

ABSTRACT

GOD'S MISSIONAL SPIRIT:

THE ACTS AND AGENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE MISSIONAL LIFE

by

John W. Freeland

The missional church movement has stepped outside the walls of the institutional church and into the streets of the neighborhood and the hallways of the workplace. However, missional practices are not enough to turn the tide of the growing irrelevance of the church in Western society. This study addresses the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the missional life. Theologians and practitioners such as Jurgen Moltmann, Michael Frost, Alan Hirsch, Alan Roxburgh, J. R. Woodward, N. T. Wright, and John Wesley were explored in the literature review which revealed six key themes: The Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit, God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities. These Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, and Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit all relate to a Christian's experience with the Holy Spirit as He designs and sends the Christian to a particular place at a particular time. The Holy Spirit joins with, guides, and leads the Christian on that mission and into a deeper personal relationship through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities Moreover, these themes relate to the outward expression of the Christian's relationship with the Holy Spirit as they respond to their context with the love given them by the Holy Spirit, work in the gifts (2 Cor. 12), fruit (Gal. 5.22–24), and power (Acts 1.8) of the Holy Spirit, and discern and engage the

missional opportunities around them. Still, a deficit in the literature exists in addressing the connection between the Christian's relationship and experiences with the Holy Spirit and missional living.

The project intervention involved a ten-week small group experience designed to help participants establish a relationship with the Holy Spirit and begin regular missional practices. Participants experienced the baptism with the Holy Spirit and perfection in love and established missional practices.

A pre- and post- missional practices assessment was used as well as a questionnaire. The data collected was both quantitative and qualitative and evaluated the connection between the Holy Spirit and missional living. The findings suggest that the six themes are important in an individual's missional life.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Chapter

Acts 1:8, “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth,” is both a mandate and a promise. The mandate to be His witnesses is preceded by the promise of power from the Holy Spirit. In essence, Jesus sent His disciples to multiply and fill the earth with the Kingdom of God, and He gave the means to accomplish this—through the power of His Holy Spirit. The Western Church, in recent decades, has operated as though it can multiply and fill the earth without the power of the Holy Spirit. Mainline Protestants in the Western world struggle with declining congregations and denominations. Chapter One identifies the relationship between the individual Christian and the Holy Spirit as the key to a vital missional life.

Plans, formulas, and systems can become mechanical attempts to accomplish that which only the Holy Spirit can do. A wise man once said, “Don’t start something you can’t finish.” In the reign of God, there is little, if anything, man can actually accomplish alone. Knowing God is on mission in a missional life is the key to fruitful ministry. This study will assess participants’ experiences of the Holy Spirit and its relation to the missional life of said participants. The goal of this study is to determine if and how the Holy Spirit helps the disciple live a missional life.

Personal Introduction

Most local churches in the West are in decline. As a Holy Spirit-filled pastor in a mainline denomination, my purpose here is not to ferret out the reasons why but to consider this phenomenon of decline in light of the promise of Acts 1:8 that God will

give His Church power to accomplish His mandate. If God has given us power through His Holy Spirit, then why are Western churches experiencing such decline, and can this decline be reversed? If so, how? While I was unable to answer these questions completely in this study, I was able to draw conclusions about the relationship between the participants' experience and knowledge of the Holy Spirit and their missional life.

Through many mission trips, as well as personal experiences in the United States, I have witnessed the action and agency of the Holy Spirit in Church and community. I have also witnessed fear and a lack of understanding of the Holy Spirit in local churches in the United Methodist denomination in the United States. Experience has shown that this fear and lack of understanding prevent the local church in the West, and the United Methodist Church in particular, from fulfilling the mandate of Acts 1:8. This fear and lack of understanding separate Christians from the promise and power of the Holy Spirit.

It is my belief that mainline denominational churches in general, and the United Methodist Church in particular, take the Holy Spirit for granted, do not understand the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit, and/or fear the Holy Spirit. Churches attempt to maintain control of worship, community, and fellowship because they lack a relationship with the Holy Spirit and have exercised little effort to become acquainted with Him. Before a reasonable intervention can occur, the problem itself must be better understood. I undertook this project to better understand how United Methodists are personally and corporately acquainted with the Holy Spirit and how their understanding of how He operates in the world affects their missional living.

I am serving my fifth appointment as a pastor in the United Methodist Church. Each of these appointments, in their own ways, were in a state of decline and crisis such

that their future was at stake. The problems seemed unsolvable by church growth strategies, leaving one to conclude the problem was deeply seated elsewhere. Church growth strategies, like creating an inviting atmosphere and welcoming experience, caring for church members, providing opportunities to serve, and properly managing church resources, may be important, but they cannot be treated as the answer (Lotich). Church growth books abound from *Lasting Impact* by Carey Nieuwhof to *How to Break Growth Barriers* by Carl F. George and Warren Bird. Local churches caught in the dilemma of dwindling attendance and failed strategies can only hope to reverse their decline by clinging to the promise of Acts 1:8 in hopes of fulfilling its mandate. However, the challenge facing the pastors of such churches is helping church members find their way to carry this mandate to their families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

Many attractional churches are dying. As members of local congregations become increasingly inactive in attendance and volunteerism, the Western United Methodist Church continues to bleed members. The inactivity of church members is often revealed most by their absence in their own communities. Church members are afraid, reluctant, or feel ill-equipped to engage the people they encounter in their everyday lives. In this dichotomy between mandate and inactivity, I dream of a local church with a hope for the Kingdom of God, a desire for the salvation of souls, and a fire from the Holy Spirit who will live out Acts 1:8 in real time and in real ways.

Statement of the Problem

There exists in the local churches of the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church a dearth of Holy Spirit inspired and empowered missional ministry. This insufficiency is a major reason for the decline in numerical growth in the Kingdom

of God, numerical growth in the North Georgia Conference, and spiritual growth as disciples of Christ. The absence of Holy Spirit-empowered believers has increased frustration and failure in local churches and among local pastors. Many people in local churches have become frustrated with the lack of unity, have experienced failure in outreach ministries, and are defeated by dwindling crowds. The combination of these frustrations and failures threaten to render many local churches impotent.

Membership in the United Methodist Church in the United States has declined by 33% since 1967. Similar decline, and in some cases greater decline, has been experienced by the Christian Church, Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the American Baptist Churches (Carter). Van Gelder and Zscheile also report decline in mainline denominations, though to a lesser extent, while reporting double-digit gain in Evangelical denominations and triple-digit gain in Pentecostal denominations (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Participating* Ch. 1). Rainer reports that more than 90% of American churches are growing slower than their communities (Rainer p. 62).

What the Holy Spirit did in the Early Church, He does not seem to be doing in the United Methodist Church in the United States. Most United Methodist Churches in the United States will not deny the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit, but most cannot bear witness to experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit found in the Book of Acts. Acts such as healing, exorcisms, power over nature, and the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit are seldom found (cf. 1 Cor. 12.8–10; Gal. 5.22–23). The North American church may look to other countries and cultures as well as the underground church in communist and

Muslim countries to find evidence that the Holy Spirit is still alive and active in and through the Church.

Jesus, in Acts 1:8, emphasized the necessity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and the Church. The Church should take Acts 1:8 as a warning that without the Holy Spirit and His power we cannot expect success as witnesses for Christ. Those in the United Methodist Church in the United States seem to be ignorant and/or disinterested in the Holy Spirit and His acts and agency and thereby grow frustrated by dwindling membership and failing church-growth strategies. These behaviors must be changed, but this will require a fundamental change of attitudes and affections.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to evaluate how a personal experience with the Holy Spirit impacts missional living in ABC United Methodist Church following a ten-week small group experience focusing on the Holy Spirit and the missional life.

Research Questions

The study required assessments of the participants' missional attitude and their relationship with the Holy Spirit, including their knowledge and experience of the Holy Spirit and their experience and practice with missional living. To guide the above the following research questions were asked and are answered in this study.

Research Question #1

What were the participants' personal experiences with and attitudes toward the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices prior to the intervention?

Research Question #2

What change in the participants' personal experiences and attitudes related to the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices were exhibited after the intervention?

Research Question #3

What practices, attitudes, and decisions in the participant's life demonstrate they are being perfected in love?

Rationale for the Project

In Genesis 1.22, God called Adam and Eve to multiply and fill the earth. Jesus calls the Church to a similar activity at the end of the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Mark (Matt. 28.19, Mark 16.15). This is an attainable mandate and commission. However, the Western church is failing to fulfill this commission and mandate even though Jesus promised that with the power of the Holy Spirit His witnesses would do greater things than even He (Acts 1.8, John 14.12). Jesus felt that the presence of the Holy Spirit was important. Jesus said, "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you" (John 16.7). It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the action and agency of the Holy Spirit in the missional life.

The Church cannot hope to accomplish the mission of Acts 1.8 without the power which comes only from the Holy Spirit. Yet, it seems the further in time the Church moves away from the first Pentecost the further it moves away from the Holy Spirit. In spite of this, the Apostle Paul offers these encouraging words, "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the

Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5.5). Hope for the church and the Kingdom of God is found in the importance Jesus placed on the person of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This hope should be realized as Christians move into the neighborhood to share the love God has poured into their hearts.

