practices, and doxological lifestyle. Additionally, points of connection and disconnection among worship, mission and formation were identified as the integrative model of *formissional worship* was considered.

Data Collection

I used three instruments to collect quantitative data for this study: (1) the *formissional worship* perception survey was given to the MM class in Christian Worship

on the first day of class, 25 February 2013, (2) the demographic survey administered alongside the pretest, and (3) the *formissional worship* perception survey given to the same group of students on the final day of class, 8 April 2013. The demographic data served to shed light on the changes in perception from the pre- to the posttest.

Employing an embedded, mixed-methods design, I inserted a qualitative element between the pre- and post-intervention surveys that would assist in mapping the individual stories of discovery in the learning process for each student. Weekly postings by the students to a closed Facebook group connected the class discussion and readings with their ministry context.

The study took place during a seven-week intensive MM class meeting four hours every Monday afternoon from 25 February until 8 April 2013. All of the twenty students took the seventy-five-question pretest in class on the first day through SurveyMonkey. At the same time, the demographic information was also gathered via SurveyMonkey. The posttest was likewise administered in class on the final day by means of SurveyMonkey.

The qualitative data was gathered through weekly postings during the six weeks between the seven class sessions and two weeks following class—actually extending the seven-week class to an eight-week window. As each student was required a minimum of one post and two responses per week, I was assured sixty posts per week, totaling 420 posts over seven weeks. Key words and phrases were observed in order to discern emerging common themes. Also, individual stories of discovery were noted.

Through these multiple means of data collection, I was able to identify changes in the perception of *formissional worship* among the students. Cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes were noted through the mixed-methods design.

Data Analysis

I used an embedded, mixed-methods design, employing two quantitative surveys: pretest and posttest. The changes occurring over the seven-week period were identified. Employing *t*-tests, the statistics were analyzed in light of the pretest demographic information on each participant. I used these statistics to assess the changes in cognition individually and collectively regarding *formissional worship* as a result of the seven-week class I designed and delivered.

The qualitative tool employed during the seven-week period of instruction was a weekly assignment involving online posts to a closed Facebook group. The analysis of this data was guided by a search for themes of changing attitudes and behaviors regarding *formissional worship*. Through this means I was able to identify the aspects of the class experience contributing most significantly to the changes in cognition, attitude, and behavior.

Ethical Procedures

Each student received a copy of the informed consent via e-mail, whereupon the document was signed, scanned, and returned to me, leaving the original signed copy in his or her possession (see Appendix D). Participation in the research was completely optional and had no bearing on their grade. The consent form also assured the students that names of individuals or churches would not appear in the final document.

To guarantee anonymity, the participants were encouraged to create an identifier comprised of the first letter of their mother's maiden name plus the last four digits of their social security number. The pre- and posttests were connected through this common identifier.

Utilizing Facebook as the site for the threaded discussion did not allow anonymity. As these postings were a class requirement, I needed to know who was writing and when. Therefore, the qualitative data served to illustrate and strengthen the overall findings of the quantitative data, though not connected directly.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

The problem of an inadequate view of worship is the ensuing fragmentation in the church. The advocates of formational worship tend to elevate being over doing. The worshiper experiences a depth of understanding in the liturgy as he or she gathers around the word and the table. Conversely, the champions of missional worship proclaim the impossibility of becoming apart from doing. Herein the worshiper is brought to a deeper understanding through a breadth of experience. Neglect of adoration or action, being or doing, moves one away from the nexus of *formissional worship*.

The purpose of this study was first to measure the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class at Mount Vernon Nazarene University titled Christian Worship. Secondly, the study sought to identify the curricular catalysts facilitating the changes in the students.

Participants

The participants for this study were students enrolled in the Master of Ministry program at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, Ohio. All twenty students in the spring 2013 Christian worship class willingly participated in identical pre- and posttests framing the intervention. However, all respondents did not answer every question.

Figure 4.1 presents the distribution of ages of the class participants. The composite profile of the participants indicates that the majority fell into the following

categories: between 20 and 40 years old (75 percent), male (70 percent), white/non-Hispanic (90 percent), married (80 percent), and was raised in the church (90 percent).

Interestingly, 55 percent of respondents had served in a cross-cultural setting.

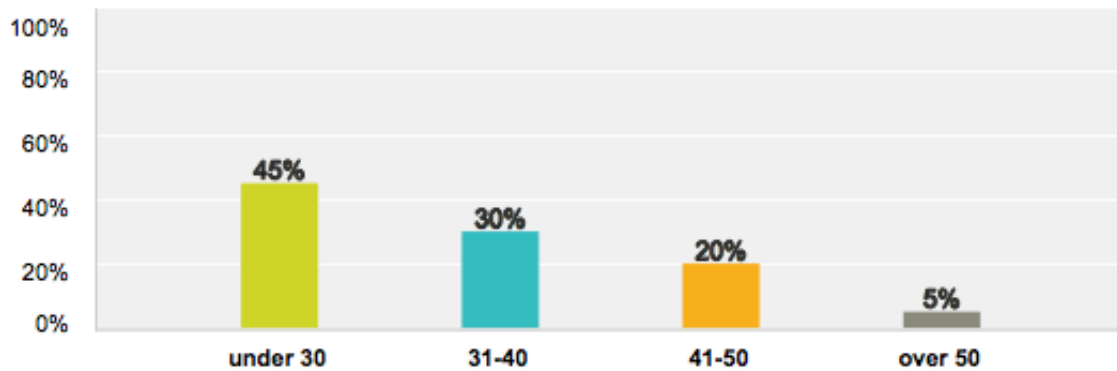


Figure 4.1. Participants—age (N=20).

Figure 4.2 presents a graphic view of the marital status of the participants, and, as could be anticipated, most were married. The singular divorcée remained anonymous throughout the class.

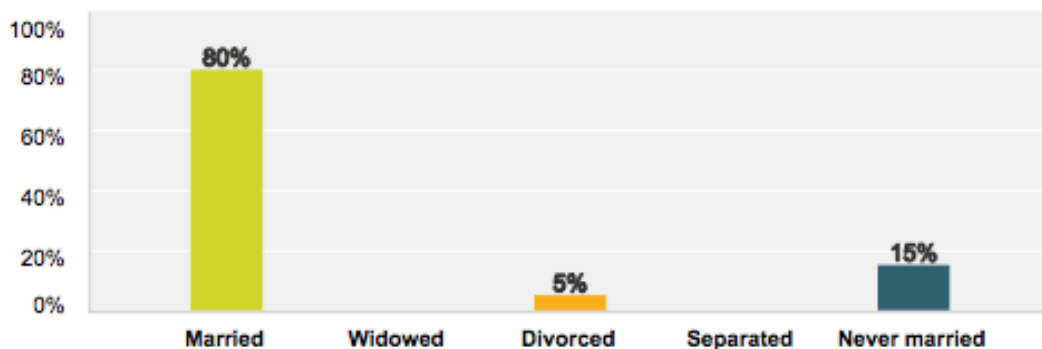


Figure 4.2. Participants—marital status (N=20).

Figure 4.3 identifies the ministry roles of the respondents. All were either preparing for ministry or were presently serving in ministry (26.32 percent as lead pastor and 36.84 percent as pastoral staff).

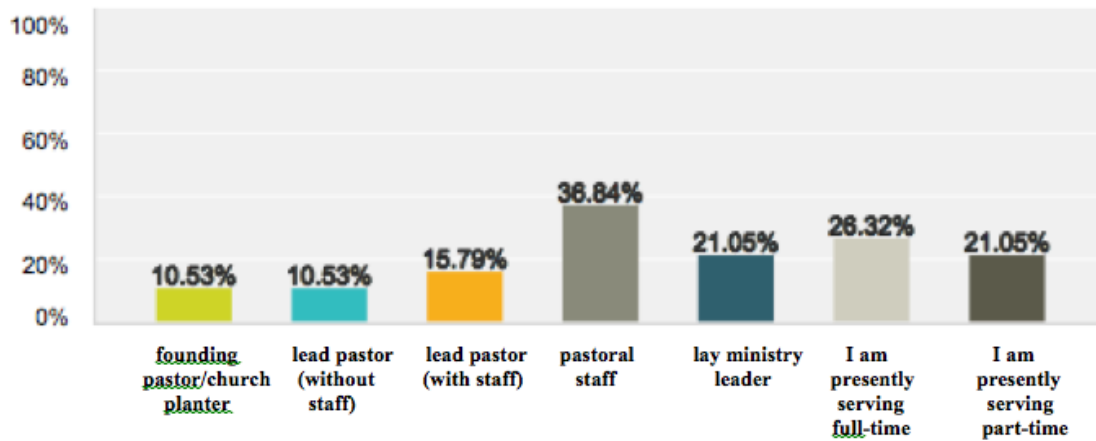


Figure 4.3. Participants—ministry role (N=19).

Figure 4.4 identifies the total years served in ministry by each participant. The majority of those surveyed had served in ministry for fewer than ten years (78.95 percent see Figure 4.4).

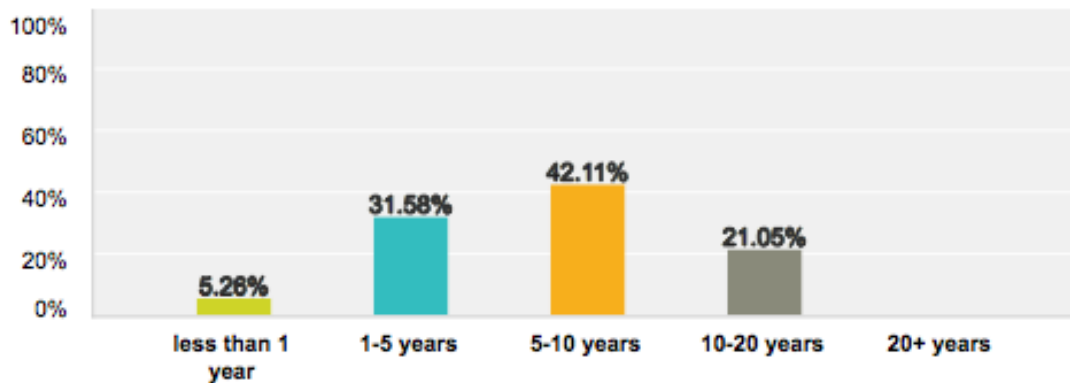


Figure 4.4. Participants—years in ministry (N=19).

As Figure 4.5 shows, those assigned in ministry have served in their present assignment for fewer than five years (57.89 percent). If the one non-responder is not active in ministry, that would bring the unassigned up to 20 percent, equaling those serving less than one year and those serving five to ten years. The designation of *unassigned* does not delineate between a never assigned, recent graduate and a formerly assigned minister between charges.

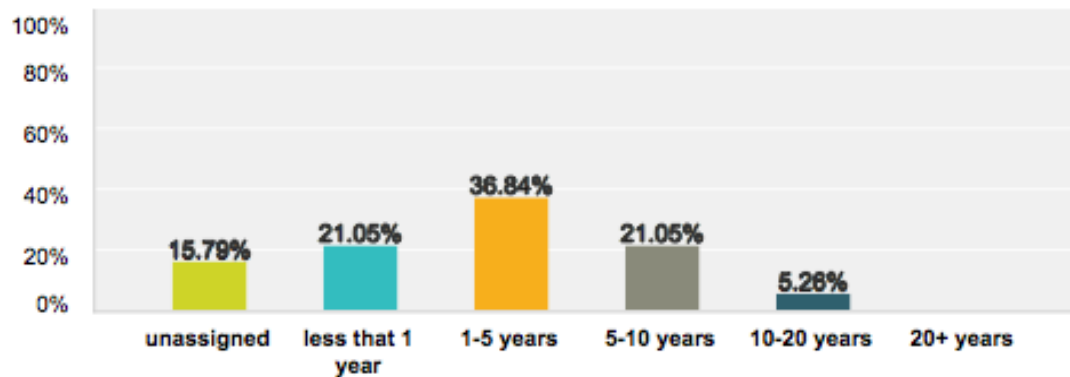


Figure 4.5. Participants—years in present ministry assignment (N=19).

Figure 4.6 portrays the ministerial credentials of the respondents. While 31.58 percent were ordained elders, another 47.37 percent were pursuing ordination as local and district licensed pastors.

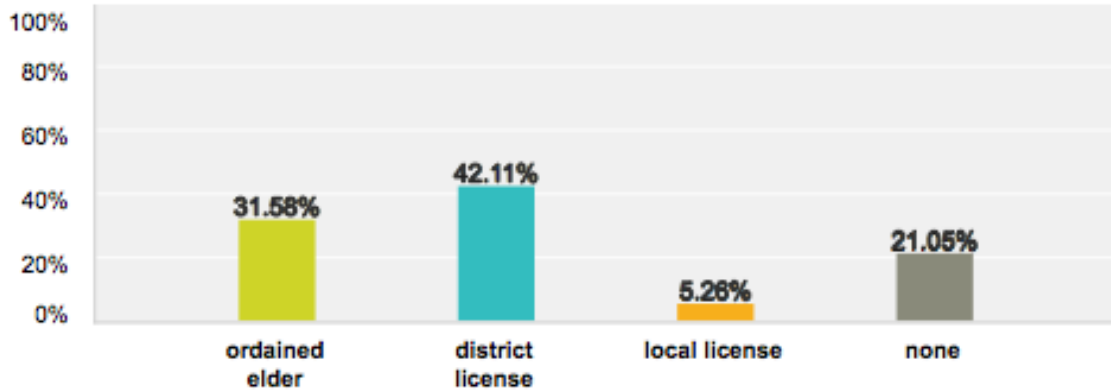


Figure 4.6. Participants—ministerial credentials (N=19).

Figure 4.7 identifies the areas of ministry specialization. Those serving in staff ministry represent the various age-group ministries (children, youth, young adult/college, and senior adult) and church administration. Examining the coalescing areas of *formissional worship*, I noted staff members serving in worship/music (20.00 percent), discipleship/spiritual formation (26.67 percent), and outreach/mission (33.33 percent).

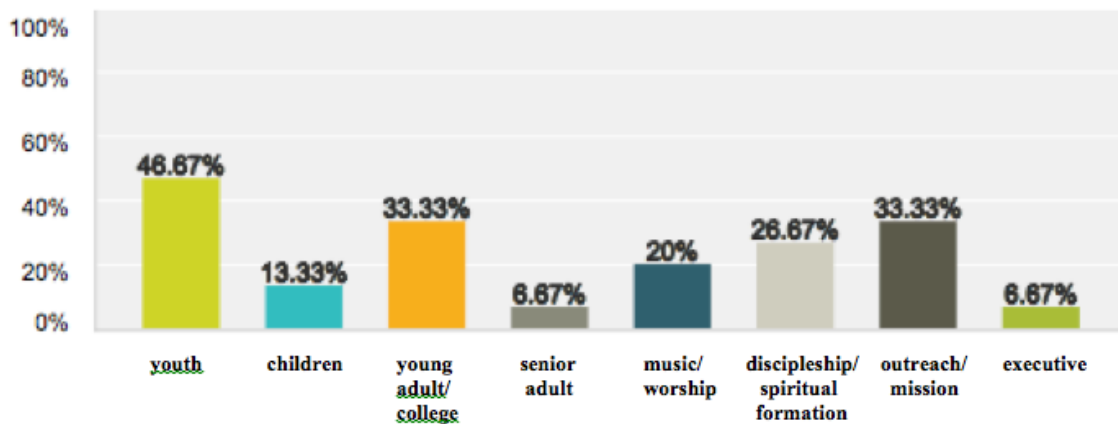


Figure 4.7. Participants—ministry areas among pastoral staff members (N=15).

As Figure 4.8 illustrates, the participants were serving predominantly in the Church of the Nazarene. Through interaction with the class, I know that the two non-respondents were serving in non-Nazarene churches.

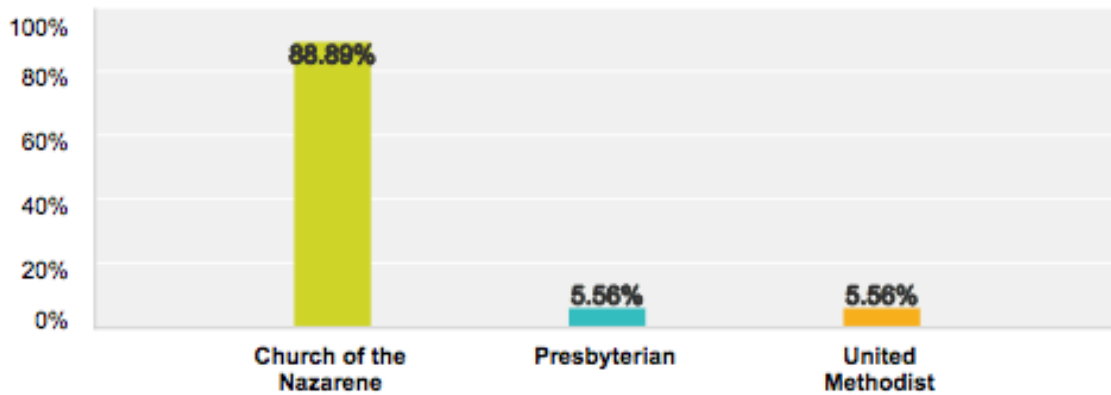


Figure 4.8. Participants' churches—denomination (N=18).

Figure 4.9 shows the average worship attendance of the respondents' churches in 2012. While there were no churches averaging 1000 or more, 65 percent averaged fewer than 250.

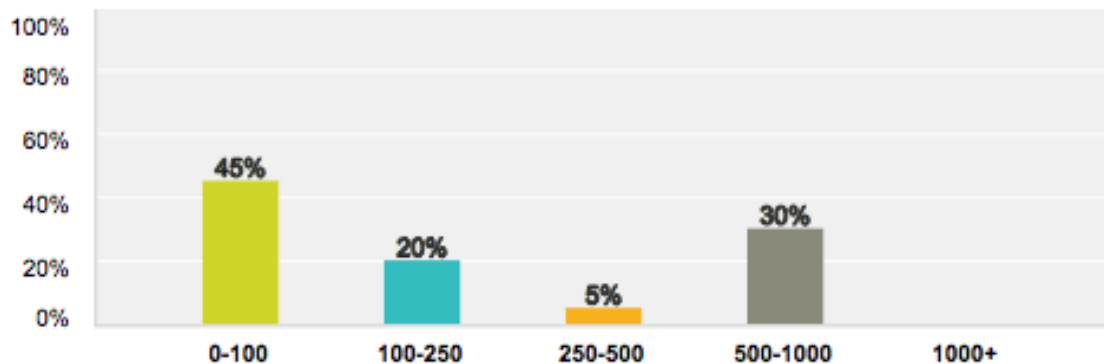


Figure 4.9. Participants' churches—2012 average worship attendance (N=20).

Most of the churches in which the respondents served have a single worship service on Sunday morning (75 percent). Figure 4.10 gives details on the 25 percent of churches with multiple services: Primarily the same venue is used (55.56 percent); the same minister speaks (55.56 percent); however, the worship leader is changed according to the targeted group (77.78 percent).

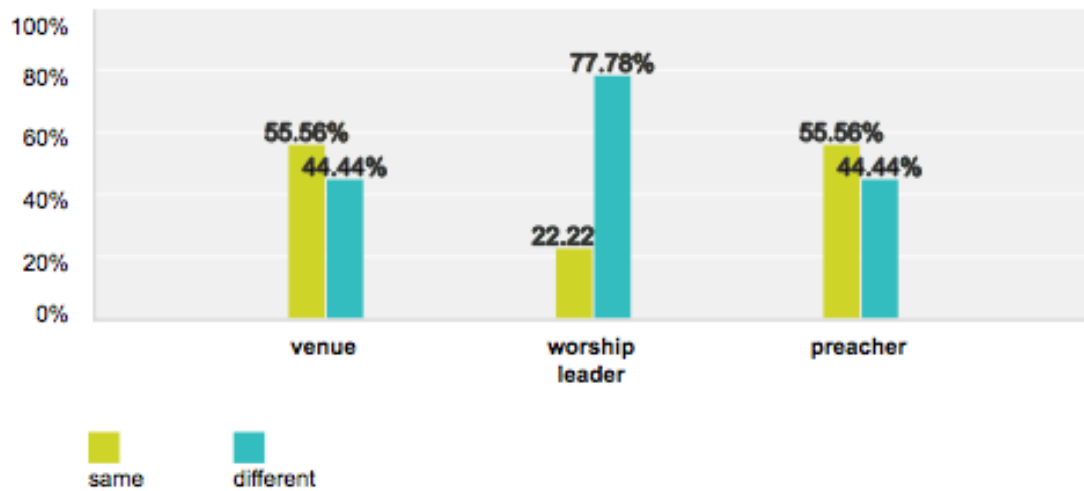


Figure 4.10. Participants' churches—multiple service distinctives (N=9).

Figure 4.11 shows us that half of the churches were over fifty years old, while 15 percent are less than ten years old. Interestingly, only one church among the respondents was started between 1988 and 2003.

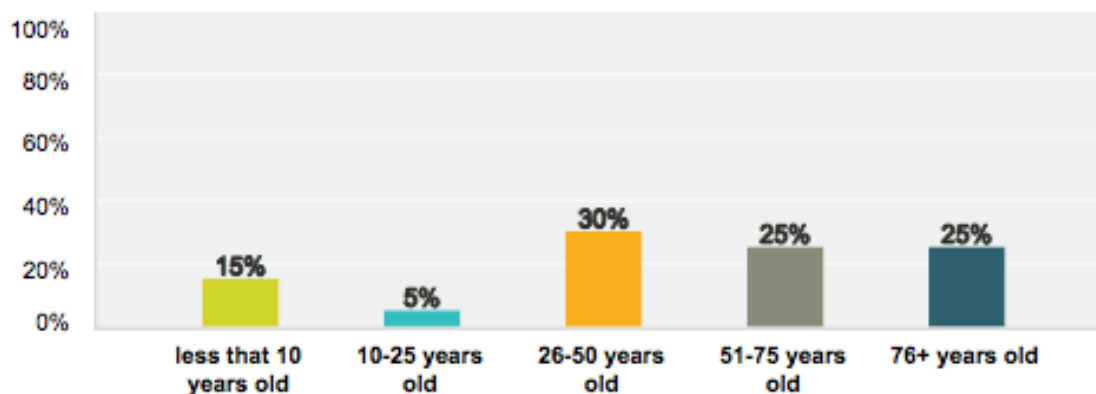


Figure 4.11. Participants' churches—age of church/founding date (N=20).

Figure 4.12 illustrates that of those who have celebrated their golden anniversary as a body of believers, 95 percent of them occupied a new worship space within that fifty years—40 percent of the churches have built new worship facilities in the last ten years. Understandably, the life expectancy of institutional buildings (e.g., churches, schools, hospitals) seldom exceeds fifty years.

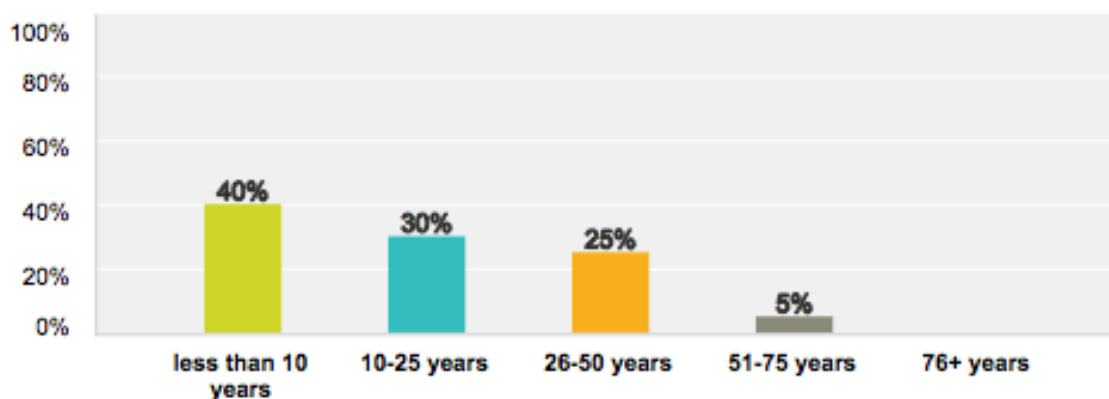


Figure 4.12. Participants' churches—years in present worship facility (N=20).

An amalgam of the respondents' churches would be located in a suburban community (see Figure 4.13), populated by people 36-50 years of age (see Figure 4.14),

with the majority of the congregants living within fifteen minutes of the church they attend (see Figure 4.15). Typically the congregants wear jeans while the platform participants are business casual (see Figure 4.16). The “other” of Figure 4.13 was designated as a village.

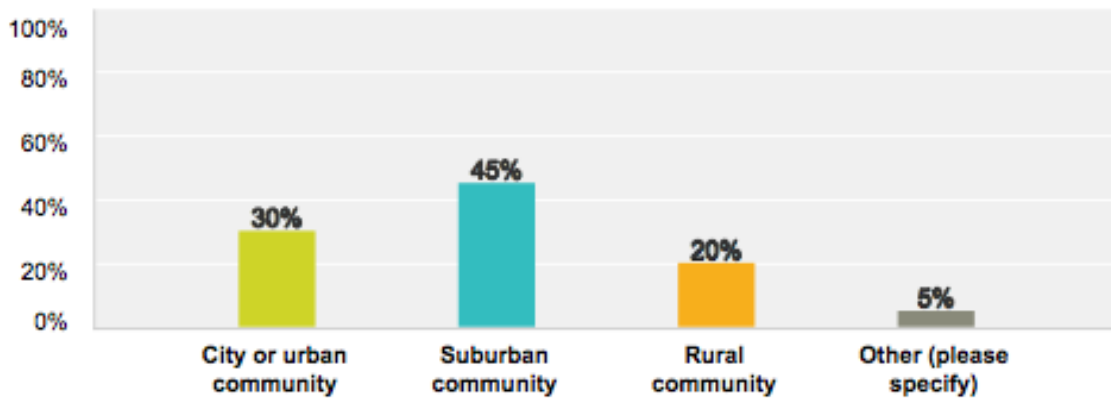


Figure 4.13. Participants' churches—location (N=20).

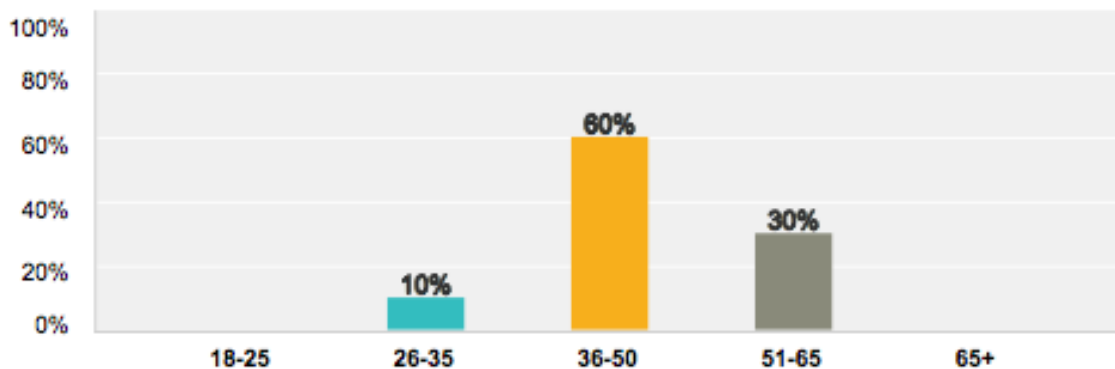


Figure 4.14. Participants' churches—average age of congregants (N=20).

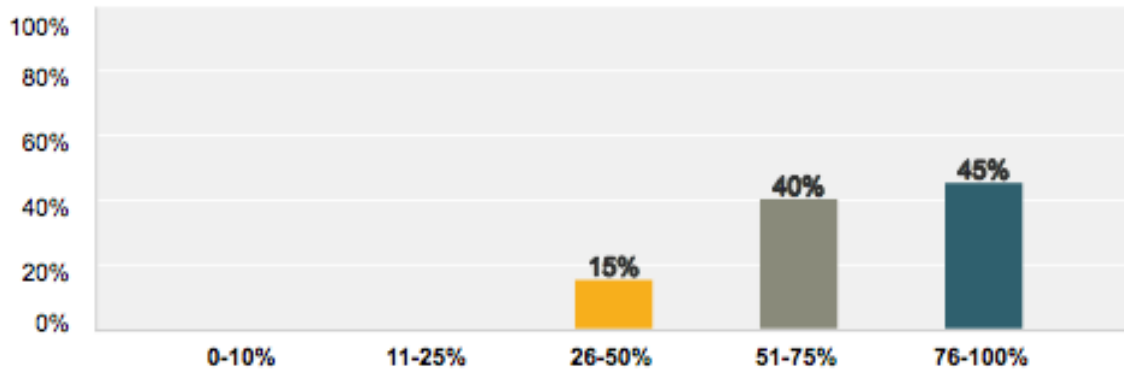


Figure 4.15. Participants' churches—percentage of regular attenders living within fifteen minutes of church (N=20).

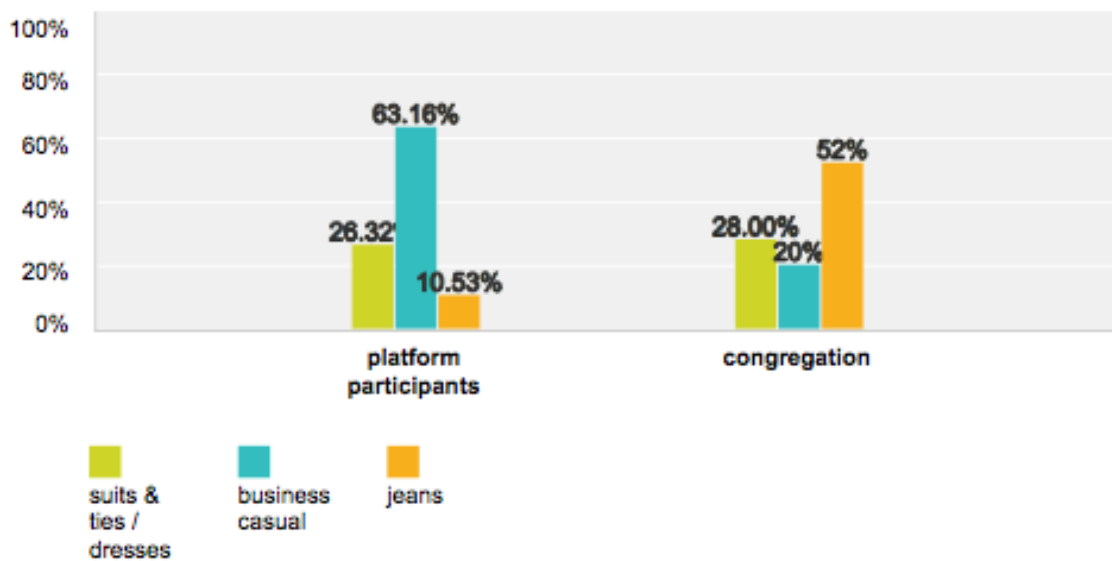


Figure 4.16. Participants' churches—worship attire (N=19).

The norms in communal worship for this sample include sixteen to thirty minutes of singing (see Figure 4.17). Open altar/family prayer time is observed weekly in most churches (see Figure 4.18), while a weekly altar call for decision is much less frequent (see Figure 4.19).

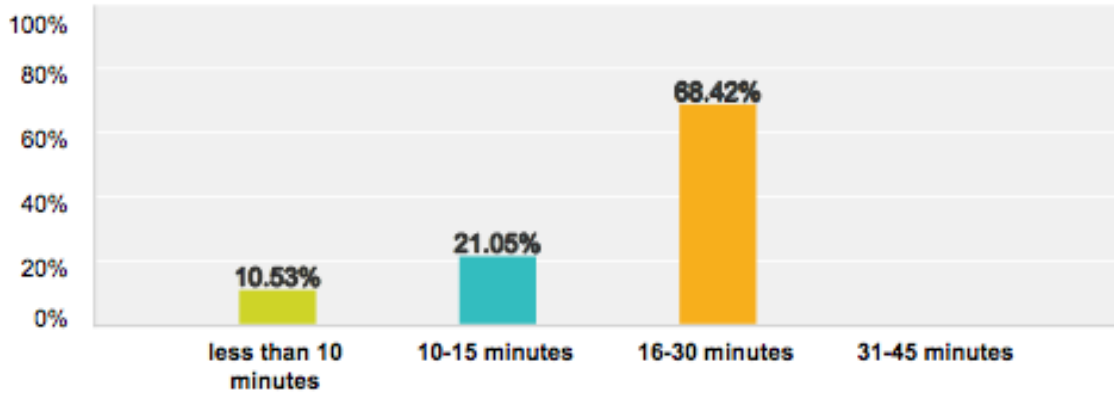


Figure 4.17. Participants' churches—congregational singing in worship (N=19).

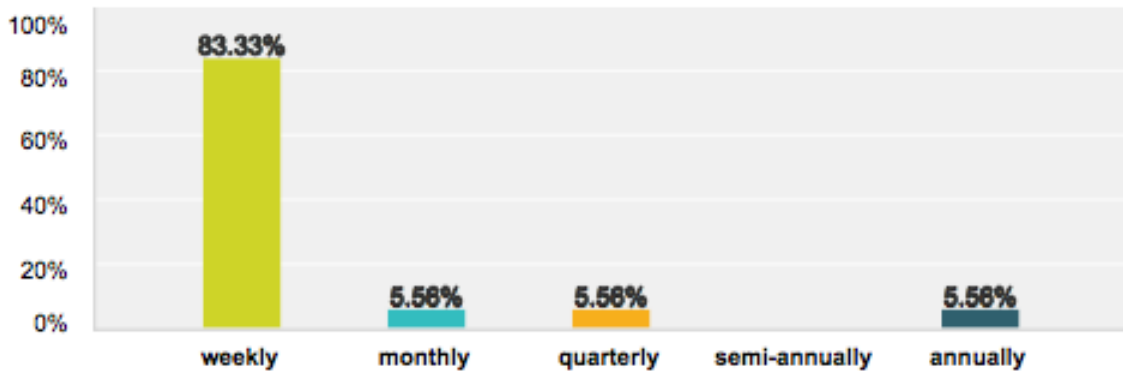


Figure 4.18. Participants' churches—open altar/family prayer time (N=18).

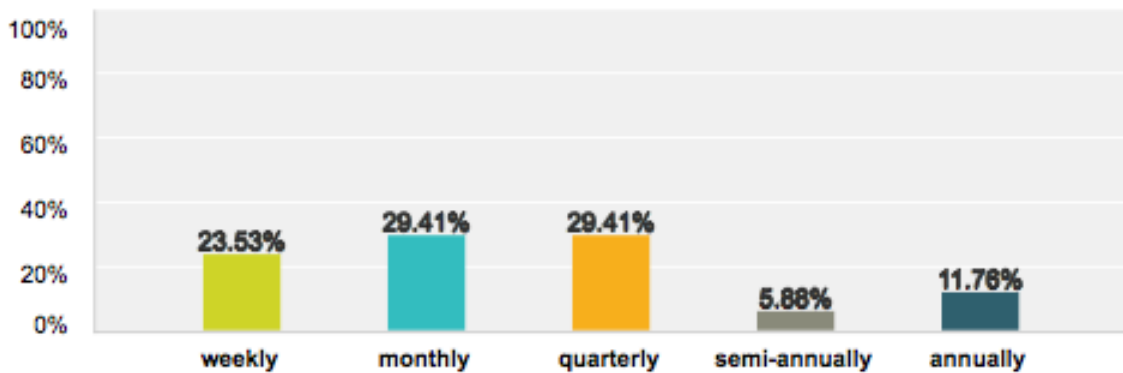


Figure 4.19. Participants' churches—altar call/invitation for decision (N=17).

Sacramentally, most polled offer communion monthly (see Figure 4.20) and baptisms annually (see Figure 4.21). Creeds are seldom used, while responsive readings and multiple Scripture readings are used sparingly (see Figure 4.22), yet every church follows a liturgical pattern recognizable by the congregants.

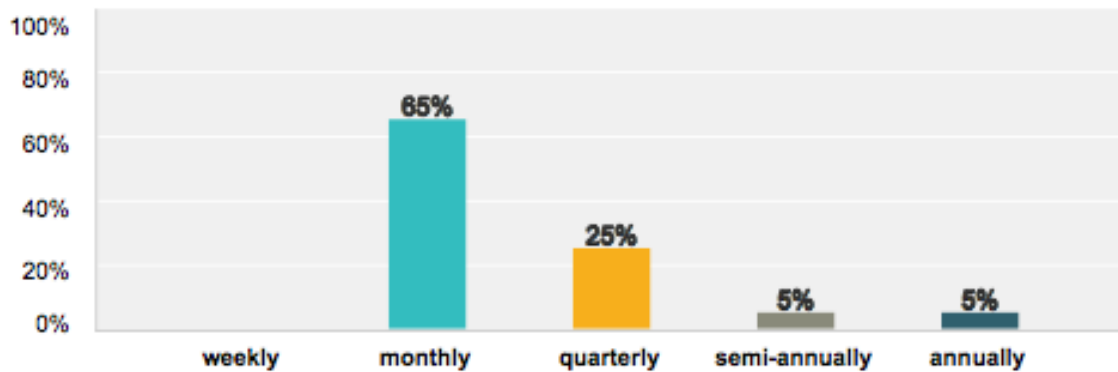


Figure 4.20. Participants' churches—frequency of communion (N=20).

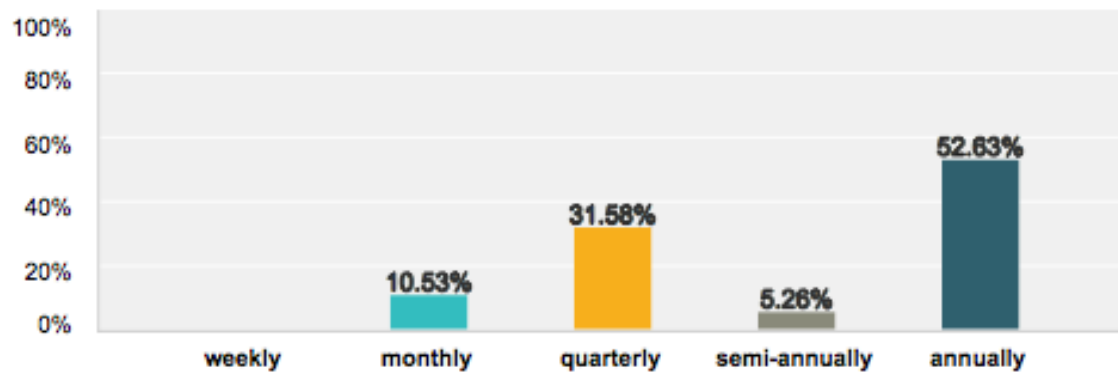


Figure 4.21. Participants' churches—frequency of baptism (N=19).