The Early Church of the Book of Acts spread with explosive growth through a few Disciples. This is evidenced by the testimony of Act 2.41 that “about three thousand were added to their number that day” and Acts 2.47 “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (see also Acts 4.4, 5.14, 6.7, 9.31, 9.42, 11.21, 11.24, 14.1, 14.21, 15.5, 17.32, 18.8). Churches in Latin America, Cuba, and Africa as well as the underground churches in China and in Muslim countries continue with explosive growth. Bishop Ricardo Pereira, bishop of the United Methodist Church in Cuba, for example, planned to plant 365 churches each year beginning in 2016. This type of growth cannot be attributed to systems and methodologies. Pastors are discovering that the attractional model of one “mega-church” does not always work in another “mega-church” and rarely works in a small church. Systematic methodologies tend to fail smaller congregations which lack financial and human resources, thus increasing the frustration of those pastors and the sense of defeat in their congregations.

The concern goes beyond the needs of the local church. The growth of the Kingdom of God is more important than the growth of a particular local church, denomination, or even the growth of the Church at large. The famous magician and self-avowed atheist, Penn Jillette, asked, “How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?” (qtd. In Raoch). Yet the decrease in the Western Church continues. Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach

the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16.15, emphasis added). Members of local churches continue to view “mission” as something to be done by the pastor, the staff, or as a “ministry label” given to their financial support of extension ministries or foreign missionaries. This study explores the phenomena of a “sent” people who will not “go.”

In particular, many United Methodist churches and denominational leaders are frustrated and fearful because they continue to lose members at an alarming rate. The United Methodist Church in the United States is decreasing by approximately two percent per year (Fenton). Donald House said, “By 2030, the denomination in the United States will either have found a way to turn around, meaning it is growing, or its turnaround in the United States is not possible” (qtd. In Hahn). In most churches, United Methodist members are negligent in their relationship with the Holy Spirit, causing United Methodist churches to operate without the power of the Holy Spirit which Christ promised in Acts 1.8.

Definition of Key Terms

Missional life – A missional life is one in which the sharing of one’s faith is carried outside the church into every aspect and place of life including daily activities at home, work, and community. Missional opportunities occur in everyday life from coffee shops to soccer games. A missional life connects with the unchurched in the neighborhoods and the greater community with the purpose of growth for the individual not-yet-Christian and growth for the Kingdom of God.

Agency of the Holy Spirit – The agency of the Holy Spirit is highlighted in Zechariah 4.6b, “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty.” The agency of the Holy Spirit is that activity and ministry of God which is carried out

through the Holy Spirit. This includes, not only, miracles, signs, and wonders, but the power and confidence to be a witness for Christ. In addition, the agency of the Holy Spirit works within the believer through sanctifying grace and perfection in love and through the believer with the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12.8-10 and the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.22-23.

Perfection in love – The believer filled with the Holy Spirit is transformed through a sanctifying process Wesley called sanctifying grace, which is initiated by the Holy Spirit, in which the believer participates. Sanctification is meant to restore the believer into the image of Christ. In this image, the believer is perfected in love and able to love others completely and unconditionally. This type of love is beyond human ability and a product of the Holy Spirit in the believer.

Delimitations

This study was limited to ABC United Methodist Church in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This church was considered large enough to offer diversity and anonymity among the participants and yet small enough to manage. Male and female participants who were slightly varied in economic status, age, level of education, and years since conversion were included in the study. The number of twelve participants in the small group was believed to be the best size for facilitating and most feasible to encourage all to participate freely. No specific knowledge of, or experience with, the Holy Spirit was expected or solicited prior to selection for participation.

Review of Relevant Literature

The project consulted biblical and theological literature to glean insights into a personal experience with the Holy Spirit and the effect on the Missional Church. The

types of literature consulted included books, websites, and journals related to the missional church and missional living, books, websites, and journal articles related to the Holy Spirit, and books, Bible commentaries, dictionaries, and journal articles related to New Testaments books, particularly the Gospels and the Book of Acts. From them several themes emerged. Ministries and organizations were also consulted including, but not limited to, Forge America, International Leadership Institute, and Rick Bonfim Ministries.

Themes related to the Missional Church from such authors as D. Bosch, M. Breen, A. Hirsch, M. Frost, A.J. Roxburgh, L. Newbigin, C. Van Gelder, C. Wright, M. Minatrea, H. Snyder, J. Woodward, R. Hastings, M.S. Boren, and D. Guder are *Missio Dei*, the Church sent as Apostles, the reign of God on earth, domestication of churches to the Western way of life, the diminishing Western Church, and incarnational approach to Kingdom and church growth. Themes related to small groups include accountability, support, and spiritual growth from authors such as M.S. Boren, J. Egli, R. Ross, S. Nelson, and K. Watson. Several themes related to the Holy Spirit arose in the writing of J. Wesley, J. Doles, R.C. Sproul, J. Moltmann, R. Torrey, G. Tyra, A. Tozer, and W.F. Albright including sanctification, holiness, baptism and infilling with the Holy Spirit, gifts of the Holy Spirit, fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the anointing and empowering of the Holy Spirit. Works on the theology of John Wesley and John Fletcher by R. Frazier, L. Wood, H. Snyder, and R. Tuttle discussed themes of the work of the Holy Spirit, dispensations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Baptism with the Holy Spirit, sanctification, perfection, good works, and degrees of grace.

Research Methodology

The researcher used a pre/post group survey and a six-question post-group questionnaire. The project was a mixed methods intervention conducted in a local United Methodist church. Twelve subjects, male and female ages 22-70, were placed in a small group experience utilizing a forty question pre/post-group survey, field notes from the small group meetings, and a six question questionnaire given over six weeks, one question per week. Data collected came from the pre/post survey, field notes, and questionnaire. Analysis of the quantitative data was done using SurveyMonkey and Microsoft Excel, while qualitative data was analyzed by comparing patterns and themes discovered in the literature review. The results of the study could be appropriately applied to a similar church in a similar culture and environment.

Type of Research

The research for the project was a mixed intervention (qualitative with quantitative) and made use of a pre/post group survey and a post-group questionnaire. These research methods were used to determine how the participants' understanding of the sent nature of the early church and the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts and their personal experiences with the Holy Spirit affected their missional life. Participants completed a survey prior to and immediately following the small group experience to determine their previous experience with the Holy Spirit, the type and frequency of missional work, and reveal changes in knowledge, awareness, practices, and attitudes about missional living and the Holy Spirit. During the six-weeks following the small group experience, participants were asked to respond to a different question each week

using 100-300 words to describe their missional experiences and practices and their awareness of the Holy Spirit during that week.

Participants

The senior pastor and discipleship pastor of ABC United Methodist Church were asked to choose participants from among the congregation. The general guidelines were for participants to be believers in Christ, ages 22–70, male and female. Each pastor was asked to independently choose twenty-five members from the congregation who attend worship services at least twice a month, volunteer at least once a month, and give financially on a regular basis. The study was limited to adult participants because a certain level of maturity was needed for comprehension of survey questions. Participants were to be between 22-70 years-of-age to restrict the study to those in the prime of their missional life.

A broad age span was chosen to create diversity in age among the participants and to match the age diversity among adult members of the ABC United Methodist Church. A racially and economically diverse group would not have been representative of ABC United Methodist Church's membership. The nature and purpose of the study was briefly explained to participants when they were invited to participate in the research project. Participants were chosen by the pastors without guidance from the researcher regarding expected levels of experience with the Holy Spirit.

Instrumentation

The pre/post group survey was administered to each participant. The purpose of this instrument was to determine each participant's personal knowledge of and experience with the Holy Spirit and the participant's current missional activity. Each

participant was asked to complete the survey online and to refrain from discussing the survey with others until after the project was complete. The questions asked in the pre/post survey required no specialized knowledge or training prior to participation. Following the small group experience, participants received six questions, one per week for six weeks. The questions were open-ended and invited participants to write 100-300 words to answer each question. These researcher-designed questions measured the participants' experience and awareness of the Holy Spirit as well as their continuing missional activity. These questions contained terms and language the participants heard explained several times during the ten-week small group experience.

Data Collection

The pre/post survey was administered online via SurveyMonkey. The results were immediately collected on a spreadsheet for analysis. Individual pre/post group surveys were compared to determine the effectiveness of the group experience. In addition, field notes taken during the small group meetings were analyzed. These notes were taken by the researcher's administrative assistants who signed confidentiality agreements. The six questions and group meeting notes were analyzed for recurring themes revealed in the Literature Review (chapter 2) and explored during the small group experience.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data consists of the comparison of the answers to the pre-group survey and the post-group survey which were identical in form and content. The researcher used the data analysis provided by SurveyMonkey with graphs, charts, and finalized data being generated by Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data consisted of the analysis of the six questions given post-group and field notes taken during the group

meetings. These were analyzed by six graders for themes discovered in the literature review and consisted of described behaviors, comments, stories, and testimonies given by participants during the group meetings and in response to the weekly questions. Further analysis was conducted to examine participants' answers for the correlation between their relationship with the Holy Spirit and their missional activities.

Generalizability

The study used ABCUMC in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This church has differing styles of worship, is located in an upper-middle class area of Atlanta, GA, which is predominately Caucasian, and is a multisite large membership congregation. Overall, participants consisted of 2 between the ages of 22 and 35, 4 between the ages of 36 and 47, 3 between the ages of 48 and 59, and 3 between the ages of 60 and 70. All participants were Caucasian, with eight being female and four being male.