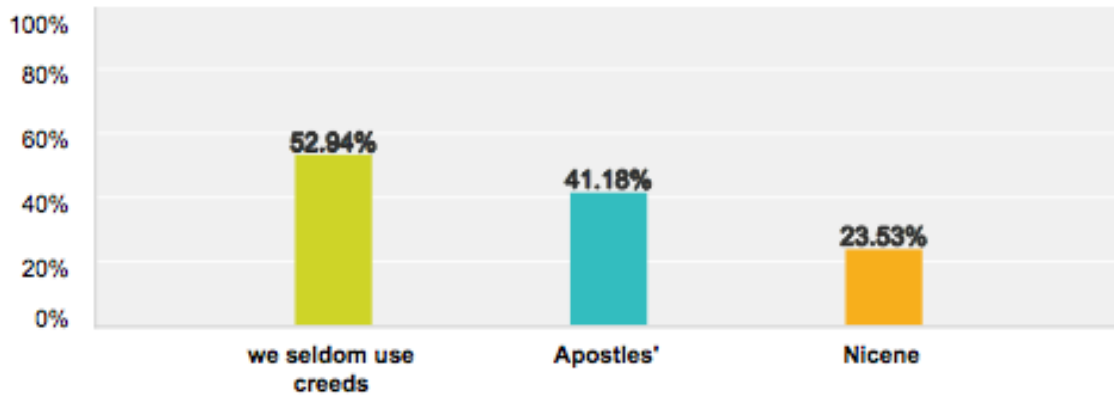


Figure 4.22. Participants' churches—use of creeds in worship (N=17).

In order to get a clearer picture of the local churches in which the students were serving, I stayed away from the ambiguous designations of worship style, such as contemporary, traditional, and modern. Instead, I opted for a twenty-question proxemics overview. A cross and/or a projection screen were displayed in 80 percent of the churches examined. Stage lights and/or a praise team were found in 70 percent of the churches (see Figures 4.23 and 4.24).

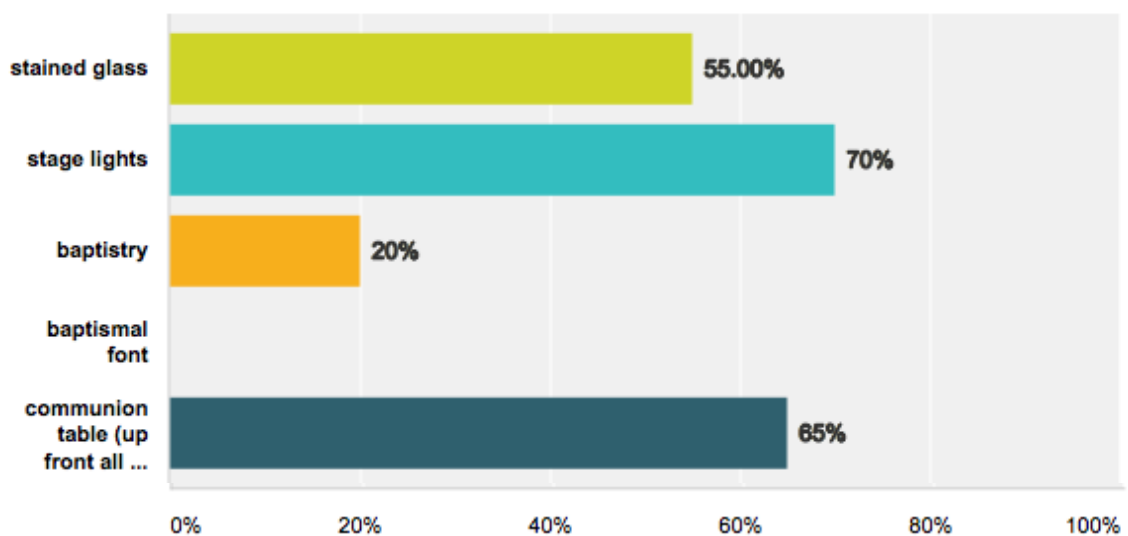


Figure 4.23. Participants' churches—proxemics, part 1 (N=20).

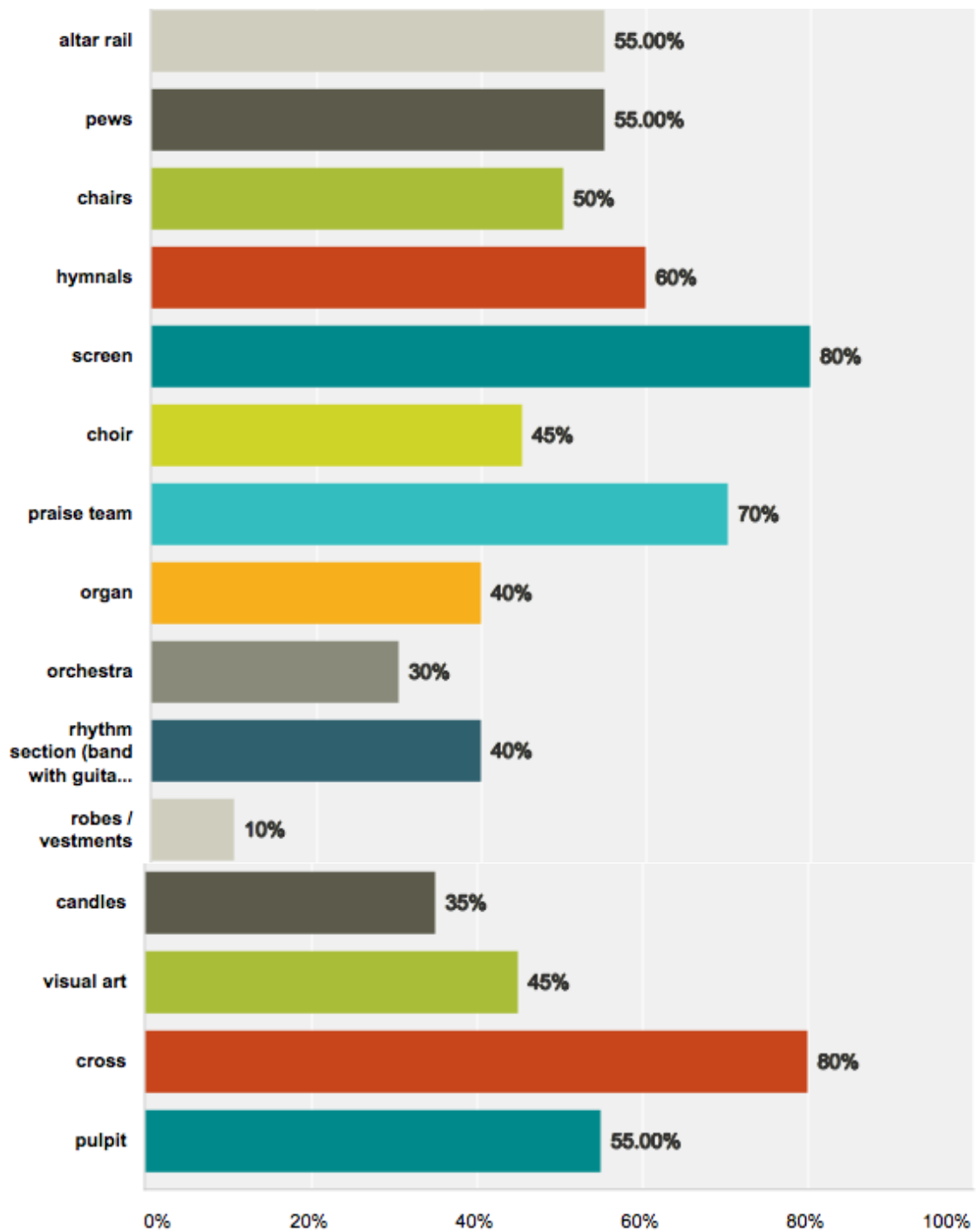


Figure 4.24. Participants' churches—proxemics, part 2 (N=20).

Most of the respondents' churches had the communion table up front all the time (65 percent), but only 20 percent had a baptistry. Over half (55 percent) of these churches favor the traditional furnishings (pews, altar rail, and pulpit). While 40 percent use the organ, another 40 percent employed a rhythm section with guitars and drums.

Research Question #1

What were the levels of cognition, attitude, and behavior of the students regarding *formissional worship* prior to the class?

The three constituent elements of *formissional worship* (worship, spiritual formation, and mission) were examined individually (see Tables 4.1-4.5). Understanding worship to be communal event, personal practices, and doxological lifestyle, the responses were subdivided along these lines (see Tables 4.1-4.3). Questions from the seventy-five-question survey are designated parenthetically as Q. The pretest understanding of anticipating the future (Q51) and remembering the past (Q73) in communal worship was relatively strong (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Pretest Understanding of Worship—Communal Event (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
5	3.10	1.26
40	3.55	1.43
44	3.90	0.89
51	4.35	0.91
61	3.50	1.07
73	4.80	1.10

Considering the personal aspect of worship, the pretest identified a definite understanding that God calls people into worship (Q43) whereupon they love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30; Q9). The participants did not believe worship to be a celebration of the present, apart from the past and future (Q14).

Table 4.2. Pretest Understanding of Worship—Personal Practices (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
9	5.75	0.54
14	2.20	1.03
23	5.30	1.08
30	3.90	1.22
43	5.75	0.43

The pretest understanding of worship as doxological lifestyle was noted in Table 4.3. The points of consonance centered on worship as a lifestyle (Q56) in which people love their neighbor as themselves (Q18). The students also strongly affirmed, the idea of the existence of worship even if humankind had never been created (Q10).

Table 4.3. Pretest Understanding of Worship—Doxological Lifestyle (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
10	5.05	1.28
18	5.30	0.64
25	3.45	1.16
56	5.60	0.58
66	5.25	0.77

At the outset of the course, participants strongly affirmed the Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31) as the model for spiritual formation in which they love God with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Q27), and love their neighbor as themselves (Q42). In addition, the community of faith was viewed as essential to spiritual formation (Q54; see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4. Pretest Understanding of Spiritual Formation (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
6	4.95	0.75
15	3.30	0.84
21	3.95	1.07
27	5.30	0.71
29	4.40	1.24
41	3.15	1.71
42	5.20	0.68
46	3.55	1.32
54	5.20	0.60
71	4.55	0.92

Students began this course, believing mission to be a call to serve (Q39) understood as loving God with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Q34), and as loving their neighbor as themselves (Q 55). However, an interesting juxtaposition was identified as many viewed a missional agenda as the key to church growth (Q16; see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5. Pretest Understanding of Mission (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
7	4.10	0.94
16	4.75	0.77
24	2.55	1.20
34	5.55	0.67
39	5.00	0.89
48	5.00	0.71
52	3.30	0.84
55	5.50	0.50
59	5.05	0.65
72	4.00	1.10

The pre-class understanding of the students regarding the various iterations combining worship, mission, and spiritual formation are displayed in Tables 4.6-4.8. The coalescence of all three elements was examined in Table 4.9.

Considering mission and spiritual formation apart from worship created an uncomfortable paradigm identified as either missional formation or formational mission (see Table 4.6). The pretest revealed a mind-set of activism that tacitly subsumes worship affirming that mission begins in spiritual formation (Q64) and that as a Christian, their life focus is winning the lost and making disciples (Q20). The participants indicated a strong belief that spiritual formation is missional (Q11).

**Table 4.6. Pretest Understanding of Missional Formation/Formational Mission
(N=20)**

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
11	4.75	0.89
20	4.95	0.80
35	4.00	1.05
38	4.50	0.87
58	3.05	1.07
64	4.30	0.84
77	4.65	0.85

At the course's beginning, those surveyed affirmed the reciprocal nature of worship and spiritual formation in that spiritual formation deepens worship (Q31) and worship deepens spiritual formation (Q76). A relatively strong understanding was held that disciples are formed as they lead worship services (Q12). Similarly, participants subscribed to the belief that what they sing, say, and pray in worship forms them spiritually (Q19), or, said differently, they are formed through the liturgy in corporate worship (Q67; see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7. Pretest Understanding of Formational Worship (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
12	4.40	1.32
19	4.75	0.77
31	5.45	0.50
33	5.00	0.84
36	4.35	0.91
49	2.37	0.98
62	4.85	0.57
67	4.00	1.10
69	4.50	1.40
76	5.40	0.58
79	3.80	1.12

The pretest understanding of the relationship between mission and worship was described in Table 4.8. The students solidly affirmed that mission and worship occur simultaneously as the disciples' love for God is embodied in their love for others (Q65). In a parallel movement, participants endorsed the idea that everyone in their communities should hear the good news in their native tongue (Q28), though only one served in a multilingual context, and that mission is loving their neighbor as themselves (Q60). A relatively strong view was held among students that the sacraments are missional (Q13).

Table 4.8. Pretest Understanding of Missional Worship (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
13	4.70	0.84
26	4.60	0.86
28	5.25	0.77
32	4.45	0.92
45	5.00	0.84
50	3.15	1.24
60	5.40	0.66
63	4.05	1.02
65	5.35	0.65
70	4.70	0.90
75	5.20	0.60

At the course's inception students showed a basic understanding of *formissional worship* as they held a strong conviction that an integrative view of worship, mission, and spiritual formation is essential (Q8) and that worship is both formational and missional (Q22). In addition, the pretest revealed agreement that the aim of their ongoing participation in the means of grace (via spiritual formation and worship) is to become a means of grace (via mission) (Q78; see Table 4.9).

Tables 4.1-4.9 provide a detailed examination of the incoming students' understanding of worship, spiritual formation, and mission. Also considered is the respondents' perception of the interplay of these elements.

Table 4.9. Pretest Understanding of *Formissional Worship* (N=20)

Question #	Pretest Average	Pretest Standard Deviation
8	5.40	0.58
17	4.85	0.79
22	5.15	0.65
37	4.20	1.03
47	4.80	0.60
53	2.65	1.24
57	2.85	1.28
68	2.95	1.02
74	5.50	0.67
78	5.05	0.60

Research Question #2

Did the students experience significant change in cognition, attitude, or behavior regarding *formissional worship* as a result of participating in the course?

Mirroring the pretest, the strongest points of consonance in communal worship center on *anamnesis*—remembering the past (Q73) and *prolepsis*—anticipating the future (Q51). The participants strengthened their endorsement of anticipating the future in worship (Q51; see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10. Posttest Understanding of Worship—Communal Event (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
5	2.95	1.28	0.15	0.625
40	3.70	1.19	-0.15	0.527
44	4.10	0.77	-0.20	0.297
51	4.85	0.57	-0.50	0.029
61	3.50	1.02	0.00	1.000
73	4.75	0.99	0.05	0.847

No significant movement was noted in the post-class understanding of the personal aspect of worship. As in the pretest, a strong conviction was evidenced among the students that worship include both, the remembrance of the past and the anticipation of the future (Q14). The respondents reiterated a definite understanding that God calls us into worship (Q43) whereupon they love God with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Q9; see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. Posttest Understanding of Worship—Personal Practices (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
9	5.75	0.54	0.000	1.000
14	1.90	1.09	0.30	0.400
23	5.40	0.80	-0.20	0.507
30	3.75	1.04	0.15	0.702
43	5.90	0.30	-0.15	0.186

The posttest revealed an increased understanding of worship as God’s invitation, as the respondents decreased their endorsement of initiating the conversation of worship (Q25). The students held more strongly after the course that worship would exist even if humankind had never been created (Q10; see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12. Posttest Understanding of Worship—Doxological Lifestyle (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
10	5.63	0.81	-0.58	0.024
18	5.45	0.50	-0.15	0.330
25	1.80	1.21	1.65	0.000
56	5.75	0.43	-0.15	0.330
66	5.30	0.84	-0.05	0.772

At the end of the course, participants strongly reaffirmed the Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31) as the model for spiritual formation (Qs 27 and 42). Though unchanged, the community of faith was viewed as essential to spiritual formation (Q54; see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13. Posttest Understanding of Spiritual Formation (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
6	4.75	0.62	0.20	0.215
15	3.35	1.06	-0.05	0.858
21	3.90	1.04	0.05	0.888
27	5.60	0.58	-0.30	0.110
29	4.35	1.19	0.05	0.858
41	3.20	1.78	-0.05	0.900
42	5.50	0.59	-0.30	0.030
46	3.80	1.08	-0.25	0.470
54	5.20	0.68	0.00	1.000
71	4.50	0.81	0.05	0.825

The singular point of significant change in the understanding of mission during the course was seen in the response to the students' decreased belief that as leaders in the church, they see a missional agenda as the key to church growth (Q16). In light of the diminishing agreement with the *outside in* movement of the missional agenda, I am led to extrapolate that the respondents prefer the *inside out* understanding of the church's mission (Schattauer, "Liturgical Assembly" 2-3).

Table 4.14. Posttest Understanding of Mission (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
7	4.35	0.65	-0.25	0.287
16	3.95	0.92	0.80	0.004
24	2.80	1.17	-0.25	0.309
34	5.55	0.59	-0.30	0.285
39	4.90	0.83	0.10	0.666
48	5.05	1.07	-0.05	0.874
52	3.45	1.28	-0.15	0.691
55	5.68	0.57	-0.18	0.163
59	5.15	0.73	-0.10	0.541
72	4.10	1.26	-0.10	0.694

The posttest understanding of the interplay between mission and spiritual formation, apart from worship, revealed some changes. The course strengthened students' conviction that spiritual formation is missional (Q11). Also noted was the decrease in belief that mission begins in spiritual formation (Q64; see Table 4.15).

Table 4.15. Posttest Understanding of Missional Formation/Formational Mission (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
11	5.45	0.59	-0.70	0.0009
20	4.80	0.93	0.15	0.591
35	3.55	0.86	0.45	0.176
38	4.55	0.97	-0.05	0.804
58	2.70	0.95	0.35	0.201
64	3.70	0.84	0.60	0.042
77	4.85	0.85	-0.20	0.359

At the course's conclusion, those surveyed strengthened their conviction that they are formed as they lead worship services (Q12) and, to a lesser extent, they are formed as they plan worship services (Q36). The respondents' pretest beliefs were strengthened in their understanding of *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*—what they sing, say, and pray in worship forms them spiritually (Q19) and especially that they are formed through the liturgy in corporate worship (Q67; see Table 4.16).

Table 4.16. Posttest Understanding of Formational Worship (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
12	5.15	0.73	-0.75	0.021
19	5.10	0.83	-0.35	0.049
31	5.40	0.49	0.05	0.716
33	5.25	0.54	-0.25	0.204
36	4.70	0.78	-0.35	0.217
49	2.80	0.93	-0.43	0.119
62	4.80	0.93	0.05	0.789
67	4.50	0.81	-0.50	0.038
69	4.40	1.32	0.10	0.649
76	5.45	0.67	-0.05	0.748
79	4.05	0.92	-0.25	0.498

The posttest understanding of the relationship between mission and worship revealed very little change during the class. The students solidly reaffirmed that mission and worship occur simultaneously as their love for God is embodied in their love for others (Q65) that everyone in the community should hear the good news in their native tongue (Q28), and that mission is loving their neighbor as themselves (Q60). The singular

point of significant change was the strengthening of the students' belief that the sacraments are missional (Q13; see Table 4.17).

Table 4.17. Posttest Understanding of Missional Worship (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
13	5.26	0.44	-0.56	0.008
26	4.75	0.77	-0.15	0.527
28	5.50	0.59	-0.25	0.096
32	4.75	1.09	-0.30	0.285
45	5.05	0.92	-0.05	0.815
50	3.10	1.26	0.05	0.891
60	5.45	0.59	-0.05	0.666
63	4.20	1.25	-0.15	0.545
65	5.20	0.75	0.15	0.453
70	4.30	1.10	0.40	0.189
75	5.37	0.74	-0.17	0.268

The posttest revealed an elevated understanding of *formissional worship* among the students as they reaffirmed a strong conviction that an integrative view of worship, mission, and spiritual formation is essential (Q8), while softening their belief that worship, mission, and spiritual formation lose their distinctiveness when viewed as an integrative whole (Q57). A stronger endorsement of the importance of the service closing as a catalyst between worship and mission was seen by the decreased belief that the closing (sending/blessing/benediction) of corporate worship is not particularly formational in connecting worship and mission (Q68). Significantly, students were

strengthened in their belief that worship is both formational and missional (Q22; see Table 4.18).

Table 4.18. Posttest Understanding of *Formissional Worship* (N=20)

Question #	Posttest Average	Posttest Standard Deviation	Differences of Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Tests for Correlated (Paired) Means
8	5.65	0.73	-0.25	0.234
17	5.10	0.89	-0.25	0.412
22	5.55	0.59	-0.40	0.008
37	4.42	0.99	-0.22	0.552
47	5.05	0.80	-0.25	0.135
53	2.15	1.15	0.50	0.163
68	2.50	1.24	0.45	0.154
74	5.05	0.67	0.45	0.058
78	5.10	0.70	-0.05	0.542

Demographic Data

Examining the posttest findings in light of the demographic data collected on day one of the class was revealing. A closer look was taken through the lenses of gender, whether the participant was raised in the church, the ministry position of the respondent, and the total number of years the student had served in ministry. All of the differences of means (averages) in Tables 4.19-4.22 were statistically at the .05 level by independent *t*-tests. All of these comparisons are conducted on the posttest responses.

**Table 4.19. Posttest Understanding through Demographic Lens—Gender
(Female = 6, Male = 14)**

SQ #	Statement	Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Test	Cumulative Results in Table #
5	Females held a stronger view of “worship is best understood as an event” than did males.	3.83 > 2.57	0.05	4.10
10	Males held the view that “there would be worship even if humankind had never been created” than did females in the course.	5.86 > 5.00	0.04	4.12
12	Males viewed that they were “formed as I lead worship services more than did females.	5.36 > 4.67	0.05	4.16
26	Males were more likely to hold a strong conviction that “the worship service is missional” than did females	5.00 > 4.17	0.03	4.17
32	Males held a stronger belief that “mission and worship occur concurrently as we contextualize/contemporize the worship service” than did females	5.14 > 3.83	0.01	4.17
48	Males affirmed that “mission is a matter of ‘being’ God’s people in the world” more strongly than did females.	5.43 > 4.17	0.01	4.14
57	Females believed that “worship, mission, and spiritual formation lose their distinctiveness when viewed as an integrative whole” more strongly than males.	3.83 > 1.86	0.01	4.18
59	Males believed “mission is joining God in his ongoing work in the world” more than did females.	5.36 > 4.67	0.05	4.14
65	Males expressed more positively that “mission and worship occur simultaneously as our love for God is embodied in our love for others” than did the females responding.	5.43 > 4.67	0.04	4.17
66	Males were more likely to hold the strong view that “worship is a divine ‘call and response’—a conversation” than females.	5.57 > 4.67	0.03	4.12
67	Males believed that they were “formed through the liturgy in corporate worship” more than did females.	4.79 > 3.83	0.01	4.16
68	Females saw that “the closing (sending/blessing/benediction) of the corporate worship is not particularly formational in connecting worship and mission” more than did male counterparts.	3.67 > 2.00	0.01	4.18
71	Males were more likely to endorse the conviction that “spiritual formation occurs best in groups (dialogical and relational) than did females.	4.79 > 3.83	0.01	4.13
75	Males held that “mission is worship” more strongly than did females.	5.57 > 4.80	0.05	4.17
76	Males affirmed that “worship deepens spiritual formation” more than did females.	5.64 > 5.00	0.05	4.16

For the most part, due to the sample profile, those raised in the church did not hold dissimilar beliefs from those who were not. Because the *no* group involved only two individuals, the following cannot be regarded as conclusive (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.20. Posttest Understanding through Demographic Lens—Raised in Church (No = 2, Yes = 18)

				Cumulative
SQ #	Statement	Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Test	Cumulative Results in Table #
29	Individuals who were not raised in the church were more likely to affirm that “spiritual formation occurs as I act my way into a new way of thinking” than did those who were raised in the church.	6.00 > 4.17	0.04	4.13
43	Those reared in the church believed more strongly that “God calls us into worship” than those who were not raised in the church	5.94 > 5.50	0.05	4.11

Interestingly, comparing the beliefs of the lead pastors to those of the pastoral staff members revealed very little variance. Two students surveyed were unassigned; therefore, they were not included in the comparisons (see Table 4.21).

Table 4.21. Posttest Understanding through Demographic Lens—Ministry Position (Lead Pastor = 11, Staff = 7)

SQ #	Statement	Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Test	Cumulative Results in Table #
21	Lead pastors affirmed that spiritual formation generally happens in a supplemental teaching role (discipleship/Christian education/catechesis) apart from corporate worship” more strongly than did staff members.	4.27 > 3.14	0.03	4.13
42	Staff members believe “in spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself” more strongly than did lead pastors.	5.86 > 5.27	0.05	4.13
64	Lead pastors were of the conviction that “mission begins in spiritual formation” more than were the staff members	4.18 > 3.00	0.01	4.15

Overall the view of those with longer ministry tenure did not vary significantly from those with less experience. The gross analysis of *t*-tests requires two samples for comparison; therefore, the population was arbitrarily divided into five years or less and more than five years in ministry (see Table 4.22).

Table 4.22. Posttest Understanding Through Demographic Lens—Years in Ministry (Fewer than 5 Years = 7, More than 5 years = 12)

SQ #	Statement	Averages	<i>p</i> of <i>t</i> -Test	Cumulative Results in Table #
8	Those in ministry longer held a stronger view that “an integrative view of worship, mission, and spiritual formation is absolutely essential” than did those in ministry five years or less.	5.92 > 5.25	0.05	4.18
23	More experienced ministers affirmed the conviction that “I have experienced more of God than I understand” than those with less ministry experience.	5.75 > 4.88	0.01	4.11
58	Individuals with longer ministries believed “my spiritual formation relies solely on my engagement in mission” more strongly than less experienced ministers.	3.38 > 2.25	0.01	4.15

A summary of the significant findings from the quantitative analysis examined in Tables 4.10-4.18 is reflected in Table 4.23. Only Table 4.11, the Posttest Understanding of Worship—Personal Practices, contained no meaningful discoveries. The findings are listed in the order they appeared on the survey, while referencing the tables from which they were gleaned.

Table 4.23. Summary of Significant Quantitative Findings (N=20)

Statement	SQ# (-) = Decrease	As Seen in Table
1. There would be worship even if humankind had never been created.	10	4.12
2. Spiritual formation is missional.	11	4.15
3. I am formed as I lead worship services.	12	4.16
4. The sacraments are missional.	13	4.17
5. As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as the key to church growth.	16 (-)	4.14
6. What I sing, say, and pray in worship forms me spiritually.	19	4.16
7. Worship is both formation and missional.	22	4.18
8. I initiate the “conversation” of worship.	25 (-)	4.12
9. In spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself.	42	4.13
10. In worship I anticipate the future.	51	4.10
11. Mission begins in spiritual formation.	64 (-)	4.15
12. I am formed through the liturgy in corporate worship.	67	4.16

Qualitative Data

The pre- and posttests included three open-ended questions in which the students were asked to define worship, mission, and spiritual formation. Though anonymous, the respondents selected a username (noted in parentheses below). Fourteen of the usernames remained consistent in the pre- and posttests, making individual changes in thought easy to track.

Searches of fifty key words were conducted on both the pre- and posttests, noting the changes in frequency and usage. Enlightening was the shift from *do* words (do, does, doing, done) to *be* words (be, being, become) as the respondents defined worship, mission, and spiritual formation. The *be* words employed in defining these three facets of *formissional worship* doubled from pre- to posttests—particularly in the area of mission

(an increase of 25 percent). Meanwhile, the *do* words were used 5 percent less across the boards.

In addition, the understanding of the relationship among worship, mission, and spiritual formation increased significantly. The posttest definition of worship showed a 10 percent increase of those connecting mission to worship and a 5 percent increase of those referring to spiritual formation in conjunction with worship. Mission, as defined at the end of class revealed a 35 percent increase of those connecting worship to mission and a 5 percent decrease of those associating spiritual formation to mission. The students' posttest definition of spiritual formation presented a 20 percent increase of those relating worship to spiritual formation and a 15 percent increase of those linking mission to spiritual formation. Overall, 25 percent of the class combined worship, mission, and spiritual formation in a posttest definition.

Worship defined. The pretest responses characterized worship as an event located in time: “gathered people” (F3253), “a time to glorify God” (473927), and “a human response to what God is doing in our midst” (L8806). From the outset the students affirmed that worship was more than the songs we sing (a1312; H7820). However, the scope of worship was understood to be personal, experiential, and subjective: “intimate time to praise the Lord” (W8610), “the condition of one’s heart before the Lord and how we express it” (P2529), and “an obedient response to the *will* of God” (emphasis mine; H1111). Both pre- and posttests shared the language of response. However, the posttest gave a stronger affirmation that God initiates worship.

The posttest understanding of worship showed movement from event to lifestyle: “an interactive relationship that permeates every fiber of our being” (F3253), becoming a

lifestyle to be lived (a1312; 473927), totally invading all areas of the disciples' life (H7820). Worship is "a whole life response to the glory of God" (T9458), through which the disciple glorifies God through his or her entire life (d3568). This lifestyle is understood as communal, obeisant, and objective: "celebrating through obedience to him, personally and corporately" (w2604), "worship is obedience to God" (P5246), "obedient response to the *word* of God" (emphasis mine; H1111), "responding to God's invitation" (B5121), and "the way that we respond to what God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives in both a personal and communal nature" (L8806). These statements reveal worship as doxological lifestyle emanating from the communal event and personal practices.

An integrative view of worship, mission, and spiritual formation emerged in the posttest: "Worship is all of our life. We give everything, receive Gods love, and pass that along to others as we are transformed" (T7447); "It [worship] is an integration of everything..." (a1312); and, "[Worship] integrates spiritual formation and mission. It is a lifestyle that enables us to live it out our calling as disciples of Jesus" (379254). Shifting the focus in that final statement, I would contend that the Holy Spirit enables and empowers the disciple to live the Christ-life. A lifestyle of glad surrender positions the disciple to receive.

Mission defined. The pretest indicated a single connection between mission and worship: "actively serving God by serving others" (I0630). By some, mission was seen as an expectation, end, or goal—to be carried out by the individual or institution: "the primary focus of effort in seeking to reach the vision" (sj3champton), "A goal that has been set and what those goals stand for" (W8610), "intentionally working or doing to accomplish a goal" (153763); "...what we intend to accomplish. In the church, it

[mission] should be given by God and encompass our purpose” (T7447); and, “Mission is a goal of an organization, for the church it is to the Great Commission” (B5121).

Admittedly, the question was open-ended, however, most responses sounded like a definition for a mission statement.

Some pretest respondents characterized mission as God’s call: “[w]hat God calls us to do with our lives as His Children” (L8806), and “the purposes for which God has called his people together” (F3253). The posttest answers shifted from understanding mission as call to seeing mission as response: “Mission is the response to God’s call on our lives in which we interact with the world around us” (L8806); “Mission is what the church does...” (a1312); and, “A response to the glory of God that is outward focused on others” (T9458). Whereas the emphasis in the pretest language of *call* is on the work to be done, the focus in the posttest language of *response* is fixed on God.

Mirroring the understanding of mission as *call* to mission as *response* is the shift from mission as solely doing to include mission as being (incarnational) as seen in these posttest responses: “Mission is living out God’s call on our lives. It is being what God wants us to be and doing what God wants us to do” (T7447); and “Mission is being the church to those in need in the world...” (B5121). Living out the *Shema* and the Greatest Commandment as an act of worship before the world is certainly missional.

The pre- to posttest shift in missional understanding of student d3568 from “[b]eing salt and light in the earth making disciples, loving people” to “[b]eing the hands and feet of Christ in the world,” clearly illustrates Mulholland’s shift from “being in the world for Christ” to “being in Christ for the world” (“Incarnating the Word”).

Many students never arrived at a point of connection between mission and worship in their posttest responses. Those suggesting connectivity varied in their responses: “[Mission is] the result of our worship” (F3253); “Mission flows out of our worship...” (H7820); and, “Mission is what the church does. It is about outreach.... [T]his will influence our worship” (a1312). Student H1111 offered the most succinct posttest response when asked to define mission by simply answering, “[W]orship.”

Spiritual formation defined. Both the pretest and the posttest show a clear understanding of spiritual formation as *being over doing*—swelling to a five to one margin in the posttest. Doing is clearly minimized as “practices/practicing” or “habits” are found four times in the pretests and none in the posttests. *Liturgy*—the work of the people—appears in neither pre- nor posttest responses.

Though “individual” was only used twice in the entire survey, both were in the definition of spiritual formation. Opposing such individualism would be “communal/ community,” “corporate” or “together,” which, combined, appeared only once in each the pre- and posttests. Seemingly, no definitive response as to the corporate nature of spiritual formation was identified.

The dominant words used to describe spiritual formation were

- Shape (two times pretest and posttest),
- Like/likeness (six times pretest to three times posttest),
- Form/formation/transformed/transformation (three times pretest and posttest),
- and
- Disciplines/discipleship (five times pretest to four times posttest).

The pretest of one respondent defined spiritual formation as “[t]he intentional process of becoming like Jesus” (T9458), while the posttest of another stated, “[Spiritual formation is] becoming like Christ” (w2604). Student 473927 articulated this becoming as a shift from understanding (“...process in [which] one ... understands more who God is...”) to experience (“place where one grows, in mind, heart, soul, and strength”).

However, a movement from the language of call to that of response is noted in student T7447. The pretest understanding of spiritual formation was, “...[T]hrough community, prayer, scripture, and experience, we should seek to emulate Christ’s character and model His love” while the posttest suggested spiritual formation to be “the process of God transforming us through our worship, through revelation, and through our communal growth in relationship.” The movement from a cloud of *should* to the dawning of transformation is seen as God works within a worshiper in community.

The paradox is seen in that God works through the works of a yielded follower: “God pressing and shaping us through spiritual disciplines” (T9458). Spiritual formation occurs as disciples become collaborators with grace in worship and mission. The posttest of H7820 offered “Spiritual formation flows directly out of worship and mission. [I]t is the daily self-surrender to your will to God’s will. It is the continuation of spiritual growth.” The formation of the disciple is possible only as worship and mission are held in balance.

Student A1312 noted the interplay as spiritual formation was “influenced [informed] by our worship” and was “apart [sic] of our worship.” One respondent saw spiritual formation as the result: “Ways God forms us and molds us into his image ...

encountered through worship and mission” (P5246). While another student viewed spiritual formation as the impetus: “...the way that we mature in Christ to grow into His image, which leads us to worship and fulfill our mission” (L8806). Again, student H1111 offered the most succinct posttest response defining spiritual formation as simply “[W]orship.”

Table 4.24 offers a summary of the significant changes in the participants’ definitions of worship, spiritual formation, and mission as reflected in the comparisons of the pre- to posttests. The overarching shifts in understanding were a movement from *doing* to *being*, and a tendency toward integration of the three elements.

Table 4.24. Summary of Significant Qualitative Findings from Survey (N=20)

Findings	Area(s) Addressed
A. A turning in the point of engagement as “being” over “doing” was observed.	Overview (all 3)
B. An increased awareness of the call to integration was recognized.	Overview (all 3)
C. A stronger affirmation of God’s divine initiative was discerned.	Worship
D. A broadening view of worship as lifestyle over even was ascertained.	Worship
E. A reframing of the language of mission—from call to response was detected.	Mission
F. An expanding vision of mission that values “being” alongside “doing” was seen.	Mission
G. A deepening realization that “God works through our works” was noted.	Spiritual formation
H. A shift of engagement in spiritual formation—from call to response was evidenced.	Spiritual formation

As the quantitative and qualitative elements of the pre- and posttests are viewed together, several common themes emerge. Table 4.25 offers a composite view of Table 4.23 (significant quantitative findings) and Table 4.24 (significant qualitative findings).

Table 4.25. Composite of Significant Findings from Survey (N=20)

Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Findings
1. There would be worship even if humankind had never been created (SQ10).	
2. Spiritual formation is missional (SQ11).	F. An expanding vision of mission that values “being” alongside “doing” was seen.
3. I am formed as I lead worship services (SQ12).	A. A turning in the point of engagement as “being” over “doing” was observed.
4. The sacraments are missional (SQ13).	D. A broadening view of worship as lifestyle over event was ascertained.
5. As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as the key to church growth(SQ16—decrease).	A. A turning in the point of engagement as “being” over “doing” was observed.
6. What I sing, say, and pray in worship forms me spiritually (SQ19).	G. A deepening realization that “God works through our works” was noted.
7. Worship is both formational and missional (SQ22).	B. An increased awareness of the call to integration was recognized.
8. I initiate the “conversation” of worship (SQ25—decrease).	C. A stronger affirmation of God’s divine initiative was discerned.
9. In spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself (SQ42).	H. A shift of engagement in spiritual formation—from call to response—was evidenced.
10. In worship I anticipate the future (SQ51).	
11. Mission begins in spiritual formation(SQ64—decrease).	E. A reframing of the language of mission—from call to response—was detected.
12. I am formed through the liturgy in corporate worship (SQ67).	G. A deepening realization that “God works through our works” was noted.

While most significant quantitative findings were reflected in the qualitative findings, items 1 and 10 found no points of resonance. By viewing 1, 8, and 10 together, I can affirm that worship is rooted in God’s divine initiative (8)—from beginning (1) to end (10). Combining items in the quantitative list where duplication in the qualitative list occurs can further refine the final list.

Research Question #3

What aspects of the class experience contributed most significantly to these changes?