Project Overview

The project outlines the results of a pre and post group survey and a post-group questionnaire completed by adults aged 22-70 in ABCUMC in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. Chapter Two discusses influential authors of the Missional Church movement and influential authors and authorities on the Holy Spirit and the Book of Acts. Chapter Three outlines the various ways the researcher investigated the research questions. Chapter Four analyzes the findings from the research. Chapter Five outlines the study's major findings and the implication of those findings.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Jesus issued the church a mission in Acts 1.8 to be his witnesses even to the ends of the earth, but the Western Church aborted that mission by prioritizing church growth over Kingdom growth. Leonard Ravenhill called this “cheapening the gospel” (59). The membership and clergy of Western churches are not engaging the community around them with the vision and power promised in Acts 1.8, nor are they leading their congregations to do so. The Western Church, in many ways, is indifferent to the world around it. Its failure to engage its community has negatively impacted church growth, but more importantly, it has stifled the growth of the kingdom of God in Europe, Canada, and the United States.

In the later twentieth century, Protestant Christianity lost one-third of its membership, and the percentage of Americans self-identifying as Christians dropped from 60% to 38% (Miller p. ii). Rainer reports that fewer than 10% of churches in the United States are growing at the same pace as their community (62). The pattern of church decline witnessed in Europe in the early twentieth century now continues in the United States (Bolger 169). Short of a significant paradigm shift, the United Methodist Church in the West will remain in decline until it loses all influence in the world (Branson 62). In desperation, with few exceptions, many denominational leaders and local church pastors have attempted a variety of popular church growth strategies only to find themselves frustrated and in further decline (S. Metcalf 75). Many churches have entered maintenance mode in an attempt to keep the active members of their base while

neglecting an entire generation of youth and young adults (Guder, *Missional Church* 59; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 22). Van Gelder and Zscheile suggest that God has tasked the church with recontextualizing, reconsidering, and reimagining their community and surroundings, for new generations (*Missional Church* Loc. 2581).

The Western Church, at least in part, is awakening to the realization that it must do something differently if it is to have any presence in the world at all. This research project enters the missional church discussion. Amidst the argument of attractional versus missional church models, this study considers another factor less studied and more difficult to describe or measure. In Acts 1.8, Jesus promised the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to those who would be his witnesses. This study investigates the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the incarnational ministry of a small group of members of ABCUMC in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Biblical Foundations

Missio Dei

The church is called to continue the work Jesus described in Luke 4.18-19 when he applied Isaiah 61.1-2 to his own ministry: to preach the Gospel to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, and to proclaim the Lord's favor (Barrett 79; Boren, *Difference Makers* 51; Bolger 217; Bright 239). With the commands of Matthew 28.19 and Mark 16.15, Jesus clearly obligated the church to, what has been called, the *Missio Dei*, the mission of God (Longnecker 52). One cannot understand the missionary church theologically outside the context of the *Missio Dei*. The proclamation of the Gospel is the most important element

in the mission of Christ, the mission of the Holy Spirit, and the mission of the church (Moltmann, *The Church* 10). The Gospels of Luke and John include sending statements in Luke 24.47 and John 20.21, as well as Jesus's sending of the disciples in Luke 10. Peter addressed the Missio Dei in 1 Peter 2.9 by reminding his audience they are a chosen people sent into the world for the purpose of declaring God's praises. The need of humanity is great. Therefore, the church is created and called to share the gospel (Fox and Morris 16; Van Gelder, *Ministry* 94).

God is more than the God of creation. He is the God who sustains and renews that creation (Spellers 33; C. J. Wright Ch. 13). Following the fall of man, God began to reconcile all things unto himself. The Missio Dei is God's work to bring about that reconciliation and to restore His creation (Spellers 33; Boren, *Difference Makers* 51; Fox and Morris 13). The nature of God is found in the Missio Dei as God reaches to restore his creative beauty to a fallen world (Boren, *Difference Makers* 51; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 6). The person of the God-head who reaches to lead men to Christ is the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of the love of God" (Moltmann, *The Church* 55). The Missio Dei, God's mission for the church, has its origin in the love of God, and it achieves its purpose when men and creation are reunited with God (Seamands Loc. 1642; Moltmann, *The Church* 59).

The theology of the missional church is found in the mission of God who sends the church into the world (Akkerman and Maddis 17; A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1016). The mission which Christ began is continued by the Holy Spirit through the church to bring salvation and reconciliation to all things and usher in the kingdom of God (Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc. 4178). The Holy Spirit, the power of the new

creation, reveals and glorifies Christ in believers (Moltmann, *The Church* p. 203). The church, and the individual Christian, is invited into the Missio Dei as God works “to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ” (Eph. 1.10b NIV) and to bring all things back into His created order (Fox and Morris 13; Hastings 251; Snyder, *Community* 63). The church’s investment in this reconciliation and restoration must be more than “planting churches and saving souls.” It must point beyond itself and become a physical, tangible representation of the missionary God among the people of the world (Frost, *Road* Loc. 430; Tan 290). The church must be open to the world in the Missio Dei and bring glory to the Father through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, *The Church* 11).

Love

The Old Testament teaches that God has the power to appear among people as a man, but in the New Testament, God took it a step further and became a man in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus had to do more than appear as a human being; he had to become one so that He could empathize with our earthly experience to become fully merciful to make atonement for man’s sins (Stern 155, 669). God had no greater way to show His love for humankind than to send His Son. John 3.16 emphasizes this love which, sent for all sinful humankind, embraces those who believe (John 3.16; Rom. 5.8; Turner 176). This is the only place in the Gospel of John the apostle uses “gave” over “sent” emphasizing that the incarnation of Christ comes from God’s love for the world (O’Day 552). God gives Jesus in “limitless” love to all people, even those who are at odds with God (Bruce, *Gospel of John* 89; O’Day 552–553).

The love of God continued from the salvation of humankind to the transformation of humankind through the pouring out of His love into their hearts (N. T. Wright, “Romans” 517). Love is first revealed through the love of God in the sending of His Son on our behalf (1 John 4.9-10). God loved humankind before humankind was able to love in return. Humankind’s ability to love is not generated in and of itself but comes from the love God has given humankind to reflect back to one another (1 John 4.7; Black 429–430). Such love is not something to be earned but is a characteristic to be freely received in the new birth (Turner 176). This love, according to Wright, is reflected in the Shema, the Jewish daily prayer from Deuteronomy 6.4-5, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is 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 might.’” This “Spirit-given love for God,” given upon new birth, is able to fulfill the central command of God (N. T. Wright, “Romans” 517).

The self-giving love of God is demonstrated in the language of 1 John 4.9 which is similar to that of John 3.16, “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him” (1 John 4.9 NASB). God expressed the deepest meaning of His love for humankind by sending His Son to atone for and forgive sin (Marshall 214–15). The purpose of the sending of the Son is that those who believe might “receive life through Him” (Bruce, *Epistles of John* 108). Jesus, the chief example of love, demonstrated God’s love for humankind. In this action of God and Jesus, the nature of love is revealed: self-sacrifice and action taken on behalf of another (Marshall 213–14).

“God is Love” (1 John 4.7-8), and therefore, the Christian is made able by faith to partake of the divine nature to love as God loves (Marshall 211; Turner 176). The Holy

Spirit pours this love into the Christian heart (Bruce, *Epistles of John* 109). The recipients of this love have no choice but to show love to another as God has taken away their sin and loved them such that they cannot help but wonder at His sacrificial giving (Marshall 215). The love which was present in the incarnate Christ must become present in Christians (Brown 554). Loving one another is essential to loving God as one's love for God reaches its fullest expression through love for others (Marshall 217). Those who belong to God must reproduce the loving nature of God (Bruce, *Epistles of John* 107).

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit works on behalf of God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. In Genesis 1.2, prior to creation, the Holy Spirit was found hovering over the formless void of the earth (Babcock 11–14). The Hebrew word *ruach* has been translated “wind,” “breath,” and “spirit” and carries the image of a violent force or energy as well as that of the mysterious breath of life. The Holy Spirit came upon Saul in 1 Samuel 10 causing Saul to prophesy freely, upon David anointing him to be king in 1 Samuel 11, and upon his son, for the same purpose, in 1 Samuel 16.13. Old Testament references to the Holy Spirit most frequently refer to Israel's religious life, especially as it pertains to the prophetic and charismatic power given to Israel's leadership (Bromiley 730). The Holy Spirit enabled Israel to follow the Law of Moses (Ezekiel 36.25–26), cleanse and restore their spiritually dry bones (Ezekiel 37), and bring justice to the nations (Isaiah 42.1) (Macchia).

Scripture speaks of the Spirit as a wind, an “invisible and mysterious” power which cannot be tracked, the “transcendent power of creation” (Pinnock Loc 341; Bromiley 730). Zechariah 4.6, Micah 3.8, Psalm 139.7, and other passages make the Holy

Spirit synonymous with God's power and presence (Bromiley 731). The Holy Spirit is still present and active among His people as God the Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit into the world followed by the sending of the church into the world by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Bromiley 731; Woodward 27). The sending of the Spirit upon the Church in Acts 1.8 was meant for the empowering and equipping of its members for service and witness (Murray Loc. 625). "Being witnesses" and "receiving power" are clearly linked (Dorman 149; Volf and Lee, "Spirit and the Church" 27). The identity and mission of Christ were shaped by the Spirit (Luke 4.18). Therefore, understanding the ministry of the Spirit is critical to understanding the mission of the church (Volf and Lee, "Spirit and the Church" 21–22; Van Gelder, Ministry 23).