A threaded discussion on a closed Facebook group was employed throughout the class. The expectation was one post and two responses to other postings per week for each of the twenty students. Meeting this requirement would generate sixty entries per week; over the seven weeks of class 420 entries would be produced. I copied and pasted all of these entries into a Microsoft Word document to assist in searches. The body of work consisted of 410 entries in an 87-page document that I examined through 127 different searches.

Unlike the pre- and posttests, the Facebook respondents were not anonymous. However, I have assigned pseudonyms to ensure anonymity when citing specific postings. The posts varied in length and depth. Most grappled openly with the disparity of *what could be* versus *what is* in their particular ministry context. Students responding to the post of a classmate provided points of identification: “I’ve had the same question.... [O]ur church struggles with that too.” Few presumed to offer solutions. The purpose of these postings was stated in the class syllabus (see Appendix B):

Think of this as *exhaling* what you’ve just experienced (SU-MO). Each of these is a response to your weekend worship experience through the lens of the readings and class discussions. This is not a book report on what you have read—nor is it a play-by-play of what happened in church on Sunday. Connect the dots! Examine what you are experiencing in light of what you have read or heard.

Therefore, the content of the postings ran parallel with the due dates for readings and assignments. To borrow a phrase from social media, this ongoing conversation showed what was trending on Twitter or, in this case, on Facebook. These postings embedded within the intervention provided a sense of immediacy, while the findings of the pre- and posttests revealed for us the residual effects of the class experience.

A high level of synthesis was seen in the student posts as they examined current practices in their ministry context through the varied lenses of learning. To assist in identifying the curricular catalysts, I grouped the Facebook posts in three sections: early (weeks 1-2), middle (weeks 3-5), and late (weeks 6-7). Such examination illuminated what aspects of the class experience contributed most significantly to the changes noted in the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

Typically the four-hour class experience consisted of a seventy-five-minute opening session in which I did a devotional and lectured on the topic of the day (e.g., invitation, revelation). After a fifteen-minute break, guests presented on weeks two through six for a seventy-five-minute offering, ending with a question-and-answer time. Following another fifteen-minute break, the class gathered for sixty minutes to discuss the readings and assignments.

The order was altered on the first and last days to accommodate the survey administration. The survey, taken at the beginning of the class on day one and at the end of class on day seven, framed the entire experience.

Early Postings (Weeks 1-2)

The curricular emphases for the first two weeks of class centered on worship as invitation and worship as revelation. The points of engagement were

- Survey—Pretest taken at the beginning of day one;
- Devotionals—Come Up Here—Rev. 1, 4; God Speaks—Deut. 6: 4-9;
- Guests—Dr. Virginia Cameron, guest lecturer on the sacraments;

- Readings—“A Rose by Any Other Name,” Lester Ruth; *Worship on Earth as It Is in Heaven*, Rory Noland, part 1 (Psalms); *The Worship Architect*, Constance M. Cherry, parts 1-2; and,
- Assignments—reading reflections and Facebook postings.

The thought of worship being initiated by God generated a great deal of discussion. Bonnie Tucker resonated with Constance Cherry’s *The Worship Architect*, writing, “Worship begins with reflection on who God is rather than reflection on us. The revelation of God’s nature forms the basis for all Christian worship.” Eighteen posts from seven students were made reflecting on worship as God’s invitation. Over the remaining five weeks of class, this Divine initiative was only referenced once, illustrating the ebb and flow of social media.

God’s call to worship was heard in the devotional that I presented in week one.

Floyd Foster’s post resonated with the words of John the Revelator:

This week I was very encouraged after our first worship class. The class was an invitation to worship. It was more than an academic environment. I sensed the Lord’s presence in the room when we read Revelation chapter 1 and chapter 4.

While worship as invitation was the topic of the class, God illustrated worship as revelation.

Cherry’s rhythm of “revelation and response” was heard in the post of Lawrence Jones. “How comforting is it to know that God pursues us. His presence is always near and always desiring a response from us. I am thankful that our own messiness does not scare God away. God wants to meet us in the mess.” Caitlyn Temple echoed that response: “I need to get beyond me so I can have a conversation with Him built on

revelation and response.” After ten posts during these first two weeks on the role of revelation in worship, only four mentions were found during the remaining five weeks.

Following Dr. Cameron’s lecture, fifty-three posts were made regarding the sacraments involving all but three of the class members. Interestingly, baptism was not mentioned in any postings until week five. This can be attributed in part to Dr. Cameron’s Eucharistic emphasis drawn from her doctoral studies.

Though the level of sacramental discussion quickly faded, the impact remained as seen in the qualitative results. Morris Bench provided insight into the strength of Cameron’s presentation, writing, “The idea of using communion as an evangelistic method was something new to me in the last few years. Which I was glad to have reemphasized in class this week.” All in the class seemed to resonate with the practice of an open table.

The understanding of worship as a *service* that the church comes *together* for was strongly affirmed in the early postings. However, the perception of these words changed through the course of the class and will be considered later.

Based on the Facebook postings of weeks one and two, the aspects of the class experience contributing most significantly to the changes observed in the previous analyses were class time (lecture, devotions, and discussion) on *worship as invitation*, the reading of Constance M. Cherry’s *The Worship Architect*, and Dr. Cameron’s lecture on the sacraments.

Middle Postings (Weeks 3-5)

The curricular emphases for the three middle weeks of class centered on worship as participation, worship as formation, and worship as contextualization. The points of engagement were

- Devotionals—Moving Toward Jesus—Matthew 14: 22-33; By His Hands—Jeremiah 18:1-6; Romans 9:20-21; and Isaiah 64:8; Belong, Believe, Behave—Luke 19:1-10;
- Guests—Dr. Geri Rosser, guest lecturer on music in worship; Rev. Sam Barber, guest lecturer on the role of Scripture in worship (e.g., lectionary, worship planning); a panel of three worship leaders—Phil Kizzee, Anthony Mako, and Jim Puckett—on staff ministry, service planning, and open question-and-answer;
- Readings—*The Worship Architect*, Constance M. Cherry, parts 3-5; *The Worship Plot*, Dan Boone; “Worship Design,” Greg Rosser (a paper I wrote for DM846); and *Emerging Worship*, Dan Kimball; and,
- Assignments—*Lectio Divina* assignment (Heb. 5-10), reading reflections, Facebook postings, church visit reflection, worship design.

Though key words (participation, formation, and contextualization) were not employed in the posts, they served as anchor points for much of the conversation. The formational foci included the formation of worship leader, worship experience, and the worshiper. The posting of Morris Bench brought these together: “As we draw into ever deeper encounters with God He should be revealed more clearly through us. Additionally attunement to [the] Holy Spirit should help us in leading others to a closer relationship

with Him as well.” However, the topic of formation did not peak until the final two weeks.

Much of the formation and contextualization sessions centered on the role of Scripture in worship. The discussion on participation focused on music. The frequency of postings pertaining to music showed no increase during this middle period, but Dr. Geri Rosser altered the students’ perception of music in worship through her presentation. Kelvin Jackson wrote, “Having Geri Rosser this week speak of music in worship this week was a true blessing.... When we properly use music in worship services, it can greatly enrich the service, and the conversation between us and God.” Yorman Toland cited the reading as catalyst of change: “I am continuing to enjoy how the books that we are reading are reminding us that worship is so much more than music that we play, but that it encompasses the whole of the service and our whole lives.” Once music was understood to be a part of the whole, it faded quickly from the postings.

However, Carl Knight called us to center in his post: “I heard Professor Rosser say,... ‘The key to worship renewal in the church is what we do with the Word of God.’” Sam Barber’s presentation on the role of Scripture in worship (personal and corporate) challenged the students to consider the use of the lectionary. Without doubt this presentation created the most discussion: twenty-nine posts referring specifically to Rev. Barber’s lecture and seventy posts regarding Scripture/Bible/preaching.

Floyd Foster’s post regarding the use of the lectionary illustrates the formation of the worship leader, worship experience, and worshiper:

I have been able to present through the help of the Holy Spirit and the lectionary a big picture of our faith in Jesus. People have been asking questions and I sense growth not only in their lives but also in mine as I prepare and lead the small group.

Mark Armstrong noted, “One thing that really stuck out to me in the lecture from class was the idea of the connectedness of scripture.” Freda Anderson affirmed, “For our worship team, it brought new meaning to leading God’s people. Using the Lectionary focused our team on telling the story.” The freedom afforded within the structure of the lectionary appealed to many—whether employed as a pastoral devotional tool or as a guide to preaching.

The reflection on the church visit outside of their tradition was due on week four and took students into contexts where they experienced multiple Scripture readings—generally from the use of the lectionary. Most of the services visited were very structured. The worship design assignment that was due on week five also led students to work with the texts for Ascension Sunday or Pentecost Sunday from the Revised Common Lectionary (Bratcher; *Revised Common Lectionary*). These two assignments in light of the assigned readings, shaped the thought of Ed Charlton:

“I used to think that you should not be too structured if you wanted God to lead, but I have come to realize that the more structured you are, the more capable you are to let Him lead.” This quote [by Cherry] gives importance to having a worship service structured.

Planning, preparation, and structure do not negate Spirit-led worship, as the students read in “Worship Design” (Rosser).

As a result of the aforementioned assignments, a marked increase in the postings regarding “openness” and the role of “silence” in worship was noted. In addition, *The Worship Plot* by Boone was barely mentioned by name, but the “bad news/good news” juxtaposition that he presents was noticed throughout.

Based on the Facebook postings of weeks three through five, the aspects of the class experience contributing most significantly to the changes observed in the previous analyses were Rev. Barber's lecture on the role of Scripture in worship and the worship design assignment. Both of these elements relied heavily on the Revised Common Lectionary, denoting the advantages of preparation.

Late Postings (Weeks 6-7)

The curricular emphases for the two final weeks of class centered on worship as incarnation and worship as integration. The points of engagement were

- Devotionals—The Samaritan Progression—Acts 1:8; Luke 10:25-37; Luke 17: 11-19; John 4:1-42; Acts 8:1-25; Eph. 2:13-22;
- Guests—Rev. Mark Ledford, guest lecturer on multicultural worship; Dr. Russell Metcalfe, presented homily and served communion on final day;
- Readings—*The Dangerous Act of Worship*, Mark Labberton; *Worship on Earth as It Is in Heaven*, Rory Noland, part 2 (Revelation);
- Assignments—reading reflections, Facebook postings, and final paper; and,
- Survey—Posttest taken at the end of day seven.

Week six began on Easter Sunday. Obviously, the events of Holy Week were reflected in this online forum, as posts about “hope” swelled. This hope was kindled through the readings that stirred kingdom imaginings. During the first two weeks, no conversation about imagination or image was noted. In the middle three weeks, Kimball and the contextual considerations stimulated some conversation regarding imagination. However, in these final two weeks imagination gave way to “image”—God's image.

Being enamored of one's imagination can feed an attractational mind-set: how to get those outside the church to come in. While an awareness of God's image feeds a missional mind-set that understands worship as incarnation: how to embody Christ's love beyond the church walls. During the seven-week course, attractational words (come, gather, service, attract) diminished in frequency in the Facebook postings while the missional words (go, serve, neighbor, outreach) increased.

In these final two weeks, worship was viewed through a missional lens (incarnation) as Mark Labberton's *The Dangerous Act of Worship* was discussed. Subtitled *Living God's Call to Justice*, Labberton challenged the students to rethink their worship paradigm. Lawrence Jones was very passionate in his response to Labberton's writing:

Worship that is only from the pew or chair is not complete. The church's task until Jesus' returns is to engage a hurting world in his name.... [H]e has called me to worship him in a way that demonstrates his power, mercy, and comfort to others, especially to those who are suffering.

This embodiment is the essence of worship as incarnation.

Betty Casey acknowledged, "As a leader I have to reflect authentic [incarnational] worship in my life before I can ask others to change." Although worship as formation was discussed in week four, interestingly, the formational dialog escalated when worship was viewed through a missional lens. Mark Armstrong noted the transformational work of the Spirit in the life of the disciple connecting worship and mission:

We cannot worship and ignore those around us that are hurting. We have to be transformed to see the world and others through the eyes of Christ.... But the most important thing in worship is to be formed in the image of Christ. We are to be Christ's hands and feet to the world around us, whether across the pew, across the street, or across the world.

His words illustrate spiritual formation finding completion in missional worship.

Of particular interest was the steady decline of discussion regarding church growth—from fifteen posts in the beginning, nine posts in the middle, and five at the end. Instead of pursuing the effect, the students chose to consider the cause. Postings about *both* outreach and discipleship showed marked increases. The class did not prefer either worship-as-evangelism or worship-as-discipleship but affirmed the necessity of both.

The synergy of worship, mission, and formation was the basis of worship as integration. Not only was the necessity of integration discussed (complete with all the models), it was modeled as the class worshiped together. The responses to the worship service with Russ Metcalfe generated numerous posts—second only to Sam Barber’s presentation. Floyd Foster’s final post clearly articulates worship as integration:

This class has really challenged me to think broader about worship. I loved the fact that it wasn’t only academic, but it was an invitation for us to respond to the Lord in worship and allow our lives to reflect his image. I truly enjoyed our last session and I appreciate Professor Rosser tying the concepts together and how spiritual formation, mission and worship cannot be understood and lived apart from one another. My prayer is that the Lord will help me to live out a life of worship as well as challenge the people I lead to find joy and pleasure in a life of total surrender and obedience to the Lord.

These words were underscored by the overarching increase in conversations seasoned with “grace” and “faith” (both more than doubled from the early to the late sessions) while topics such as “power” almost disappeared.

Based on the Facebook postings of weeks six and seven, the aspects of the class experience contributing most significantly to the changes observed in the previous analyses were class time (lecture and discussion) on worship as integration, the reading of Mark Labberton’s, *The Dangerous Act of Worship*, and the closing worship service with Dr. Russell Metcalfe serving communion.

Summary of Facebook Postings

According to the Facebook postings, the curricular catalysts that contributed most significantly to the observed quantitative and qualitative changes are as follows:

1. The weekly class meeting (devotions, lecture, and discussion) was referenced weekly.

2. The assigned readings were generally referenced in the posts, particularly *The Dangerous Act of Worship* by Mark Labberton and *The Worship Architect* by Constance M. Cherry.

3. Cameron's week-two lecture on the sacraments generated a lot of discussion.

4. Barber's week-four lecture on the role of God's Word in worship (personal and communal) and the potential use of the Revised Common Lectionary was very challenging.

5. The assigned visit to a church outside of the students' ministry context was most enlightening.

6. The worship design assignment led the students into a deeper engagement with the Revised Common Lectionary and showed the necessity of worship planning.

7. Through the closing communion service with Metcalfe, God's Spirit brought to life our academic pursuits.

The seven items listed generated the most feedback on the Facebook postings. Therefore, by implication these components contributed most significantly to the observed changes. Failure to mention other facets (e.g., lecturers, texts, assignments) of the class experience does not imply they were ineffective. However, the aforementioned

influencers brought students to the threshold of changes in attitude and behavior. Table 4.26 shows the changes reflected in the posts as a result of the curricular catalysts.

Table 4.26. Summary of Significant Facebook Findings (N=20)

Findings	Time Period
I. A stronger affirmation of God's divine initiative was discerned.	Early (wks. 1-2)
II. A resolve to address the neglect of the sacraments was recognized.	Early (wks. 1-2)
III. A deepened conviction to retell God's Story in communal worship (through tools such as the RCL) was noted.	Middle (wks. 3-5)
IV. A renewed commitment to planning and preparation was observed.	Middle (wks. 3-5)
V. An increased awareness of the call to integration was recognized.	Late (wks. 6-7)
VI. An expanding view of worship as incarnational lifestyle was affirmed.	Late (wks. 6-7)

The findings from the Facebook postings complemented the previous sources of data from the pre- and posttests. Table 4.27 collates the data, combining the survey findings, both quantitative and qualitative (see Table 4.25, page 127), with the Facebook findings. I have used distinctive labels to designate areas of findings: quantitative (1-12), qualitative from the open-ended questions on the survey (A-H), and qualitative from Facebook postings (I-VI; see Table 4.27).

Table 4.27. Overview of Significant Findings

Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Findings	Facebook Findings
1. There would be worship even if humankind had never been created (SQ10).		
2. Spiritual formation is missional (SQ11).	F. An expanding vision of mission that values “being” alongside “doing” was seen.	
3. I am formed as I lead worship services (SQ12).	A. A turning in the point of engagement as “being” over “doing” was observed.	
4. The sacraments are missional (SQ13).	D. A broadening view of worship as lifestyle over even was ascertained.	II. A resolve to address the neglect of the sacraments was recognized.
5. As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as the key to church growth (SQ16—decrease).	A. A turning in the point of engagement as “being” over “doing” was observed.	VI. An expanding view of worship as incarnational lifestyle was affirmed.
6. What I sing, say, and pray in worship forms me spiritually (SQ19).	G. A deepening realization that “God works through our works” was noted.	IV. A renewed commitment to planning and preparation was observed.
7. Worship is both formational and missional (SQ22).	B. An increased awareness of the call to integration was recognized.	V. An increased awareness of the call to integration was recognized.
8. in initiate the “conversation” of worship (SQ25—decrease).	C. A stronger affirmation of God’s divine initiative was discerned.	I. A stronger affirmation of God’s divine initiative was discerned.
9. In spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself (SQ42).	H. A shift of engagement in spiritual formation—from call to response—was evidenced.	
10. In worship I anticipate the future (SQ51).		
11. Mission begins in spiritual formation (SQ64—decrease).	E. A reframing of the language of mission—from call to response—was detected.	
12. I am formed through the liturgy in corporate worship (SQ67).	G. A deepening realization that “God works through our works” was noted.	III. A deepened conviction to retell God’s Story in communal worship (through tools such as the RCL) was noted.

Table 4.28 synthesizes the collected data into five composite findings deemed significant. In the corresponding columns, the quantitative (1-12), qualitative (A-H), and Facebook (I-VI) data are referenced. In addition, I have shown the connecting points to the curriculum design (see Table 4.28).

Table 4.28. Synthesis of Significant Findings

Findings	Quantitative	Qualitative	Facebook	Curriculum
1. Incumbent upon each disciple and each congregation is first to hear God's call to worship.	1, 8, 10	C	I	Invitation, revelation
2. Keeping God's Word central forms worship leader and worshiper alike in preparation for, presentation of, and participation in communal worship.	6, 12	G	III, IV	Participation, formation
3. God's mission is realized as Spirit-filled leaders embody missional worship, moving from the inside out.	3, 5	A	VI	Formation, contextualization, incarnation
4. Moving outward from God's altar, each church speaks into a particular context.	4, 11	D, E	II	Formation, contextualization, incarnation
5. The integration of worship, mission, and spiritual formation leads the disciple into a lifestyle of <i>formissional worship</i> .	2, 7, 9	B, F, H	V	Integration

The duplication shown in curricular emphases illustrates the formation of the worship leader (3, 4), the worshiper (4), and the worship experience (2). The repetition of contextualization and incarnation indicate the movement from leader to congregation.

Summary of Major Findings

The demographic data, comparison of pre- and posttests, and the qualitative data gleaned from the threaded discussion on Facebook led to the following findings:

1. Incumbent upon each disciple and each congregation is first to hear God's call to worship.
2. Keeping God's word central forms worship leader and worshiper alike in preparation for, presentation of, and participation in communal worship.
3. God's mission is realized as Spirit-filled leaders embody missional worship, moving from the inside out.

4. Moving outward from God's altar, each church speaks into a particular context.

5. The integration of worship, mission and spiritual formation leads the disciple into a lifestyle of *formissional worship*.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

The problem of reducing worship to an event ending at noon on Sunday leads the church toward a fragmented view of spiritual formation. Seeing mission as worship and vice versa leads toward integration of life and ministry. This paradox is the essence of *formissional worship*. A move away from this nexus is move toward *dis*-integration.

The purpose of this study was to measure the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes in students concerning *formissional worship* as a result of a Master of Ministry class at Mount Vernon Nazarene University entitled Christian worship.

Listening Matters

The first finding was a reorientation of the students toward worship as divine call and response. God is the initiator in worship (Noland 138). As Cherry states in *The Worship Architect*, “Worship is an invitation, not an invention” (4). An increase of 55 percent was seen in respondents *strongly disagreeing* with the statement, “I initiate the ‘conversation’ of worship.” This shift in understanding is clearly reflected in both the qualitative findings and the Facebook posts.

The witness of the preexistent, perichoretic dance of the Trinity in ongoing, eternal, self-deferential worship points to “worship even if humankind had never been created.” Eastern Orthodoxy believes that when gathered, the disciples are ushered up into heaven to join in the ongoing worship. This vision underscores the essential nature of Trinitarian worship. The angels worship (Heb. 1:6, 14; Rev. 5) and nature joins in worship (Neh. 9:6; Ps 19:1, 69:34, 93:1-4, 96:11-97:1, 148:9-14; Isa 55:12; Luke 19:37-

40). To enter into worship is to step “into a stream that began in God” (Boone 8).

Originating in God, this stream flows from eternity past to eternity future.

God’s call to worship invites all individuals and churches that have ears to hear (Labberton 115). Throughout the Gospels Jesus said, “He who has ears, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15; 13:19; Mark 4:9, 23; 7:16; Luke 8:8; 14:35). God spoke through Moses in the *Shema* saying, “Hear, O Israel...” (Deut. 6:4) and Jesus reiterated in the Greatest Commandment, “Hear, O Israel...” (Mark 12: 29). John the Revelator writes, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9). Clearly, the responsibility of the worshiper is to listen.

God’s voice is the thread of hope throughout eternity—he spoke, he still speaks, and he will speak at the end of all things. I shared these words from Revelation in the first class session:

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “*Come up here*, and I will show you what must take place after these things.” (emphasis mine; Rev. 4:1)

Again, in the final chapter John continues the theme of invitation:

‘I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.’ The Spirit and the bride say, ‘*Come.*’ And let the one who hears say, ‘*Come.*’ *And let the one who is thirsty come*; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. (emphasis mine; Rev. 22:16-17).

Hearing the call to come, “in worship I anticipate the future.” “Between memory and hope” (Johnson xi), one responds to the revelation of God.

The disciple enters into communal worship with the awareness that this rhythm of revelation and response (Cherry, *Worship Architect* 8) begins, not with me, but with God.

As Ben Browning succinctly wrote in his Facebook posting, “We would all do well to

remember that it is God who acts first, and out of that action our worship should flow.”

The worship leader/pastor can elevate the trajectory of the worship gathering by delivering the call to worship as more than a greeting; it is a reminder to hear anew. As Boone writes, “Church is not an escape hatch or an enclave for saints. It is a gathering of people at the invitation of a holy God” (41). Listening matters because God still speaks through his Holy Spirit. Therefore, each disciple and each congregation must actively listen, that they may hear God’s call to worship.

Content Matters

The second finding was a deepened conviction to keep God’s word central—from the preparation for, to the presentation of, and the participation in communal worship.

While I am not advocating disciples worship the Bible, it is the nonnegotiable foundation of their assembly. God is revealed to them through his Word by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit is speaking at times other than Sunday morning.

Preparation. Sam Barber, pastor of a large Nazarene Church in the Columbus area, stretched the class in his presentation on the use of the Revised Common Lectionary. Speaking from experience, he challenged the students to use the *whole word of God*—not defaulting to their favorite passages. Will Sabo posted on Facebook, “In thinking about Sam’s presentation this week on the lectionary I could not think of a better tool that helps us to really focus our attention on Christ and on how we as Christians live according to His word.” Hopefully, many of the students were provoked to newness as they considered the use of the lectionary.

For George Jay, the use of the lectionary was modeled in the church visitation assignment:

I feel like using the lectionary ... will give us a fuller perspective of the Bible. When I was at the Anglican Church for my church visit, we read a passage out of the OT, a Psalm, an Epistle, and out of Gospel (which the sermon was out of as well). Each of these four were [sic] connected with a theme. This helped pull the Bible together for me.

Worshiping in a more liturgical context (e.g., Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican) helped the students recognize the apparent neglect of public Scripture reading in many of the churches in which they serve.

Employing the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) connects the disciple to the liturgical calendar. A worship leader is committed to retelling *God's story*—not rehashing personal trials and triumphs. Over the course of the class, the students exhibited “a deepened conviction to retell God’s story in communal worship.” Lester Ruth reminded the students in his earlier article that churches are either a cosmic-story church or a personal-story church (“A Rose” 100). While the path provided by the liturgical year was familiar, most used it as a reference point and returned to it on occasion (e.g., Easter, Christmas, Good Friday, maybe Pentecost, maybe Advent, maybe Lent, but not Ascension Day and lesser observances).

Through all of these experiences and the worship design assignment (RCL: Ascension Sunday or Pentecost Sunday), “a renewed commitment to planning and preparation was observed” among the students.

Holding in tension the preselected Scriptures and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, I challenged the class to prefer the paradox of *both*. The worship leaders/pastors are freed to be totally present in the moment if they are prepared. Interestingly, the pre- and posttests defining mission asserted, “God works through our works.” Through this

lens I see the marriage of mission and worship. Whether a liturgical mission or a missional liturgy, it begins in Word-centered preparation.

Logistically, knowing the general direction weeks in advance assists greatly in planning for musicians, lectors, and other service participants. However, as Cherry asserts there is a need for deeper preparation:

There are two main purposes for celebrating the Christian year [or following a lectionary]. The first is that the Christian year tells the story of God.... The second purpose for observing the Christian year is that it provides a guide for our own spiritual pilgrimage. (*Worship Architect* 208-209)

Preparation centered in God's Word guides the individual and the congregation in faithfully presenting Truth (John 17:17).

Presentation. Like the foundation of a house, God's Word provides the invisible substructure upon which liturgical response rests. However, unlike the foundation of a house, God's word must be highly visible in communal worship. Sadly, far too often worship leaders/pastors consult the word in preparation and obscure it in presentation.

Available as collateral reading for the class was Constance Cherry's article, "My House Shall Be Called a House of ... Announcements." In the article, Cherry recounts her visits to thirty different churches, representing nineteen denominations, in four different states, over a period of sixteen months. In each worship service, she timed every element (e.g., prayer, congregational singing, announcements, sermon, reading of Scripture, sacraments). Her findings were sobering. The public reading of the word averaged 2-9 percent of the total service time (liturgical worship, 9 percent; traditional worship, 5 percent; blended worship, 2 percent; and, contemporary worship, 2 percent).

Liturgical worship was the only group that averaged more time on the reading of the Scripture than the announcements.

In the class discussions, ways to engage the congregation in the public reading of Scripture were considered. Floyd Foster's Facebook post recounts one of those ideas that he used with great success:

Something that really stood out to me in this past two weeks is the importance of the Word of God in worship. Our professor mentioned about a church that has a reading team, where they spend time praying and reflecting on the Scriptures before Sunday.

Just as the special music, the reading of the Scripture can be a prepared offering. Not everyone sings or plays an instrument, and some are gifted readers.

Scripture is the basis for much of the liturgy in *high church* settings. The creedal statements and prayers are seldom verbatim, yet the foundation is not based on individual experience, but upon God's word. Liturgy in the free tradition is viewed with suspicion as extemporaneous prayers and personal testimonies supplant centuries of liturgical response. Preferring the *via media*, I proposed to the students that both could be used effectively in corporate gatherings.

The quantitative findings suggest that the students were open to the role of liturgy. Survey Question 67 from the pre- and posttests posed, "I am formed through the liturgy in corporate worship." The findings show a 15 percent increase in those who agree or strongly agree—from 35 percent to 50 percent, while another 40 percent somewhat agreed.

Seemingly, the church ignores the incongruity that by memory, regardless of their mother tongue, the Jews recite and chant the Torah in Hebrew and Muslims recite and chant the Qur'an in Arabic, while Christians do not take time to *read* the Bible aloud in

their *native* language. Whether a screen or a book is employed in worship, I contend that anything that can be done to put God's words on the lips of the worshiper is a good thing.

Søren Kierkegaard provides an analogy that is counter-cultural in today's consumerist world. He suggests that in corporate worship, the people in the pews are not the audience—God is the audience of one. Instead of being the audience (consumer), the people in the pews are the performers before God. Therefore, the presumed actors on stage are the prompters feeding lines to the people in the pews (180-81). The lines given by worship leaders/pastors to the congregation comprise the liturgy. As liturgy is the work of the people, the participation of all is the goal.

Participation. The students' response to the statement, "What I sing, say, or pray forms me spiritually," showed a 25 percent increase in those who strongly agree. As prompters in worship, Scripture must be the primary source. The worshiper is adrift apart from God's word. Moses recognized the necessity of being tethered to God's word as he wrote, "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart" (Deut. 6:6). "These words" (v. 6) refers back to the monotheistic pledge of undivided love in obedience to Yahweh (vv. 4-5). Moses' desire that the heart be saturated in this truth necessitated repetition. The *Shema* became an oft-repeated credal statement of the early Church.

In a meeting with my Research Reflection Team, Russell Metcalfe noted that the recitation of the Lord's Prayer moves the participant from wonder, to access, to purpose. The observed progression finds parallels in worship, spiritual formation, and mission—presenting all the facets of *formissional worship*.

The students resonated with the ancient maxim, *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*, meaning that what disciples say becomes what they believe, which becomes how they live. Unfortunately, the repetition of non-biblical, weak theology also wears a path in one's belief system. Content matters in communal worship, for what is done with God's word sets the trajectory of formation in the worship leader, worship service, and worshiper.

Table 5.1. Content Matters—An Overview

Attention to God's Word in	Through	Brings about Formation in
Preparation	Prayer	Worship leader
Presentation	Prompting	Worship service
Participation	Presence	Worshiper

Formation in worship is facilitated through participation. Cherry writes that worship is a “transformational journey” and argues, “Without participation there is no worship” (*Worship Architect* 15, 266). Expanding upon this premise, she continues, “For worshipers of the twenty-first-century, participation = experience and experience = worship” (267). Worship leaders/pastors serving as prompters in the drama of worship, must understand the necessity of putting God's Word on the lips of twenty-first-century worshipers in order that their experience may be transformational.

Leadership Matters

The third finding was that God's mission is realized as Spirit-filled leaders embody missional worship, moving from the inside out. In leading, one does not desire to do the work of the Spirit, but to be used by the Spirit as to a catalyst to facilitate

awakenings in the lives of others that they may discover and become who God has called them to be—in the church and in the world. The leader cannot take this responsibility lightly as Roxburgh and Romanuk write, “Leaders either form or deform the emergence of the Spirit’s work among God’s people” (126). The leader in worship begins not at the periphery bringing cultural icons to God’s altar; rather, he or she begins at God’s altar (loving God) and moves outward (loving neighbor) as an act of worship.

Schattauer contends that this inside out movement “locates the liturgical assembly itself within the *missio Dei*... the assembly for worship *is* mission. The liturgical assembly is the visible locus of God’s reconciling mission toward the world” (“Liturgical Assembly” 3). Being his Church before a watching world is missional. Jesus said, “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35). Love is the currency of this alternative kingdom.

The qualitative findings from the pre- and posttest definitions saw an overarching shift from the language of *doing* to that of *being*. Mission was viewed as incarnational presence (relational) over programmatic evangelism; formation was viewed as openness to God’s Spirit over striving to earn his favor; and, worship was viewed as a response to God’s divine call. Darrell L. Guder offers insight: “What we have lost in the ascendancy of technique is the openness to mystery and the understanding of God’s own inscrutable work in our midst” (198). The *doing* easily focuses on technique while neglecting mystery, to the detriment of one’s spiritual formation.

The leader encourages the congregants to be wholly present to God and one another. As Cherry writes, “Christian worship is a sustained encounter with God—a journey from our place of origin (physically and spiritually), through meaningful acts of

worship as a community, to transformation from having been in God's presence" (17). However, this journey inward informs the subsequent journey outward.

Isaiah led from the center as his spiritual formation and mission emanated from God's altar (Isa. 6). Like Isaiah, the twenty-first-century leader is spiritually formed, commencing in worship and continuing in mission. Apart from encountering the Holy God and acknowledging one's brokenness, the leader is malformed and the mission is manageable. The fire from God's altar is not available for the individual's mission.

However, the authentic, humble leader recognizes the source of their strength. Leah Davis posted on Facebook, "If more of us who are leading would grow in our understanding and wisdom from the word, our churches would look very different." A few days later Betty Casey wrote, "As a leader I have to reflect authentic worship in my life before I can ask others to change." Spirit-filled leaders can change the culture of their churches.

During the seven-week course, the students became more convinced of the statement, "I am formed as I lead worship services." The posttest revealed 100 percent of the respondents were on the "agree" side of the ledger (somewhat agree, agree, strongly agree)—an increase of 20 percent. Floyd Foster posted on Facebook, "I sense growth not only in their [congregants] lives but also in mine as I prepare and lead." Hearing from God was and is a prerequisite to speaking for God.

As the congregation gathers in worship, under the authority of God's word, the leader must be the first convert every week. Moving outward from the heart, the *Shema*, reveals the missional movement from heart (v. 6), to family (v. 7), and to community (vv. 8-9). By God's grace this movement away from the center can be winsomely

incarnational, making disciples in each successive concentric circle. As Kimball notes, “The local church is the intergenerational body life of disciples. We worship God and serve one another on our mission together” (118). The growing church celebrates the diversity within the unified community.

However, church growth is not the primary aim of the leader. As Morris Bench posted, “There must be a continual awareness of why we do what we do [in worship]. If it is for bigger crowds or a larger offering and not in order to draw people closer to God we have failed to keep Christ first in our hearts.” However, a healthy body naturally grows.

The movement from the pre- to the posttest showed a diminishing acceptance of the statement, “As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as the key to church growth.” On the pretest 65 percent agreed or strongly agreed, while on the posttest, only 30 percent agreed, and none strongly agreed. This change reflects a 35 percent decrease in belief that the catalyst for church growth is found in a missional agenda. Admittedly, *missional agenda* can be defined in a myriad of ways, yet the implication is a movement from the outside in. The posttest change in perspective reveals a resistance on the part of class members to subscribe to an agenda that begins off center.

Missionary Amy Carmichael purportedly said, “You can give and not love, but you cannot love and not give” (qtd. in Kucey). Turning that phrase a bit, I contend that one can be missional and not worship, but disciples cannot worship and not be missional. Leading from the inside out does not diminish the missional fervor; rather, it sets it ablaze.

Moving from the inside out, the Spirit-filled leader models worship as incarnation; the worshiper becomes the embodiment of the One worshiped, moving beyond the walls as an act of worship. Labberton writes, “Worship names what matters most: the way human beings are created to reflect God’s glory [*gloria Dei*] by embodying God’s character [*imago Dei*] in lives that seek righteousness and do justice [*missio Dei*]” (13). Due in no small part to the writings of Labberton, the Facebook posts revealed “an expanding view of worship as incarnational lifestyle.” This lifestyle of *formissional worship* is lived from glory to glory.

In class discussion on the incarnational lifestyle, the juxtaposition of the travel agent and the sherpa as leadership models was considered. While travel agents know the brochure and speak the language, they may or may not have actually ever been to the mountain. Inasmuch as they are not going along on the journey, selling the trip is the primary concern. In contrast, sherpas have spent an inordinate amount of time *on* the mountain; coming down from the mountain, they take you to where they have been. Effective worship leadership requires a sherpa.

Context Matters

The fourth finding was that in moving outward from God’s altar each church speaks into a particular context. Labberton suggests that the cultural milieu in which disciples minister does not define them “in light of the larger and deeper context of the gospel” (82). This “context of the gospel” is the embodiment of Christ’s expansion of the *Shema* to include, “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). As citizens of Christ’s kingdom (Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20), the center of gravity is no longer self. Christ’s lordship extends beyond the sanctuary, calling for worship to be incarnated in any context.

Of the incarnation, Eugene Peterson writes in *The Message*, “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood” (John 1:14). The churches in which the students served were miles apart geographically and even further apart culturally; though all were primarily English speaking, they all have their own language. I shared this quote from Frederick Buechner in the class PowerPoint:

English-speaking tourists abroad are inclined to believe that if only they speak English loudly and distinctly and slowly enough, the natives will know what’s being said even though they don’t understand a single word of the language.

Preachers often make the same mistake. They believe that if only they speak the ancient verities loudly and distinctly and slowly enough, their congregations will understand them.

Unfortunately, the only language people really understand is their own language, and unless preachers are prepared to translate the ancient verities into it, they might as well save their breath. (107)

The twenty-first-century leader must be bilingual as he or she models and encourages the worshipers to hear and speak the “ancient verities” in the language of the culture, making the liturgy missional.

Conversely, the same bilingual leader translates in word and deed those “ancient verities” from the altar to the culture in which they live, making mission liturgical. Volf clearly articulates the coalescence of this dichotomy, writing, “Does adoration need to take place in seclusion from the world? The answer to that question depends on where God is to be found” (208). Mission is liturgical as believers worship at the margins. As is seen in the adoration of the Magi (Matt. 2:1-12), God is to be found “among the least” (Matt. 25:40).

Therefore, worship at the margins is not to be understood as a service—a noun describing an event; rather, the worshiper’s participation is to serve—a verb describing “the work of the people” (i.e., liturgy), serving Christ for the sake of the world. Webber

was right: “[W]orship *is* a verb” (emphasis mine; *Worship Is a Verb* 12). Sadly, for the twenty-first-century disciple, worship has been reduced to an adjective (e.g., worship service, worship music, worship pastor, worship class).

Bauckham takes Volf’s call to the margin a step further and suggests that the center from which the church worships is actually a position of “social and cultural exile or marginality” (81). Traversing the outbound pathway of contextualization toward an embodied worship relocates the placement of center, but not the Person. Christ remains the center; however, he is found at the margins.

Consequently, the incarnational movement from the center sets the coordinates for a doxological trajectory of living worship. As Paul advocates, “I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship” (original emphasis; Rom. 12:1). Worship as incarnation—presenting one’s body as a living and holy sacrifice—can be understood as the Eucharistic life. Just as in communion, the body of Christ is blessed, broken, and given; in worship the Church (as the body of Christ) is likewise blessed, broken, and given.

In one of the meetings with my Research Reflection Team, Bruce Petersen, coordinator of the Master of Ministry Program at MVNU, echoed John Wesley’s view of the sacraments as a “means of grace” (Maddox 202-05). However, he continued on suggesting that in the disciples’ participation, they may, in turn, become a “means of grace” to the broken world in which they minister. Herein the liturgy has become missional.