The Old Testament theology of the Holy Spirit climaxes with the promise of the Holy Spirit coming in a new way with the advent of the Messiah as prophesied in Joel 2.28-29 and Ezekiel 26.24 (Macchia; Babcock 16). Jesus's messianic ministry begins and continues only after being anointed by the Holy Spirit following his baptism in the Jordan River. This ministry is confirmed by Pentecost itself (Acts 2.32; Bromiley 734–735). The Pentecostal event of Acts 2 is the fulfillment of Joel 2 and the beginning of the New Testament Church's incarnational ministry as they continue Jesus's ministry and fulfill Acts 1.8 by going, empowered by the Holy Spirit, into the world to preach the gospel (Macchia). Paul, who sees the Holy Spirit as the source of signs, wonders, and power for the church, also focused on the Holy Spirit as the one who anoints the church for ministry through the bestowal of gifts and fruit and reveals the mysteries of God and Scripture to those filled with the Spirit (1 Cor. 12; Gal. 5.22-23; Bromiley 737; Babcock 18).

Following Jesus's resurrection, Jesus spoke frequently of the coming kingdom of God and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit for the church (Macchia 258; Stott, *Acts* 40, 44). In Acts 1.6–8, Jesus rejected the “human power” suggested by the disciples in favor of that which would come when they received the Holy Spirit (Pathrapankal 75). The promise of the Holy Spirit would come in a Spirit-baptism which would anoint and enable the apostles and other disciples to accomplish the mission Jesus gave them in Acts 1.8 to preach the gospel to all the earth just as Jesus himself had been anointed in each of the Gospels (Matt; 3.16-17; Mark 1.10; Luke 3.22; John 1.32–33; Bruce, *Acts* 38; Barrett 79). Jesus has made that Spirit available to all who believe in Him (Conner 32). According to Wesley's interpretation of Acts 4.32, this Spirit-baptism would be a separate event from Salvation, a second work of grace (Skuce 20).

Understanding the Biblical foundation for the promise and filling of the Holy Spirit is complicated by the lack of a rigid Biblical pattern (Acts 2.38; 8.12–19; 10.44–48; 19.5; Bromiley 735). The baptism with the Holy Spirit appears at least five times in the book of Acts (2.4; 8.17; 9.17–18; 10.44; 19.6; Kendall Loc. 2455). Stott held that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was an unconscious event which occurred at conversion for every believer. This, he based on 1 Corinthians 12.13, “we were all baptized by one Spirit.” Kendall argues that 1 Corinthians 12.13 does not refer to the baptism with the Holy Spirit described in the book of Acts which is a second work of grace (Kendall Loc. 2490, 2517). As the disciples in the book of Acts experienced a second work of grace, so subsequent Christians should seek such an experience post-justification (Maddox 81).

Theological Foundations

“You must be born again”

Scripture is concerned with telling the stories of God's salvific acts (Fox and Morris 14). The consequence of Adam's and Eve's sin for humanity was alienation from God, from each other, from self, and from the land (Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc 2800). The fall of humankind in Genesis 3 compelled God to establish and execute a mission for the salvation of all (Frazier Loc. 4064). Wesley believed the fall of man caused humankind to spiral downward, losing both the knowledge and love of God, becoming both unhappy and unholy, thus becoming the "very image of the devil." Therefore, man contains nothing within himself by which he/she may earn God's mercy (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Locs. 1073, 423).

Sin is deserving of death. (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Loc. 692). Thus, a means of grace had to be applied to the human condition. This grace is demonstrated in the Old Testament as God forestalled his wrath and accepted humankind's attempted obedience to the Law of Moses in spite of humanity's capacity for unbridled sin (Frazier Loc. 4064). In the New Testament, God made a way for salvation through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus that humanity may be "born again." God, compelled by His love for sinners, was willing to walk into the midst of sin to restore them to the family of God (Walt, "Secular;" Bruce, *Gospel of John* 40). Jesus came in the lowliest of births and made manifest the character of God, as Athanasius said, "For he became man that we might become divine; and he revealed himself through a body that we might receive an idea of the invisible Father; and he endured insults from men that we might inherit incorruption" (*De Incarnatione*, 54).

In John 3.3, Jesus answered and said to [Nicodemus], "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (NASB). This spiritual birth

begins the repairs to one's relationship with God, provides eternal life which begins in the here and now, and touches every aspect of one's life (Fremont and Fremont 14–15; Frost, *Road* Loc. 912). This spiritual birth is a new birth in the Spirit of God of a human life and the “beginning of the fulfilled promise of God” of Revelation 21.5, “I am making all things new” (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 381). Wesley believed that the new birth is how God changes the “devilish” mind into the mind which was in Christ and raises the soul from death in sin to a life of righteousness (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Locs. 1156, 1151). However, this is only the beginning of the discipleship Jesus had in mind as he said, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me” (Matt. 16.24 NASB). Jesus commanded these disciples to make more disciples and baptize “them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28.19 NASB). These disciples are formed into a new community, which grows through the ministry of the Spirit (Zscheile Locs. 825, 988).

Jesus did not trust to the Apostles alone the task of making and being disciples. He gave the Holy Spirit to help. Throughout Scripture, God is present in the person of the Holy Spirit actively engaged in the lives of his people (Bromiley 741). God's desire in the sending of his son was that all should be saved. To this end he employs the Holy Spirit to shape and empower the ministry of the church (Pinnock Loc. 318; Tan 283; Van Gelder, *Ministry* 20). Wesley called this presalvific work of the Holy Spirit “prevenient grace” (Yong Loc. 5574).

The Importance of the Holy Spirit in the Believer's Life

Gregory Liston describes First, Second, and Third Article theologies with First and Second Article theologies pertaining to the interruption of man's relationship with

God through sin and the restoration of that relationship through Jesus Christ, respectively. Third Article theology pertains to the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit in the relationship of individuals and communities with God and explores the transformational nature of God (Liston 10–11). Through the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit, God works to establish the kingdom of God and his rule in the lives of his disciples and those yet to be his disciples (Stott, *Acts* 42). Luke-Acts, particularly the Pentecostal account of Acts 2, illustrates the acts of the Holy Spirit seen in Jesus and the manifest presence of God in the world continuing through the church (Bromiley 735; Wall 43; Wenrich 8). The early church saw itself as the fulfillment of the covenant expectations found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel experiencing the power and sanctification of the Holy Spirit (Bromiley 742).

Assignments relative to the *Missio Dei* in the church are under the liberty and authority of Christ and empowered of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, living a life true to the *Missio Dei* is possible. God has given his Spirit to indwell all disciples of Christ and give power, gifts, and fruit to enable his disciples to fulfill his *Missio Dei* (Moltmann, *The Church* 302–303; Murray, *Full Blessing* Loc. 513; Olajide 179; Pinnock Loc. 1945; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Participating* Ch. 9; Yong Loc. 5556). In order to accomplish that which only the church was designed to accomplish, it must work in the power of the Holy Spirit (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 1055). Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, was empowered to confront and defeat evil in the world, to heal diseases, and to exercise power over demons and nature (Van Gelder, *Ministry* 91; Wall 41). The presence and anointing which was upon Jesus and made Him the Anointed One is the same presence and anointing which was upon the disciples that made them anointed ones (Conner 91).

In Acts 1.8, Jesus promised his Holy Spirit would continue His presence in the world (Babcock 135).

Salvation, which is acquired through Christ, is appropriated through the Holy Spirit. The church must understand itself in the presence and process of the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, *The Church* 227, 197). The early church fathers recognized baptism in part and parcel with the Holy Spirit. However in the West, baptism has become linked with forgiveness and the Holy Spirit linked with the laying on of hands (Bromiley 743). The Gospel of John connects the sending of the Spirit with both the Father and the Son (14.26; 15.26). In this sending of the Son and the sending of the Spirit, God placed Himself in the presence of humankind. Therefore, humans must deal with God through the Son, through the Spirit (Moltmann, *The Church* 54–55). The church which seeks first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness will discover the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 311).

This fellowship and community of Christ and the church can only come about with the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, *The Church* 33). The Holy Spirit is present for the whole congregation. Therefore, no one individual can claim the Spirit as his/her own personal possession. Spirituality is not a solitary, selfish experience but is lived in community (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 723, 1048). The identity and stability of the church is preserved through Christ's faithfulness and the presence of the Holy Spirit. The *Missio Dei* and the "special assignments" in the church come under the authority of Christ, are exercised by the power of the Spirit, and are not the ideas or working of a single fellowship of Christ (Moltmann, *The Church* 319, 302–303).

G. R. Beasley-Murray suggests that baptism, for both Jews and Christians, is understood to mean immersion (Olajide p. 180). The “baptism” with the Holy Spirit is an immersion in the continuing presence of God in this world. R. A. Torrey maintains that “baptism with the Holy Spirit” is only used in reference to the initial infilling and not of subsequent fillings (Torrey 112). Pentecostals place more emphasis on the “baptism with the Holy Spirit” than on the “infilling of the Holy Spirit.” By focusing on baptism to the exclusion of infilling, Pentecostals focus on power ignoring the Spirit’s role in one’s relationship with God (Olajide 178). However, the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is both and. It is both the power promised by Christ in Acts 1.8, Isaiah 61.1–2, and Luke 24.49 and the relationship promised in Jeremiah 31.33–34, Romans 8.2–9, and Ezekiel 36.36–27.