The quantitative findings showing belief that the sacraments are missional was more strongly affirmed in the posttest. Whereas 15 percent somewhat disagreed in the pretest, 100 percent agreed or strongly agreed in the posttest. Morris Bench posted on Facebook, “The idea of using communion as an evangelistic method was something new to me in the last few years.... I was glad to have [it] reemphasized in class this week.” An open table is observed in the Wesleyan tradition, encouraging all to hear Christ’s invitation.

In worship, songs and prayers are employed as believers seek intimacy with the Lord, yet his table is often neglected. As Labberton says, “Our central lie is in the discrepancy between the language of worship and the actions of worship” (71). Of the students surveyed, thirty-five percent serve in a church where communion is offered less than monthly; 10 percent of those observe the Lord’s Supper less than quarterly. The general consensus from the Facebook findings was a resolve to address the neglect of the sacraments in the contexts represented.

Baptism retells in communal worship of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Though not salvific, in baptism the disciple mystically shares in Christ’s identity as he or she by faith enters into his burial and resurrection (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3-5). Paul wrote to the church at Galatia, “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Eugene Peterson contemporizes Paul’s words, writing, “Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe—Christ’s life, the fulfillment of God’s original promise” (Gal. 3:27). To be “clothed in Christ,” is to become Christ embodied to family,... community,... and the world. The movement of contextualization is from the

particular to the universal. This embodiment is the essence of understanding worship as incarnation. Moving from the inside out, the disciple experiences the resurrection power of Jesus Christ and longs to see others brought to life by God's Holy Spirit.

An interesting shift in the definition of mission was noted between the pre- and posttests: "A reframing of the language of mission—from call to response was detected." As the divine call and response is rehearsed in worship on the Lord's Day, this rhythmic underscore animates the daily song of life. Rather than perceiving mission through a lens of should or ought, the students came to articulate mission as "being in Christ for the sake of the world" (Mulholland, "Incarnating the Word"). This understanding moves mission from being an abstraction wrapped in duty to an organic response growing out of worship.

The students' agreement with the statement, "Mission begins in spiritual formation," decreased from the pre- to posttest. Whereas the pretest identified 45 percent of respondents as agree or strongly agree, only 15 percent held the same conviction on the posttest. Admittedly, much of the 30 percent swing is absorbed in the 15 percent increase among those that somewhat agree. Nonetheless, a decrease is noted.

Whereas mission gives direction and a needed outward focus to spiritual formation, apart from worship the "formational mission/missional formation" dyad is incomplete. The constant challenge is to connect the Sunday worship experience (albeit contextualized—a missional liturgy) with the Monday through Saturday worship lifestyle (a liturgical mission).

In practice, this understanding means the end of the service is a sending—not a dismissal (Schmit "Sent and Gathered" 124-126). As Brent D. Peterson writes, "The

church is sent *with* and *by* the Spirit to be broken and poured out into the world” (original emphasis; 199); Boone says, “Rather than exiting the service at the end of a sermon, we move in obedience together” (55). The students clearly heard this imperative. In the posttests a “broadening view of worship as lifestyle over event was ascertained.”

Unwittingly, the way in which the leader addresses the congregation at the service closing can reduce worship to an event that has just ended or enlarge worship to be the daily, Spirit-led offerings of devotion and obedience. Though the center of one’s worship is understood to be a Person, the contextual journey outward is to a specific people or place. In any context, experiencing worship as lifestyle deepens spiritual formation in the integration of communal worship and mission.

Lifestyle Matters

The fifth finding was that the integration of worship, mission, and spiritual formation leads the disciple into a lifestyle of *formissional worship*. Various iterations of the constituent elements were examined with models, as seen in Chapter 2. The incomplete nature of each dyad (formational worship, missional worship, formational mission/missional formation) was considered.

Mission + formation = being. Revealed in the posttest was an overarching move toward the integration of any iteration presented. Albeit incremental, the strongest affirmation was shown toward *formissional worship*. First I examine two of the findings from the quantitative data connecting spiritual formation and mission.

At the end of the course, an increased number of students indicated agreement with the statement, “Spiritual formation is missional.” On the pretest 10 percent

somewhat disagreed, while the posttest revealed 100 percent on the agreement side of the ledger—50 percent strongly agreed.

Echoing the words of Mulholland, “spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ *for the sake of others*” (emphasis mine; *Shaped by the Word* 15). One simply cannot be spiritually formed apart from serving. The desert fathers found that being alone was not good, because they had no one to serve. To make spiritual formation a private practice is to reduce the classic disciplines to self-improvement.

Mark Armstrong connects formation and mission in his post on Facebook: “The most important thing in worship is to be formed in the image of Christ. We are to be Christ’s hands and feet to the world around us, whether across the pew, across the street, or across the world.” The *Shema* parallels this centrifugal movement as “these words” (Deut. 6:6) move from heart, to family, to community—on the worshipers’ doorstep and gates; and, beyond as they become mobile on the individuals’ hands and foreheads (Deut. 6:6-9).

Emanating from worship, the transformed heart responds to the missional call through an embodied message—an incarnational presence. An expanding vision of mission that values *being* alongside *doing* was seen in the class. Missional *being* is not to be understood as a substitute for missional *doing*. Rather, *being* is the constant underpinning as *doing* ebbs and flows in the lifestyle of worship. Mark Driscoll and Gary Breshears write, “Worship is not merely an aspect of our being but the essence of our being as God’s image bearers. As a result, all of life is ceaseless worship” (339). Therefore, all the disciples’ comings and goings from the quotidian to the quixotic, the mundane to the extraordinary, can be understood as an act of worship.

Formation + mission = doing. Also affirmed by the class was a practical application of integrating spiritual formation and mission: “In spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself.” No responses on the disagree side of the ledger in either pre- or posttests were noted. However, a 20 percent increase among those that strongly agreed in the posttest was observed.

Regarding Jesus’ Greatest Commandment to love the Lord God with all one’s heart, soul and mind and to love one’s neighbor as oneself (Matt. 22:34-40) Labberton writes: “These commandments set the agenda for lifestyles of worship. No allegiance of love is ever to be greater than our allegiance to God.... Love for God comes first and leads us to love our neighbor” (27). The priority of worship is inescapable. Although formation and mission are essential, they are hollow pursuits apart from worship.

The shift toward an integrated view of worship, mission and formation was evidenced in the Facebook post of Lawrence Jones:

Our task until Jesus’ returns is to engage a hurting world in his name. This is the worship that God desires (Isaiah 58); justice and freedom for the oppressed. We are to embody the ministry of Jesus until he returns to make everything right. I don’t fully understand why God allows suffering but I do know that *he has called me [to] worship him in a way that demonstrates his power, mercy, and comfort to others*, especially to those who are suffering. (emphasis mine)

Spiritual formation is deepened through missional engagement in the crucible of suffering. Later the same day, Lawrence posted, “Following and worshiping Jesus requires me to set aside my agenda to follow his.” Eschewing the narcissistic, worship-as-event leads one to a spiritual formation forged in the fires of missional engagement.

Additionally, the comparisons of the pre- and post-intervention definitions of spiritual formation revealed a shift from call to response as the point of engagement. This

shift underscores the rhythm of revelation and response (Cherry, *Worship Architect* 8), showing again that God is the initiator. A self-generated, formulaic approach to experiencing God seldom ends well (Lev. 10). Presuming to engage God in spiritual formation, mission, or worship on the disciple's terms is presumptuous, at best. As Mulholland says, "Doing God's work, your way is the essence of idolatry" ("Incarnating the Word"). God's work done God's way receives the added benefit of God's blessing.

Certainly spiritual disciplines are appropriate responses to God's grace, but they are not meritorious. To engage in such formational practices as response is an act of worship. Whereas self-initiated formational practices lead to an endless pursuit of information, God-initiated formational practices lead to transformation. Into formational worship the Spirit speaks, leading the disciple beyond self to service—mission.

Worship = doing + being. Maturing disciples become disciple makers, reflecting both the work of formation and mission. Leading missiologist Rick Wood writes that worship services can unwittingly retard the work of discipleship. Comparing the Sunday service to an academic setting where the student comes to hear a lecture with no accountability or expectation of outside work, Wood suggests that attendees will remain unchanged as they are merely "auditing" worship (4).

Where church is a place instead of a people and worship is an event rather than a lifestyle, there God is understood as a manageable deity assigned to the periphery of life. The consumerist view of worship as an event has contributed to the marginalization of God. In essence, such attractional worship markets a god in a box (confined to the building), dispensing solutions. Pursuing an experience of God instead of God himself, self-improvement supplants spiritual formation and activism usurps mission.

T. S. Eliot writes, “We had the experience but missed the meaning” (39). While worship *is* a communal experience, the worship leader must always look behind the experience. As Torrance writes, “More important than our experience of Christ is the Christ of our experience” (34). Worship cannot be reduced to subjective experience.

Kimball writes, “As I often say, church is not a place you go. Instead, it is a community of worshipers on a mission together” (60). By God’s Holy Spirit, the church’s worship becomes faith in the Triune God, expressing itself in adoration and obedience, enacted in community, as a divine call and response comprised of invitation, revelation, participation, formation, contextualization, incarnation, and integration.

Worship defines one’s being and doing—formation and mission. As Labberton says, “[W]orship is life and life is worship” (84). The conviction that worship is both formational and missional was strengthened in the class. While 100 percent of the respondents were on the agree side of the ledger (somewhat agree, agree, strongly agree) in both pre- and posttests, a 30 percent increase among those who strongly agreed was noted. Therefore 60 percent of the class strongly agreed that worship is both formational and missional at the end of the class. This finding was the strongest quantitative affirmation of the movement toward integration.

An increased awareness of the call to integrate worship, mission, and spiritual formation was noted in many of the class responses. To silo these elements, viewing them programmatically, was no longer an option for the majority.

God is to be the center of life. The disciples’ worship begins in their response to the center. Their worship continues as they move from the inside out, embodying the

center. The disciples' worship never ends. Jesus' reiteration of the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-5) in the Greatest Commandment, sounds the call to integration:

Jesus answered, "The first [commandment] is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31)

Labberton asserts, "These commandments set the agenda for lifestyles of worship."

Within this lifestyle God's Spirit forms and shapes disciples into the image of Christ.

Mark Armstrong posted on Facebook, "It is very easy for us to separate worship and lifestyle.... [W]e cannot just worship when we are at church. Our worship while at church should be reflected in all our life." A month later he posted, "We can experience God's presence on Sunday. But if that's where our worship ends, our lives will not be changed. We have to experience God's transforming worship on a daily basis,... even continually." Worship cannot be relegated to the hour on Sunday.

Craigie suggests that for the Christian, the "fundamental truth" of the *Shema* (i.e., "The Lord our God, the Lord is one") is incarnated in Jesus Christ, while the "fundamental duty" of the *Shema* (i.e., "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength") is made possible by his Holy Spirit (168). To Craigie's fundamental truth and fundamental duty I would add, the fundamental expectation of Jesus' expansion of the *Shema* (i.e., "You shall love your neighbor as yourself") is the embodiment of worship in mission.

In order to live a lifestyle of worship, one must hold the seemingly disparate foci of worship and mission in tension. As B. Peterson suggests, the Spirit inhales drawing the church to worship; the Spirit exhales sending the church into mission (41). The Spirit

drawing them to a missional liturgy and sending them into a liturgical mission forms disciples.

Any movement away from integration is a movement toward *dis*-integration and fragmentation. However, to experience the unity of integration in worship, mission, and spiritual formation is to know the shalom of God. Therefore, I contend that *formissional worship* is realized on the Spirit-led path from *Shema* to shalom.

Implications of the Findings

Teaching young church leaders, my prayer is that these findings will inform worship practices in their local context. To influence the way a pastor thinks and leads in worship will ultimately affect the congregation he or she serves. A congregation with an enlarged vision of worship that includes loving their neighbor as themselves will change their community.

Based upon the response of the students, attention to corporate worship is needed in four areas. Addressing one or more of these in contextually appropriate ways would open the door to a deeper understanding of and engagement in worship for each congregation. Interestingly, the four areas align with the classic fourfold order of worship.

Gathering

As the church gathers to worship, the center of gravity must be firmly established. God is the initiator, the object, and the subject of corporate worship. If the leader has heard God's call, the corporate call to worship is a sense of joyful expectancy.

Word

God's Word must be foundational in communal worship. The necessity of increased public reading of Scripture was affirmed. Means discussed for the delivery of the Word were prepared lectors and a prepared liturgy—putting the words on the lips of the congregation. One great aid in preparation considered by class was the Revised Common Lectionary. Employing a lectionary for use as a devotional guide in the leader's life was a high priority. This discipline would bring the rhythm of the church year into the consciousness of the congregation and open the pastor to consider less familiar texts.

Table

Most of the respondents left class with a new resolve to raise the level of sacramental engagement (communion *and* baptism) in their congregations. The Church of the Nazarene, recommends that communion be observed at least quarterly. Whereas 35 percent of the respondents gather at the table no more than four times per year, 85 percent celebrate baptisms no more than four times per year. Ritualism is resisted in the free tradition. However, based on the findings, these congregations are far from that tipping point. A Spirit-led leader instituting incremental change can move a congregation toward this sensory engagement, bringing balance to the communal worship experience.

Sending

Consistently, the service ending is the most neglected. The students agreed that inadequate time for congregational response was the norm. Feeling hurried at the end of the service, an appeal is made followed by a perfunctory dismissal. I contend that instead of looking for the egress from the worship service, the leader could be pointing to the ingress to the worship serving. The sending is a charge to go and live, to embody what

one has seen and heard as the body has gathered that day. As discussed in class, the sending is a formational moment in communal worship that connects worship and mission. To be intentional about this one thing could unleash the Spirit from the imaginary containment in the church (building) to empower the church (people) in their ongoing worship beyond the walls.

Limitations of the Study

Though participation in the pre- and posttests was completely optional and required the consent of each student, none opted out. I want to believe that they all support the research efforts of academia. However, I recognize also that they want to accommodate their professor. The surveys were anonymous, but the Facebook posts were not. Twenty is a relatively small sample size, so I am grateful all participated.

The research questions framing this project centered on the changes in cognition, attitude, and behavior of the students. I feel the tools employed identified changes in cognition and attitude. However, to measure observable behavioral changes would require an examination in their ministry contexts, perhaps at six and/or twelve months after class.

As previously stated, the context for the class was somewhat narrow: a Midwestern, Nazarene university. The homogenous nature of the class brought an uneasy sameness: most were married, 20-40 years old, white males (SurveyMonkey, demographic survey). The exceptional ones brought variety to the discussions.

Since teaching this class and gathering this data at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, I have had the opportunity to teach this same class twice for Ashland Theological Seminary. The diversity was rich. The class represented traditions in various

contexts: Korean, Latino, Greek, African, African-American, and Caucasian; United Methodist, Church of God, Evangelical Free, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Mennonite, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Independent Pentecostal, Vineyard, and Brethren. Each class had a balanced ratio of females to males. The increased number of African-Americans led me to see that connecting worship to justice has been a generational reality for those not in the dominant culture. In the sections on contextualization and incarnation, in the future I need to draw from the examples of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Howard Thurman, for example.

Lastly, a limitation introduced into this study is my inherent bias. As a worship leader in a local church for over thirty years, I tend to see everything through a liturgical hermeneutic (e.g., Webber and Cherry). I am not dismissive of a missional hermeneutic (e.g., Wood, Hirsch, and Guder), nor of a formational hermeneutic (e.g., R. Foster and Willard). However, I see the necessity of sounding the triad of *formissional worship* (i.e., liturgical, formational, missional) together.

Unexpected Observations

In my analysis of the qualitative responses to the open-ended questions on the pre- and posttests in addition to the Facebook postings, I noticed some key words that were missing. What began as an interesting fact has become an unsettling awareness. The lack of *holy* language was alarming. Only two inclusions of the word holy are found: “*is Holy*” and “*be holy*.” In addition, there were only four mentions of holiness. References to the third person of the Trinity such as, “Holy God,” “Holy Spirit,” and “Spirit” accounted for a combined forty mentions. Whereas, God the Father was referenced 188 times and Jesus (a.k.a. Christ, Son, Lord, Word, King, Savior) was referred to 151 times.

In a class on worship in a holiness institution, the failure to connect a holy God to a people made holy is disturbing. Coming from a Christian university's class on worship, the neglect of Trinitarian language is troubling. In light of the disproportionate oversight, I can only assume that I did not say what I thought I said. Consequently, as the instructor my surprise and chagrin have given way to a resolve to be more intentional in communicating these matters.

Recommendations

Logistically, it probably cannot happen, but I see real merit in having everyone in the same room for all seven sessions. Using the uplink to connect eight campuses—many with one to three class members—creates many obstacles in teaching worship. As I taught this class for Ashland Theological Seminary, having all the students together allowed for small group presentations of worship services with immediate peer review.

As previously mentioned, the research would benefit from a six or twelve-month follow-up survey to see what of the findings were actually implemented. Perhaps even a congregational survey at the end of class (when implementation would begin in the local church) and again a few months later would be beneficial. In addition, viewing the pre- and posttests through an ecumenical lens as offered at Ashland would be very interesting. This additional data would provide some interesting comparisons.

Another potentially helpful perspective would be to survey pastors in the same theological camp and geographic area who did not take the class. This data could assist in identifying the culture into which the students are seeking to implement changes in worship practice.

In my passion to see the church experience a holistic understanding and experience of worship, everything I see and hear relates to *formissional worship*. This project will never be complete in my mind. I see the need to go deeper in each of the seven areas of the curriculum (i.e., worship as invitation, revelation, participation, formation, contextualization, incarnation, and integration), perhaps developing seven new classes based on this survey.

Two additional areas that have captured my imagination are the parallelism between the triads of worship, mission, and spiritual formation compared to the *Gloria Dei*, *Missio Dei*, and *Imago Dei*. Even now I have to resist writing more. The other area that consumes much of my thought is the insistence that God be contained in time and space—specifically here and now—in the church building on Sunday morning. Whereas God inhabits eternity, he longs to bring the there and then (salvation history past and future) into the church's impoverished here and now. In that tug-of-war, believers get halfway, coming to worship in the here and then (what I believe to be a modern construct) or the there and now (what I see as the essence of postmodernity).

Postscript

This portion of the journey has taken about eighteen months longer than anticipated. I am reminded of the words of Luci Shaw: “Waiting is always longer than the time it takes” (41). However, in the midst of this rather difficult season, the *Shema* has been more than an academic curiosity; it has been an anchor for my soul.

Several times a week I use the “Morning Prayer” in *Celtic Daily Prayer*:

In the name of the Father,
And of the Son,
And of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

One thing I have asked of the Lord,
This is what I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life;
To behold the beauty of the Lord
And to seek him in His temple.

Who is it that you seek?

We seek the Lord our God.

Do you seek Him with all your heart?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your soul?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your mind?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your strength?

Amen. Christ, have mercy.

To whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life,

And we have believed and have come to know

That You are the Holy One of God.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ,
King of endless Glory. (17-18)

These questions of examen regularly bring me back to center. My aim is to be singular in purpose with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Although graduate school has been a challenging season of life, I have seen God's hand and sensed his presence—even in the preparation of this document. My times at Asbury have been a balm to my soul.

APPENDIX A
WORSHIP, MISSION, SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Pre- and Post-Class Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: Please take the next 45 minutes to complete this survey. Please note the different rating scales used in each section and respond accordingly. Thank you.

1. Please select a **username** (suggested ID: first initial of your mother’s maiden name + last four digits of your social security number. This will used on all surveys and known only to you): _____

2. Please write a brief definition of **worship**: _____

3. Please write a brief definition of **mission**: _____

4. Please write a brief definition of **spiritual formation**: _____

Share your opinion in these areas based on the following scale:

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Somewhat Disagree	3
Somewhat Agree	4
Agree	5
Strongly Agree	6

Respond to these Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Worship is best understood as an event (e.g., a service).	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	In my experience, the classic spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible reading, fasting, communion, worship, etc., are the primary means of spiritual formation (these are what John Wesley called “means of grace”).	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Mission is evangelism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	An integrative view of worship, mission, and spiritual formation is absolutely essential.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	In worship I love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	There would be worship even if humankind had never been created.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Spiritual formation is missional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	I am formed as I lead worship services.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	The sacraments are missional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	In worship I celebrate this present moment only—not looking back or ahead.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	Spiritual formation occurs best in personal devotional time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as the key to church growth.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Mission is both worship and spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	In worship I love my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	What I sing, say, and pray in worship forms me spiritually.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	As a Christian, my life is focused on winning the lost and making disciples.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	Spiritual formation generally happens in a supplemental teaching role (discipleship/Christian Education/catechesis) apart from corporate worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22.	Worship is both formational and missional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	I have experienced more of God than I understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	Mission begins when worship ends.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	I initiate the “conversation” of worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	The worship service is missional.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Respond to these Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	In spiritual formation I love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	I believe everyone in my community should hear the good news in their native tongue.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	Spiritual formation occurs as I act my way into a new way of thinking.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	Worship is best understood as an attitude/posture (e.g., reverence).	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	Spiritual formation deepens worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	Mission and worship occur concurrently as we contextualize/contemporize the worship service.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	The life of Christ in me is nourished whenever I take Communion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34.	In mission I love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35.	Spiritual formation begins in mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36.	I am formed as I plan worship services.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37.	To be formed into the people of God worshipping before the nations is our mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38.	A guiding principle of ministry for me could be, "Don't just sit there, do something!"	1	2	3	4	5	6
39.	As a leader in the church, I see a missional agenda as a call to serve those "outside the walls" seven days a week.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40.	I connect with God more deeply through the music of our worship gatherings than in the sacraments.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41.	I understand more of God than I have experienced.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42.	In spiritual formation I love my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43.	God calls us into worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44.	I connect with God more deeply through the reading and preaching of the Word in our worship gatherings than in the music.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45.	Worship sends me to mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46.	Spiritual formation occurs as I think my way into a new way of acting.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47.	Spiritual formation occurs best in the relationship between worship and mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48.	Mission is a matter of "being" God's people in the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49.	The space in which we gather to worship has no impact on my spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Respond to these Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
50.	Mission is the primary focus of worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51.	In worship I anticipate the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52.	Mission is primarily reaching out to a different people group (e.g., language, culture, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6
53.	Mission, worship, and spiritual formation are best understood as different and separate components of our spiritual lives.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54.	The community of faith is an essential component for my spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55.	In mission I love my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
56.	Worship is best understood as a lifestyle (e.g., all day, every day).	1	2	3	4	5	6
57.	Worship, mission, and spiritual formation lose their distinctiveness when viewed as in integrative whole.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58.	My spiritual formation relies solely on my engagement in mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
59.	Mission is joining God in his ongoing work in the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
60.	Mission is loving my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61.	I connect with God more deeply through the sacraments in our worship gatherings than the reading and preaching of the Word.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62.	I am formed in corporate worship according to my participation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63.	Worship and mission are the alternating occupations of a disciple.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64.	Mission begins in spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
65.	Mission and worship occur simultaneously as our love for God is embodied in our love for others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
66.	Worship is a divine “call and response”—a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
67.	I am formed through the liturgy in corporate worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68.	The closing (sending/blessing/benediction) of the corporate worship is not particularly formational in connecting worship and mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69.	I cannot be fully formed spiritually apart from corporate worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
70.	From mission I am drawn to worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71.	Spiritual formation occurs best in groups (dialogical and relational).	1	2	3	4	5	6
72.	Mission is what I “do” for God in the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73.	In worship I remember the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Respond to these Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
74.	God's mission is that his people would be conformed to Christ's image, reflecting God's glory for all to see.	1	2	3	4	5	6
75.	Mission is worship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
76.	Worship deepens spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
77.	A guiding principle in ministry for me could be, "Don't just do something, become something!"	1	2	3	4	5	6
78.	The aim of my ongoing participation in the "means of grace" (via spiritual formation and worship) is that I would become a "means of grace" (via mission).	1	2	3	4	5	6
79.	Personal worship is the primary path of spiritual formation.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX B

CLASS SYLLABUS

Mount Vernon Nazarene University

School of Theology and Philosophy

PRW6013– CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Spring 2013

- I. Title:** PRW 6013, Christian Worship
- II. Credit:** Three credit hours; Seven class sessions, Mondays, February 25 through April 8, 2013.
1:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m., Virtual Classroom.
- III. Instructor:** Greg Rosser, M.M., M.A.P.T., D.Min. (ABD).
- IV. Course Description:**
This course is designed to help church leaders plan services that engage the congregation in active and meaningful worship. Biblical/historical patterns of worship will serve as a basis for the development of a theology of worship. Contemporary models will also be examined.
- V. Objectives of the Course:**
- To develop a biblical theology of worship.
 - To survey the history of Christian worship and its evolution into its contemporary expressions.
 - To acquaint the student with worship traditions and practices outside of his or her own tradition, providing a wealth of resources from which to draw in the planning and leading of worship.
 - To equip the student to plan and lead services reflective of a biblical theology of worship that will engage congregations with the truth of the gospel.
- VI. Texts and Materials (listed in order of use):**
- Noland, Rory. *Worship on Earth as It Is in Heaven: Exploring Worship as a Spiritual Discipline*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. ISBN-13: 9780310331285
- Cherry, Constance M. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0-8010-387-7
- Boone, Dan, *The Worship Plot: Finding Unity in Our Common Story*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0-8341-2312-0.
- Kimball, Dan, *Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations*. Grand Rapids, MI: emergent ys, published by Zondervan, 2004. ISBN-13: 978-0-3102-5644-1.
- Labberton, Mark, *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0-8308-3316-0.

VII. Methods Used in the Course:

Active participation is essential both in and out of class. Class periods will consist of presentations and demonstrations by the instructors, discussions with the class, devotionals related to worship, and lecture. Out of class assignments will be comprised of reading of texts, observing worship in various contexts and reflecting your observations in writing, service planning, attendance and participation in classes, and a ten page integrative paper.

Attendance is crucial to this course. For an absence to be considered an “excused absence,” the instructor must be contacted before class meeting time, either in person, via e-mail, or phone message. When absent, you are responsible for materials assigned or covered in class. No assignment will be accepted late without an excused absence granted by the instructor.

VIII. Method of Evaluation:

Assignments		Points	Learning Hrs
Class Participation (7 sessions @ 4 hrs ea)		50	28
Assigned Reading (5 texts & selected articles = 1130p @ 25pph)			45
Weekly Postings—MO-WE (1p ea wk in view of local context)		200	13
Weekly Reading Reflections—TH-SA (6 @ 3p ea=18p @ 1pph)		300	18
Church Visit & 2p reflection (2 hr svce + 2p @ 1pph)		75	4
Plan an order of worship (1p order + 2p commentary=3p @.5pph)		75	6
Final Research Project (10p @ .5pph)		250	20
Pre & Post Surveys (30 min in class on first & last day)		50	1
Total		1000	135
Potential Extra Credit: JAK Theology Seminar (attend 3 hrs, write 1 hr refl)		50	4
A 1000-930	B+ 899-880	C+ 799-750	D 699-600
A- 929-900	B 879-830	C 749-720	F 599
	B- 829-800	C- 719-100	MVNU does not recognize A+ or D-

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For a highly extensive worship studies bibliography to be used as an aid to your paper (not as a source for required reading), go to the Webber Institute for Worship Studies website (www.iwsfla.org) and look under the Resources tab for “Bibliography.”

X. Disability Statement

Students who qualify for and desire accommodations in this course due to a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, must follow the Disability Services Policies and Procedures as put forth by the office of Academic Support. The guidelines can be accessed in a hard copy at the Academic Support office. Call extension 4540 for further information.

PRW 6013– CHRISTIAN WORSHIP Spring 2013 Assignment Descriptions

Weekly Postings: 1 page—MO-WE

Think of this as *exhaling* what you’ve just experienced (SU-MO). Each of these is a response to your weekend worship experience through the lens of the readings and class discussions. This is not a book report on what you have read—nor is it a play-by-play of what happened in church on Sunday. Connect the dots! Examine what you are experiencing in light of what you have read or heard. One *well-written* page is plenty. Write the first part of the week while Sunday is fresh in your mind. These are worth 25 points each (if *both* poles—reading information connected to your worship service experience—are not present, you will receive not receive full credit). **In order for you to get them all in, you will have to do the seventh one after our last class. There will be no more than one received per week.**

Weekly Reading Reflection: 3 pages—TH-SA

Think of this as *inhaling* new material. Each week interact with the assigned readings by writing a 3 page reflection. Please organize your thoughts as: points of CONSONANCE (That’s exactly what I think!); points of RESONANCE (I agree, but I need to “tune myself” to this truth. It demands something of me.); points of DISSONANCE (I disagree!). They do not have to be a full page for each point, but the total should be 3 pages. There will be no assignment for the first week of class. **The order for writing will be: wk 2—Cherry (pt. 1& 2); wk 3—Cherry (pt. 3-5); wk 4—Boone; wk 5—Kimball; wk 6—Labberton; wk 7—Noland (Though we will discuss pt. 1 in wk 1 & pt. 2 in wk. 7, wait until wk 7 to write about it all. This will frame the class). There will be no more than one received per week.**

Church Visit Reflection: 2 pages DUE wk 4 (March 18)

Attend a regular weekly worship service at a church outside of your “tradition.” If you’re in a church with all contemporary, go to a more liturgical (Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, etc.) service. If you’re in a more traditional setting, go to a more contemporary (Vineyard, any number of “contemporary” or “alternative” services at larger churches) service. Though not required, you may want to consider a church of a different size, socio-economic make-up, ethnicity, etc. Alternative service times may be a necessity (Saturday night service, early Mass on Sunday) due to ministry responsibilities. Describe what you “sensed” (see, hear,

smell, taste, touch); what you felt (welcome, alienated, etc.); how you experienced God's presence.

Service Planning Assignment: 3 pages (1 page order + 2 page explanation) DUE wk 5 (March 25)

Plan and outline a worship service for your worship context incorporating the knowledge you've gained through your reading and class discussions. Plan the service based on the readings for SU, May 12 (Ascension Sunday—1 week before Pentecost) or SU, May 19 (Pentecost). Consult <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/index.php> or similar sites. In addition to the outline of the service, include an explanation of the service, detailing what the room looks like, segues and your reasons for using the various elements. E-mail your service and its description to grosser1@mvnu.edu no later than midnight Saturday. (See paper by Greg Rosser for more tips.) We hope to copy the single page orders of each student and make them available to all on the final day of class.

Final Paper Guidelines and Potential Topics: 10 pages DUE wk 7 (April 8)

The cumulative input from class interaction and outside reading is to be distilled into a minimum 10, but no more than 15-page final paper (not counting front/back matter such as title page, bibliography, appendices, etc.), with a minimum of ten significant bibliographical sources. Aim for one source per page of text. (i.e., Ten pages of text = minimum of ten sources, etc.) **An electronic copy of your Word document** is to be submitted no later than the final class period on April 8. The student is permitted to follow one of the two courses listed below, based on interest. (See grading rubric for final paper in a separate document). Time will be given to discussing and refining your decision in class so that it is neither too broad nor too narrow for a research paper of this length.

Option 1:

An in-depth look at the student's own local worshiping community. This study should draw from the materials introduced in class and observable data from the practices of the local church. The paper will consist of four parts:

- 1) A description of the local congregation, including its *perceived* theology of worship (what does its behavior tell us about its beliefs?). (2 pages).
- 2) A summary of the place this congregation takes in the overall history of worship praxis (free worship/liturgical, importance of sacraments, etc.). In other words, trace the lineage of this congregation's worship and place it in an historical context. (3-5 pages).
- 3) An analysis, based on the student's study and observation, of his/her worshiping congregation's strengths and weaknesses. While the focus should be on the main weekly worship gathering, the entire life of the church in worship (as in Labberton) may also be discussed. (3-5 pages).
- 4) A concluding section of steps the church's worship leadership can take to strengthen areas that are already healthy and to make corrections in areas that are not. Attention should be given to broader, more "macro" issues that need to be resolved over an extended time and not peripheral or technical items that can be easily addressed. (2-3 pages).

Option 2:

A research paper into a specific worship topic. This is a means for the student to explore a particular area of academic interest and become more familiar with the leading voices and issues involved. Although this is not the same kind of local church-focused review as option A above, it should eventually result in describing how it relates to the student's own particular worship community. Some suggestions for topics include:

Use of the Christian calendar in worship planning; the place of sacraments in worship; historic controversies regarding the sacraments; how we are "formed" in worship; the role of music and/or the arts in worship; the benefits and problems of technology in worship; postmodern worship; Trinitarian worship; how our worship reflects our Christology, Missiology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, etc. (select 2-3); Wesley and worship; worship as adoration and action; present a topic to the instructor for consideration.

The paper should consist of three parts:

- 1) An introduction to the topic with an indication as to why this is of unique interest to you. If it is to address a particular issue in your local worshiping body, give reasons. (1-2 pages)
- 2) An exploration into the subject itself, identifying key issues in history, significant writers/thinkers who have addressed the topic, and other relevant findings. (7-10 pages).
- 3) A critical evaluation of what you have discovered with specific applications you can make to your local congregation. (2-3 pages).

About your written assignments

Papers should conform to the prescribed style manual for the M.M. program. All written work for the course is expected to meet graduate level writing standards, with good sentence structure, accurate spelling, and proper academic form throughout. Please have someone edit your paper before submission. Deductions will be made for misspelled words and incomplete sentences. Papers should be typed (12pt font), double-spaced, one-inch margins, with proper citations for all material not your own. Please use indented paragraph form and appropriate headings, sub-headings, etc. Your name should be on the first page of the paper. Because our language is such a strong force in shaping our ideas, and because all publishing is now done in gender inclusive format, inclusive language is strongly encouraged on all written assignments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The highest level of academic honesty is expected of all students. Students will be held accountable for any forms of cheating or plagiarism. Reports of any academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. Penalties may range from failure in a specific assignment or exam to failure and/or dismissal from the course.

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

- Personal tracking ID (suggested: first letter of mother's maiden name + last 4 digits of social security number): _____
- Age: _____ Gender: Male / Female
- Race/ethnicity: _____
- Marital status: Married / Single / Divorced
- Raised in the church? yes / no
- Have you served in a cross-cultural setting? yes / no
- Ministry Role (**check all that apply**):
 - Founding Pastor / Church Planter
 - Lead Pastor (without staff)
 - Lead Pastor (with staff)
 - Pastoral Staff member in _____ (area)
 - Lay Ministry Leader in _____ (area)
 - I am presently serving full-time.
 - I am presently serving part-time.
- I have served at this church: 1-5 years / 5-10 years / 10-20 years / 20+ years
- Total years in ministry: 1-5 years / 5-10 years / 10-20 years / 20+ years
- My ministerial credentials are: Ordained elder / Ordained deacon / Local License / District License / other (please define): _____
- About the church where you serve:

- Church denomination (optional): _____

 - Average worship attendance 2012: _____
 - Age of your church: -10 years / 10-25 years / 26-50 years / 51-75 years / 75+ years
 - In present worship facility how long? -10 years / 10-25 years / 26-50 years / 51-75 years / 75+ years
 - Average age of congregants: 18-25 / 26-35 / 36-50 / 51-65 / 66+
 - Church location: rural / urban / other (please specify) _____
 - Communion served: weekly / monthly / quarterly / semi-annually / annually
 - Baptisms: weekly / monthly / quarterly / semi-annually / annually
 - Percentage of the attendants who live within 15 minutes of the church: 0-10 / 11-25 / 26-50 / 51-75 / 76-100
- Think about the worship service at your church. Which of the following normally occurs in your church? **Check all that apply:**
- Service order printed in the bulletin
 - Service order printed for the platform participants only
 - Multiple Sunday morning services (identical order and leadership)
 - If yes, how many? _____
 - Multiple Sunday morning services (different styles)

- If differing, list the style/target of each service: _____

- If differing, are they in different venues: yes / no
- If differing, do they have different worship leader: yes / no
- If differing, do they have a different preacher: yes / no
- Sunday night service
- Saturday night service
- We recite creeds
 - If yes, indicate which creed(s):

- Typically in a service we sing: less than 10 minutes / 10-15 minutes / 16-30 minutes / 31-45 minutes
- We use responsive readings:
- Multiple Scriptures are read in each service.
- Offering plates are passed.
- There is a collection box in the back.
- Suits and ties on the platform.
- Business casual on the platform.
- Jeans on the platform.
- Suits and ties in the congregation.
- Business casual in the congregation.
- Jeans in the congregation.

■ About your worship space (**check all that apply**):

- Stained glass
- Stage lights
- Baptistry
- Baptismal font
- Communion table (up front all the time)
- Pews
- Chairs
- Hymnals
- Screen
- Choir
- Praise team
- Organ
- Orchestra
- Rhythm section (“band”) with guitars and drums
- Robes / vestments
- Candles
- Visual art
- Cross
- Pulpit

APPENDIX D
LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

February 19, 2013

Greetings!

Since you are a student enrolled in PRW6013-Christian Worship beginning Monday, February 25, I am writing to request something of you. As your instructor for this class, I am also a student. Presently, I am completing my dissertation for my Doctor of Ministry at Asbury Theological Seminary. As part of my research, I would like to do a seventy-five-question survey on the first and last days of class relating to worship, mission, and spiritual formation. These pre- and posttests would be taken online during class. At the time of the pretest, a demographic survey will be administered as well. *Participation in this study will not add any work outside of class assignments.*

Permission to do this research has been granted by the Institutional Review Board of MVNU and Asbury Theological Seminary. Dr. Bruce Peterson, director of the M.M. program at MVNU, has been part of my Research Reflection Team.

I believe that this research will serve to strengthen the curriculum design and delivery for future classes. My hope is that churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have taken time to participate. Once the research is completed in approximately three months, I will destroy the individual surveys, retaining only the anonymous data electronically for an indefinite period of time—at least until my dissertation is written and approved.

The pre- and post-tests will be anonymous, connected by an ID that only you know. No names of individual students or churches will be included in the final document.

While your participation is optional (you may choose *not* to participate), I would ask that you prayerfully consider being part of this study. Feel free to call or write me at any time if you need more information.

If you are willing to assist me in this study, please sign and date this letter below to indicate your voluntary participation. Then scan the document and return the signed copy to me before our first day of class. Thank you for your help.

Grace & Peace,

Greg Rosser

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

Please type your name and here: _____

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