Both power and relationship are necessary for the church to fulfill the *Missio Dei*. God the Father sent the Holy Spirit to continue the mission of Christ through the Apostles and the church (Seamands Loc. 1676). The age (dispensation) of the Spirit was introduced fully through the birth of the church (Bromiley 742). As the Holy Spirit empowered and equipped Christ for His mission in the world, so the Holy Spirit empowers and enables the church to point to Christ, fulfill the commandments, and live a virtuous life (Pinnock Locs. 1373, 1850, 1859–1872; King 112). These things are achieved in those who have been immersed in the Holy Spirit and abide in the continuing presence of God in this world.

John Fletcher’s Dispensations

John Fletcher’s theology of dispensations sought to explain the covenant of grace through three major dispensations as human history unfolds. Joachim of Fiore likewise

divided history into three eras, though he did not use the term dispensation. He suggested: the era of the Father, the Old Testament period; the era of the Son, beginning with the incarnation; and the era of the Holy Spirit in which the Holy Spirit would continue the *Missio Dei* by empowering the church (Zamora p. 47). Fletcher explains the progression of God's Spirit in human history with the dispensation of the Father, dispensation of the Son, and dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Each dispensation involves two things, the activity of God in dispensing his grace to humanity and the individual's responsibility to appropriate God's grace. Fletcher explained that the light of Christ is shown in each of these dispensations, though it does not shine with the same intensity (Frazier Locs. 2074–2457).

The dispensation of the Father began after the original sin of Adam and Eve by promising to send a redeemer (Frazier Loc. 3501). The second dispensation is that of the Son where believers were under a spirit of bondage rather than a spirit of adoption. In this dispensation, believers are children of God in a lower sense, not having the constant witness of the Spirit. Believers experience the Holy Spirit as a monitor in the dispensation of the Son in contrast to experiencing the Holy Spirit as *Paraklete* in the dispensation of the Spirit (Frazier Loc. 4555–4565). Those in the dispensation of the Son have a measure of the Holy Spirit but cannot experience the full measure available to those in the dispensation of the Spirit, when they are freed from the law of sin and death and the words of Jesus are engraved on their hearts (Frazier Locs. 5088, 5802; Sumrall 23).

With each dispensation, from Father, to Son, to Spirit, the believer experiences a greater understanding of God and increases in Christ-likeness and perfect love. God has

established an expected level of discipline and faith, which corresponds to each dispensation for which he supplies ample grace. Thus, Fletcher used his doctrine of dispensations to describe how believers mature in faith from “faith in the Father” to “faith in the Son” to “faith in the Holy Spirit” (Fox and Morris 131; Frazier Locs. 2613, 3581–3660; Wood, *Meaning* 113, 167). Fletcher believed his doctrine of dispensations demonstrated God’s grace toward humanity in accepting them into the kingdom of God in spite of errant theology and the inferior stage of grace they may have achieved (Wood, *Meaning* 127). Wesley endorsed Fletcher’s doctrine of dispensations, but it was not widely accepted among Methodists (Frazier Loc. 447).

John Wesley’s Theology of the Holy Spirit

Theologians prior to John Wesley linked sanctification to the Holy Spirit, but Wesley perceived the possibility of an entire sanctification through the filling of the Holy Spirit in an individual Christian’s life (Bromiley 746). Understanding the promise of the Holy Spirit in Wesleyan theology is complicated by Wesley’s lack of clarity on the subject. Wesley’s understanding remains ambiguous as the language of his theology changed in his later years as he rejected the use of “baptism” to refer to anything other than water baptism. However, for Wesley, “receiving” the Holy Spirit meant personally receiving the power and sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit into one’s life. John Fletcher, Wesley’s theologian, brought some clarity by stating that every conversion should be followed by “a day of Pentecost” when the Holy Spirit would come upon them in a second work of grace (Maddox 81–86).

Wesley, struggling with how a person could be turned instantly from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Spirit, searched the book of Acts and

discovered most conversions came instantly (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Loc. 396). Wesley described justification as what God does *for* us through Christ and sanctification as what He does *in* us by the Holy Spirit (Frazier Loc. 5727). He maintained that the receiving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was a Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit than the Spirit given to all believers upon salvation (Frazier Loc. 5978). Wesley further recognized that Puritans such as Richard Baxter and John Goodwin held that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was a full assurance of faith, which was to be received after justification by faith. Fletcher's use of the term "baptism with the Holy Spirit" was fully endorsed by Wesley who spoke of the Methodist movement as restoring a "Pentecostal Church" in the world (Wood, *Meaning* 25, 117).

Spiritual regeneration is essential in the kingdom of God, and the Holy Spirit is the primary agent for what Wesley called "sanctifying grace" (Sproul 30). For Wesley, the work of the Holy Spirit in the world was salvation and sanctification, with salvation being freedom from the penalty of sin and sanctification being freedom from the power of sin. This explains the continuing activity of the Holy Spirit in the world to bring redemption and to testify to the "unfinished character of salvation" (Frazier Loc. 5741; Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* Loc. 845). Wesley felt spiritual maturity was only possible through the action of the Holy Spirit (Frazier Loc. 5771). He believed the indwelling of the Holy Spirit brought transformation from sinner to saint and to partakers in the inheritance of the saints (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 13).

Wood addresses the issues around understanding exactly where Wesley stood on baptism with the Holy Spirit and sanctification. Wesley did not himself address the issue systematically. To some, like Joseph Benson, he resisted the connection between the

baptism with the Holy Spirit and sanctification or perfection in love. At one-point, Wesley contradicted himself with Benson by sending letters at different times which supported opposing views. In Wesley's Explanatory Notes on Acts 8 (the Samaritans' baptism with the Holy Spirit) and Acts 19 (the Ephesian disciples receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit), Wesley clearly connects the receiving of the Holy Spirit with sanctifying grace (Wood, "Exegetical Theological Reflections" 60–61).

Wesley specifically connects the baptism with the Holy Spirit and sanctification in his discussion of sanctification and circumcision. In a letter to Fletcher, Wesley spoke of "fathers" as those whose "Pentecost had fully come" and of young men and "babes in Christ" who had not yet received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Wood states that "Fletcher made explicit what was implicit in John Wesley." Fletcher referred to Wesley's sermon "Spiritual Christianity" where Wesley states that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was for the greater purpose of giving the Christian baptized with the Holy Spirit the "mind which was in Christ, those holy fruits of the Spirit, which whosoever hath not, is not of His; to fill them with 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering...' and to enable them to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lust" (Wood, "Exegetical Theological Reflections" 60–61).

The Holy Spirit Sends on a Mission

Missio Dei

The Missio Dei comes not from the church but originates from God, for the Holy Spirit is the spirit of mission who sends the church into the world. Missional churches are comprised of sent people (Frost, *Road* Loc. 554; Ma 172; Tyra Loc. 293; Woodward 27).

God's reaction to the lost is to "go" and "send" (Ferguson and Ferguson 105).

Understanding God's sending can only be accomplished by also considering God's participation in His own mission (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1013). Through the sacrifice of Christ, the kingdom of God broke into the world. From this demonstration of God's love comes the church's God-given mission (Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 951; Peterson 165).

The Wesleyan approach to the *Missio Dei* begins with God's own action in "drawing and calling" each person to him, calling his church to engage others in an incarnational manner, and bringing people to the awareness of his presence and power through the Holy Spirit (Akkerman and Maddis 18–19). Probable points out that the *Missio Dei* originated as the Holy Spirit was sent by God into the world and now signifies the calling and sending of the church into the world to continue the mission of Christ (Probable 236). Preaching Christ was the first preoccupation of the church (O'Driscoll 469). This mission should be so central within the church that it will fail unless its people all participate in the *Missio Dei* (Bolger 72; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 164). Participating in this invitation is a privilege. Therefore, the church should more seriously consider its responsibility in continuing this mission to witness to the reality of God (Akkerman and Maddis 21).

Only 11% of American Christians have a spiritual conversation in a typical week, while 16% avoid spiritual conversations altogether because they fear appearing ignorant. Most Americans who confess Christ as Savior live indistinguishably from those who do not. They produce no fruit for the kingdom of God and do not share Christ with their unbelieving neighbors (Barna 39, 29). The church has erected cultural, theological, and

social barriers which newcomers are required to navigate upon entering the institution (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Loc. 4201). Complications like this push away most people who need help simplifying their lives (Zscheile Loc. 626). Rainer postulates that the church, by its decision to not “go,” has become a “religious country club” instead of disciples following the Great Commission (Rainer 61).

The church, according to C. S. Lewis, has no other purpose than to “draw people into Christ” (qtd. In Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 700). The church originated as an organic people movement, rather than a religious institution (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 22). As the church rediscovers its identity as a sent people, the church will redefine mission as its very identity (Guder, *Missional Church* 6; Hastings 132). A missional church sees all people as having the same fallen nature and makes Christlikeness a goal for the community as it goes out into the community as sent people (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Locs. 1068–1115; Guder, *Missional Church* Locs. 3685–3692). The missional church engages the world around them by entering their communities to meet people as opposed to the current attractional model of the institutional church which expects people to come to them, forgetting they are no longer seen as relevant (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 37; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 2505). The missional church prefers growing missionaries to growing churches and seeks fresh expressions of church, which connect with the community around them (Halter and Smay Loc. 3202; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 1854).

The Reign of God

Jesus, during his earthly ministry, healed the sick, drove out demons, brought salvation to sinners, and brought the kingdom of God to the needy, all by the power of

the Holy Spirit (Oden 269). The church demonstrates the reign of God through Christ by intentionally creating space, time, and resources, which help the people of God live in a way that reveals the reign of God and his transforming power (Guder, *Missional Church* Locs. 2338, 2755; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 56). This life-changing presence should be noticeable to outsiders (Pinnock Loc. 1946). The church is enabled to live out the reign of God as the kingdom of God occurs “within believers, in the church, over all creation, and over principalities and power in the spiritual realm” (Minatrea 127). The church living out the *Missio Dei* is more interested in alerting people to the reign of God than church growth (Frost, *Road* Loc. 279; Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 271).

The missional church draws its identity from the *Missio Dei*. It will fail in its ultimate task if it fails to connect with the community around it (Minatrea 11, 145; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 253). Frost states that alerting people to the reign of God is the compelling force behind the mission of the church (Frost, *Road* Loc. 546, 1185). According to Guder, the church is the harbinger and preview of the coming reign of God (Guder, *Missional Church* 108). Its impact stems from its compassion and acts of service in the community which make the reign of God and the love of God evident to those outside the church (Guder, *Missional Church* 105, 135).

The Reign of God is sometimes seen in the insignificant and understood as both already and not yet (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 6; Snyder, *Models* 16; Zscheile Loc. 823). It can be seen in the lives of those who have received the reign of God as a gift—those who have been broken and restored (Guder, *Missional Church* 200). The missional church is called to invite others into God’s reign. Sometimes, this may be a call to witness specifically in the traditional understanding of speaking the gospel

message, or it may be a call to witness through acts of care and concern (Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 8812; Snyder, *Models* 154). Christians inaugurate God's kingdom when they follow the way of the cross and become a part of what God is doing in his kingdom (N. T. Wright, *Surprised* Loc 3191).

Inviting others into the reign of God will require the reorientation of one's life to the *Missio Dei* and the voice of the Spirit. The church must reorient and move outside their buildings with ministries and strategies which alert people to the reign of God through Christ (Frost, *Road* Loc. 434; Guder, *Missional Church* 137). The church must change their focus from working to get people into the church to working to get the church into the world (Frost, *Road* Loc. 1352). Wesley's famous quote, "I look upon all the world as my parish" focuses believers' attention to the outward nature of the missional church (qtd. in Snyder, *Community* 68). Jesus demonstrated that all space is God's space by going to the blind and lame and the sinners and outcasts. The church must realize that the whole world is God's world and all are called, ordained and lay, to reach that world (Kok and Niemand 507; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 93).

Snyder calls the church the "eschatological community" to distinguish it from the kingdom of God, while maintaining its connection to it (Snyder, *Community* 68). Hunsberger states that the church becomes the community of the reign of God through prayer, worship, and Christian community. Each member of the missional church is important to the *Missio Dei* because the missional church is a community with unique Divine gifting which contributes to the Body of Christ causing its members to be interdependent (Minatrea 33). The church as community is to show the tangible character

of the reign of God in human form as messengers to announce the reign of God and as servants to participate in bringing the justice and wholeness of the reign of God to the world (Spellers 33–35). God’s reign will break in to make a new relationship with God possible (Volf and Lee, “Spirit and the Church” 28).

Missional God

Western churches are filled with faithful people who sincerely seek to serve God, but they have yet to visualize faith as a mission intended to be a vital part of their lives (Sproul 28). A transformation will be required for Christians to fulfill their call to God’s mission (Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 1557). Luke summarizes the mission of Jesus writing, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19.10 NASB). Jesus was always on a mission—determined to restore the world and reconcile humankind to the Father. He has invited his church to participate in that mission (Collins Loc. 929; Guder, *Missional Church* 4; Ross Loc. 692).

The church is not called out of the world, as some have supposed, but sent into the world to be the church incarnate (Guder, *Missional Church* 109). The book of Acts paints a portrait of the mission of Jesus continuing through the Apostles and disciples of Christ. They are, in essence, an extension of Christ into “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth” (Acts 1.8). These new missionaries were filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit who directed, supported, and empowered Jesus’s ministry, and sent to be witnesses of the things which they had personally seen and experienced. In this way, the Holy Spirit continues to gather the community of faith and works in and through it to bring the coming reign of God through Christ to all creation (Althouse 231; Bolger 180; C. J. Wright Ch. 2). Jürgen Moltmann agrees that, while the church is included, the

mission belongs to the Son and Spirit through the Father (Moltmann, *The Church* 64; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Participating* Ch. 2).

For most churches, mission comes from their understanding of what it means to be the church. It should begin with discovering and joining what God is already doing (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1045; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 163). The church cannot be expected to do mission on their own as the Holy Spirit initiates mission and guides the church where to go and what to do (Bosch, *Transforming Mission* Loc. 3006). Spirit-filled church leaders should encourage their church members to continually ask God what he might be doing each day and to seek to discover how they may join him in ministry (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1045; Tyra Loc. 1819). This will require missional disciples not only to attend to the Scriptures but also to discern the activity of the Holy Spirit around them (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1026; Beard 191; Long, Stokes and Strickler 15). From 2 Timothy 1.7, “God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline,” Kendall offers the following as a litmus test for following the Holy Spirit: fearlessness, power, love, and self-control (Loc. 2836).

Sent People

Van Gelder and Zscheile said, “the Holy Spirit is the primary actor in God’s mission” (*Participating* Loc. 1145). The Holy Spirit is at work in the church bringing new life and new ways for the church to practice community and to witness even as the old institutional church fades (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Participating* Ch. 10). In addition, the church must remain open to all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are given to individuals who are given the right to use them according to their call from God. The

church must come to understand its identity and purpose in light of the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit in the world and must discover that they are sent as witnesses to participate in God's mission in the world (Van Gelder, *Ministry* Locs. 2347, 2343).

The *Missio Dei* is not the church having a mission but the mission of God having a church. The *Missio Dei* does not derive from the church. The church derives from the *Missio Dei* (Beard 191). God was on a mission when he sent Jesus incarnate and continues that mission with the sending of the church into the world accompanied by the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (MacIlvaine III p. 96). The missional nature of the church comes from sent people who brought definition to the church in both content and doctrine as an apostolic, sent church (Hirsch, *5Q* Loc. 2899; Woodward 116). Early Methodism contained all the elements needed in an apostolic movement through classes, small groups, church planting, and apostolic organization (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 6512). The early church, from Pentecost to Constantine, existed of sent people who promoted the gospel throughout the Roman empire (S. Metcalf 45).

The church that lacks missional zeal will become obsessed with self-preservation, will be void of the visible and physical expression of the kingdom of God, and will fail to make an impact on the community around it. It may maintain its worship life and other aspects of institutional church, but it will not fully represent Christ (Minatrea 22; Snyder, *Community* p. 13). Incarnational ministry crosses boundaries which normally separate the believers from the not-yet-believers (Kok and Niemand 502). The Christian life is missionary in the sense that its mission is to witness of Christ and him crucified and resurrected (Walls Loc. 6089). 2 Corinthians 5.20 refers to believers as "ambassadors for

Christ,” who are more than personal representatives but are the “very embodiment” of the one who sent him/her (Bosch, *Spirituality* 42–43).

Hirsch and Catchim state, “God is always on the move, and he intends to take us on the journey with him” (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 5696). This requires the missional church to shift its focus in discipleship to prepare members to return to the apostolic focus of the Church of Acts and meet the needs of people outside the building (Beard 185; Probable 237). This shift reimagines the church as the means of God’s purposes and sent as God’s agents of healing and restoration back into the world (Althouse 234; Kok and Niemand 507; MacIrvine III 92). Where the church imitates the sent nature of God with the Father as Sender, the Son as Sent, and the Holy Spirit as Sending, success will be measured not by weekend attendance but by significant service in the community (MacIrvine III 104; Seamands 44).

The purpose of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is global mission. Pentecost “emphasizes the need for the Spirit, the eschatological character of the Spirit, and the prophetic empowerment dimension of the Spirit” (Keener 72). The presence of the Holy Spirit and his transformation of his people into the image of God make the church bold in mission (Nelson, *Vision* 49). God has placed the church in the center of the *Missio Dei* and relating the kingdom of God to the world. The church’s missional identity, and very purpose for existence, is grounded in the work of the Holy Spirit who gathers the church for community, equips it, and sends it into the world (Van Gelder, *Ministry* 85).

Parakletos

Parakletos: To Come Alongside

The church should place its greatest hope in the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit, trusting that he is working among them as they begin something new (Althouse 233; Zscheile Loc. 1732). Torrey said, “The infinitely Holy Spirit is ready to come into our churches, however imperfect and worldly they may be now, if we are willing to put the absolute control of everything in His hands” (Loc. 575). Moltmann suggests that creativity in all matters in life comes through the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 100; Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 112). The greatest satisfaction and joy are found not in good works but in surrendering to God’s will, giving God room to work in them, participating with the Spirit, being present in the world, and giving the Spirit everywhere we go (Escobar Loc. 2235; Oden 271; Scandrette Loc. 1729). The reign of God through Christ and its spread in the world through the church will occur not through the activities and attitudes of the church alone but primarily through the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit (Althouse 233).

Kingdom work is only possible with the Holy Spirit alongside those sent (Breen Loc. 1955). Parakletos, the Greek word most often translated “helper” or “comforter,” a title given the Holy Spirit by Jesus, is a compound word made of para, “alongside,” and kletos, “to call.” In this sense, the Holy Spirit is the one who comes alongside the called (Girard 13; Sproul 30; Tan 284). Seamands calls the Holy Spirit the third missionary who empowers the church to be the fourth missionary (Loc. 1599). The “Parakletos,” this leader and companion in missional ministry, is vital to the missional movement (Breen Loc. 1955).

The Trinity

Much of modern Western theology has focused on Christology to the exclusion of the Trinity, and only recently has the Holy Spirit begun to receive attention (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* Locs. 747, 2523). The Trinity is viewed by many as a puzzle to be solved rather than a way to discover a missionary God and thus a way to understand mission. Barth maintains that “missio,” as used by the early church, expressed the doctrine of the Trinity sending forth the Son and the Holy Spirit (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* Locs. 2256, 400). The Holy Spirit, sharing the same nature, is sent forth by the Father and the Son to focus on the truth of Christ and thereby glorify the Father and the Son. There is a deep unity within the Trinity evidenced as each glorifies the other but never themselves. The Son glorifies the Father, while the Spirit glorifies the Son (Hoeck 30, 26–27, 37).

Jesus promised the disciples another Paraclete implying that Jesus Himself was the first Paraclete (Hoeck 28; Tuppurainen 42). Upon the Paraclete’s arrival in Jesus’s name, He will reveal the name and true identity of Christ (D. Kim 265). Like Christ in both nature and mission, the Paraclete will do what Jesus did (Hoeck 27). The Holy Spirit is the permanent divine presence of the Father and the Son for the church to enter an unbelieving world with the Gospel of Christ. The Spirit functions among Christians to bring salvation and reform the world (Tuppurainen 50).

When the church sees its place in commonality with the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit it will discover its place in the world (Moltmann, *The Church* 11).

Fletcher’s doctrine of dispensations views the Trinity with different roles: the Father conceiving the plan of redemption, Christ the Son executing that plan, and the Holy Spirit continuing its application (Frazier Loc. 631). Collins believes that mission should be

focused on Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit while reflecting the Father's concern for his creation (Collins Loc. 815). Mission belongs to the Holy Spirit; thus, the Holy Spirit continues his presence with the church, enabling them to be the incarnational presence of Christ in the world (Ma 172; Morgan 4; Van Gelder, Ministry 41).

Just as the Holy Spirit hovered over the surface of the deep to bring something from nothing in Genesis 1, so the Holy Spirit hovers over the church bringing something from nothing (Willimon 32). The early disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit for desire, courage, and power to carry forth the Gospel in the world (Murray, *Experiencing the Holy Spirit* Loc. 640). The Holy Spirit remained with them bringing unity and purpose (Dumitrascu 46). The Holy Spirit comes as an "unrestricted presence" bringing life endowed with energy (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 166). The Spirit was sent into the world inviting believers to participate in His mission (Rom. 8.14–17; K. Kim 94).

The Holy Spirit Goes Before

The *Missio Dei* drives the vision of the missional church as they think in terms of people and places rather than church growth strategies (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Loc. 680). The missional church movement sees all members of the Body of Christ to be "an army of ordinary people" (Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 103). This "army of ordinary people" can be confident and inspired to go where they are sent, for the Holy Spirit goes before them preparing the way for God's reign (Volf and Lee, "Spirit and the Church" 40). Even though the missional church may never have a complete understanding of the Holy Spirit's acts and agency, it must seek the kingdom of God and how it can participate in His ministry (Scandrette 179; Wachsmuth p. 212).

The baptism with the Holy Spirit has, at its core, the purpose of bringing about the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not the church but the presence of the Spirit, which sets the captives free. The kingdom of God under the reign of Christ began to be realized on the day of Pentecost. On that day, the Spirit gave birth to the church in the outpouring of the Spirit by incorporating believers in Christ to fulfill the call to be witnesses of the Gospel and instruments of God's kingdom in the world (Macchia 256–257, 260, 265; Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 680; Yong Loc. 2532). The witness is not sent alone but is preceded by the Holy Spirit who awakens, convicts, and convinces people of their need for God even while lost in their sin (Fox and Morris 135). Wesley called this prevenient grace—the grace that goes before justifying grace and sanctifying grace (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 55).

The future hope of an unknowing world mirrors the future hope of the Spirit-filled church, that of a time when the whole world will be integrated into the kingdom of God. (Wood, *Meaning* 171). The church is the community of God knit together by the Spirit and thus is the beginning of the reign of God bringing about the kingdom of God to a world groaning for redemption by bringing it into union with the Father and Son through the Spirit (Althouse 231, 240–242). The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost so the church could join the Holy Spirit in continuing the mission of Christ for which the Holy Spirit provides the gifts and authority. That mission can only be accomplished through the presence, acts, and agency of the Holy Spirit (Seamands Loc. 1678; Shaw 139; Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc. 4656). The Holy Spirit has been given so the church can continue the *Missio Dei* of Christ and prepare for the coming kingdom of God, at which time the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh (Keener 49; Macchia 265).

The Holy Spirit Leads

The Holy Spirit is God's continuing presence in the church and the world. He reveals the good news and the reign of God through Christ and carries it into the community (Boren, *Difference Makers* 172, 148; D. Kim 266; Moltmann, *The Church* 220). Leslie Newbigin states the mission of the church must be discerned through the Holy Spirit (Newbigin, *Gospel* 118-119; Tyra Loc. 156). He felt that the church could only be a successful witness by following the leadership of the Holy Spirit (Collins Loc. 1482). Missional efforts attempted apart from the Holy Spirit will only lead the church to futility (Collins Loc. 1465). The church is the evidence of the Holy Spirit's work to transform and minister through believers (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 16).

Tozer said, "If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, ninety-five percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference" (qtd. in Kendall Loc. 565). The church must invite an encounter with the Holy Spirit who will bring the desire to be effective in the *Missio Dei* (Minatrea 68). Watching prayerfully for the Holy Spirit makes people vulnerable and receptive to receiving the Holy Spirit and the freedom to move in unison with Him (Moltmann, *The Church* 287). Transformation into the likeness of Christ only happens where the Holy Spirit is at work (Barna 14; Scandrette Locs. 1056–1060). Pentecost was a demonstration of the transformative power of the Holy Spirit on the human heart to bring sanctification (Frazier Loc. 5953).

Tyra recommends the church adopt a "missional pneumatology" to increase their missional faithfulness (Tyra Loc. 1321). Wesley called this "faith working through love" (Ross Loc. 861). The relationship between Christ and his Church cannot be fully considered without considering also the presence of the Holy Spirit (Liston 86). The self-

giving nature of the Father and the Son enters the church in the person of the Holy Spirit and invites the church to participate in the Spirit's movement outward into creation. In so doing, the church will cease its reliance on attractional approaches to mission and will cultivate an ability to recognize the presence of the Paraklete everywhere (Moyhagh and Harrold Locs. 3627, 3770; Tozer, *Be Filled* Loc. 558).

A Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

Many Do Not Know the Holy Spirit

Most Christians, and especially most mainline Christians, are ineffective because they know so little about the Holy Spirit and lack a real relationship with him (Fremont and Fremont 10; Murray, *Revival* Loc. 1135). For many Christians, the Holy Spirit has become the “incognito ‘person’ of the Trinity” (Morgan 1). Rees Howells observed that the church knows more about Jesus, who was only on earth 33 years, than it does about the Holy Spirit who has been here for 2,000 years (Grubb 41–42). The neglect regarding the work of the Spirit in relation to Christ has exalted Christ above the Spirit and directed attention away from the sacrificial work of Christ (Pinnock Loc. 1282). In the Methodist tradition, the spiritual decline of the movement began with the decline of the class meeting, Wesley's small groups, and the establishing of clerical orders which also brought about the virtual cessation of charismatic gifts (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 66–67). The focus on the baptism with the Holy Spirit as a normal part of the Christian life decreased in the Western Methodist tradition in the latter 20th century, with little emphasis continuing today (Skuce 15, 25).

There is frequently tension between the work of the Holy Spirit and the institutional church (Willimon 35). Churches who restrict the Holy Spirit are in jeopardy

of becoming a dead sect (Pinnock Loc. 2165). Therefore, the incarnational presence of the missional church is largely dependent upon the presence and infilling of the Holy Spirit (Frost, *Road* Loc. 261). The power and presence of the Holy Spirit is available to those in relationship with him. So, the missional church should expect only to live generous and hospitable lives when they are filled, led, and gifted by the Holy Spirit (Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 109; Pinnock Loc. 2362, 2366). The church should not expect to bring transformation to the spiritual and physical needs around them without God's power, as prophetic speech and action are products of the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Guder, *Missional Church* Loc 1038; Tyra Loc 1594). The Holy Spirit of the Old Testament frequently moved the prophets against the civil and religious authorities. Therefore, the true church should be expected to move against the ecclesial authorities of the institutional church when necessary (Tyson 242).

Relationship

Torrey relates that the Spirit is a Person who speaks from his own wisdom to his listening servants (Torrey 6). The desire of Christ is that all those baptized with the Holy Spirit would act upon the ministry assignments they receive from him, so they may make disciples and build up the church (Tyra Loc. 1667). The Holy Spirit not only brings the Christian into unity with God but also creates community with other Christians (Tan 290). Such fullness of life in the Spirit does not occur without intentional cultivation (Guder, *Missional Church* 149). In the Christian's relationship with the Holy Spirit, it is vitally important to place oneself at the disposal of the Holy Spirit (Pinnock Loc. 2372).

Worship holds together the Christian's experiences and faith as he or she lives out the *Missio Dei* (Bolger 186). The challenge in most churches is that for most Christians

other activities have become mandatory while worship has become optional (Rainer 29). To focus upward seeking passionate spirituality is of vital importance in the missional church as it brings deeper intimacy with Christ and requires a response which propels the church outward (Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 226; Guder, *Missional Church* 241). The church that has gathered in worship and community can faithfully be sent into the community to share God's grace (Akkerman and Maddis 74). A missional church sees all people as having the same fallen nature and makes Christlikeness a goal for the community as it goes out into the community as sent people (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Locs. 1068–1115; Guder, *Missional Church* 206–207).

Frost recommends taking one parcel of time each week to create community with God (Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 571). Hirsch and Hirsch recommend disciples get to know the Holy Spirit better by allowing themselves to be drawn into the presence of the Spirit, thereby becoming genuine lovers of God (Hirsch and Hirsch, *Untamed* 91). Wesley referred to prayer, praise, and worship as “spiritual respiration.” This “spiritual respiration” is important for creating a conversation between God and the Christian as it causes the grace of God to descend into the heart of the Christian while the prayer, praise, and worship of the Christian ascend to God (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Loc. 1146). Torrey believed that such a relationship with the Holy Spirit would yield boundless joy and satisfaction for the soul (Torrey Loc 634).

Breen suggests the missional church attend to three elements: Up, In, and Out, with *Up* being Passionate Spirituality, *In* being Radical Community, and *Out* being Missional Zeal (Loc. 2625). Halter and Smay, who comparatively use the terms communion, community, and mission, believe that when these three exist in balance in

the church or in a group of people, those people will grow as disciples of Christ, not-yet-Christians will move toward God, and the kingdom will always be found (Locs. 2913, 2936). The church which balances Up, In, and Out will be zealous to compassionately meet the physical, social, and spiritual needs of those around it (Minatrea 22). Breen said that the church, which lacks passionate spirituality (Up), will miss the intimate and life-giving relationship God's offers (Loc. 2629). The church without radical community (In) will miss the incarnational expression of God in the "Christian extended family" (Breen Loc. 2625). Radical Community represents the importance of relationships over practices as the church creates a distinctive bond that is centered on Jesus (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* Locs. 669–671; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 3303).

Second Work of Grace

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is understood by many to be a separate event from that of salvation. Martyn Lloyd-Jones maintains that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a second work of grace and a higher form of assurance (Kendall Loc. 2579; Wood, "Exegetical Theological Reflections" 55). To demonstrate the separate nature of salvation and the baptism with the Holy Spirit, Torrey refers to Jesus's instruction to His disciples to expect another experience they had not yet experienced, the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.5; Torrey 92). Gregory Dix believed the baptism with the Holy Spirit and justification by faith were "inseparably connected" but could not be considered to be the same thing, saying the baptism with the Holy Spirit was to Christians as the practice of circumcision was to the Old Testament Jews (Wood, *Meaning* 359–360). Moltmann connects salvation and the baptism with the Holy Spirit as two separate events while maintaining their separation just as the cross and Pentecost were two separate events.

There can be no cross without Pentecost, and there can be no Pentecost without the cross (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 246). Wood and Wright make the analogy of Easter to the Exodus and Pentecost to entering Canaan. Easter is the beginning of something to be completed. It was completed at Pentecost, just as the exodus from Egypt was completed when the Israelites entered the Promised Land (Wood, “Sanctification” 257, 274, 276; N. T. Wright, *Surprised* Loc. 3698).

Fletcher, Kendall, and Pinnock consider the receiving of the Word of God preached by Philip to the Samaritans in Acts 8.14 and their receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit later under the ministry of Peter and John in Acts 8.17 to be an example testifying that the two events are to be experienced separately (Kendall Loc. 2544; Pinnock Loc. 2826; Wood, *Meaning* 23). Wesley held this position which was embraced by the Holiness Movement of the late-nineteenth century and became known as Wesley’s doctrine of a Second Work of Grace (Bromiley 746; Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 39). In Acts 19.2, Paul came upon the disciples who had not “received” the Holy Spirit when they believed. Had they received the Holy Spirit, they would have known it and been able to answer affirmatively Paul’s question, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (Kendall Loc. 2552). F. F. Bruce gleans that Apollo had not yet been baptized by the Holy Spirit when Priscilla and Aquila encountered him and added to his incomplete knowledge (Wood, “Exegetical Theological Reflections” 56).

Baptism with the Holy Spirit

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is not necessary for eternal life but is used by God to instill “a certain quality of (Christian) life” into the church (Dorman 155). In the baptism with the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit is imparted for service (Torrey

112-125). Many manifestations of the Holy Spirit are found in those who are filled with the Holy Spirit (Wood, *Meaning* 7). The baptism with the Holy Spirit is meant to give the believer the mind of Christ, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and empower them to crucify the flesh and sin-nature (Wood, *Meaning* 7). The filling with the Holy Spirit brings a fire of illumination, which enabled the disciples to see why Jesus died and rose from the dead, and a fire of cleansing, which purifies the heart (Kendall Loc. 2431–2534).

The hope of Moses, that one day the Holy Spirit would be upon *all* his people, became the prophecy uttered by Joel, which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. No longer would only a few be empowered for particular service as in the day of Moses, but every person could be filled with his Spirit (Sproul Locs. 469, 473, 477; Tyra Loc. 1033). Jesus intended that the baptism with the Holy Spirit be for all believers. In Acts 1.5, his intent went beyond the disciples at hand but to the church at large (Olajide 193). Peter promoted this intent by indicating that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was for every child of God in every age (Torrey 109). Peter's Pentecost sermon of Acts 2 revealed the fulfilling of the hope of Moses and God's plan to cross these barriers to reach the nations of the world and pour out his Spirit upon any who believe. (Keener 68; Lewis 306).

Torrey explains that in salvation the power of the Holy Spirit is imparted to the one who receives it for eternal life (Locs. 1793, 1814, 1804). However, Tozer, Bright, and Torrey agree that, following acceptance of Christ, one must surrender to God, ask for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, practice faithful obedience, and have faith God will respond with such filling (Bright 77; Nechifor 190; Tozer, *Be Filled* Loc. 453; Stronstad 58). Seamands states that for the Christian to participate in the ministry of Jesus and fulfill his or her calling to live missionally he or she must receive the baptism with the

Holy Spirit (Loc. 249). The Holy Spirit works within the Christian to live the life of Christ so that his or her utter weakness and helplessness to live such a life may be overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through the Christian (Murray, *Revival* Locs. 718, 842). All Christians are invited into this baptism and encouraged to do all they can to surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit in them (Scandrette Loc. 1061).

Torrey points out that many believers are misusing scripture in such a way as to convince themselves they have already received the baptism with the Holy Spirit when they have not (Loc. 1847). He describes the baptism with the Holy Spirit as the infilling of the believer's mind with truth, especially the truth of Christ, taking possession of the believer's faculties, and imparting to the believer spiritual gifts which qualify him or her for service (Torrey 103; Scazzero Loc. 702). Wesley and Fletcher taught that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was linked to a "full assurance of faith," which is realized for the believer by the testimony of the Holy Spirit through an inward impression on the human soul and the testimony of the Christian's own spirit that they are a child of God. In addition, the Christian becomes conscious of the inner working of the Holy Spirit within to transform him/her into the image of Christ (Frazier Loc. 5489; Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 128).

Sanctification

Transformation into the image of Christ is one purpose for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. 2 Thessalonians 2.13 establishes that the Holy Spirit brings sanctification (Burke 738). Bonaventure held that the Holy Spirit works to transform the Christian to the image of Christ (Zamora 55). The Christian experiences sanctification when the Holy Spirit surrounds the Christian as he or she surrenders to His presence (Moltmann, *Source*

of Life Loc. 671). Sanctification is holiness of life, but it is also defending that holiness against the extortions of a fallen world (Moltmann, *Source of Life* Loc. 626).

Pentecost was the full restoration to the image of God in Christ Jesus as the believer was empowered to love God perfectly. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God dwelling in the hearts and minds of believers, while sanctification is the making of believers into a sanctuary for God (Wood, *Meaning* 119, 171; Torrey 103). That which is sanctified is set apart, separated for God's possession and service (Murray, *Power* 68). Sanctification, which is meant for this life, is the work of the Holy Spirit setting the Christian apart and perfecting them in the image of God (Runyon 82, 96). Sanctification comes to the church wherever it participates in lowliness and suffering. Therefore, sanctification does not separate the church from sinful man nor set it above sinners (Moltmann, *The Church* 355, 353).

A God-kind of Love

Self-sacrificing Love

Wachsmuth recounts the story of Father Marko Glogovic's prayer group who were all filled with the Holy Spirit and joy when they urgently sought an experience with the Holy Spirit. As Father Marko's concern grew for the disheartened and the less fortunate, particularly single mothers, he began leaving the monastery to actively engage them. In this way, the Spirit brings a paradigm shift in the missional life of the church compelling it into the community around it (Wachsmuth 209). As the Holy Spirit leads, the missional church is able to "create gracious and caring space," reveal God's faithfulness, and disciple people into a relationship with God and into fellowship in the church (Boren, *Difference Makers* 172; Guder, *Missional Church* 179).

The Christian filled with and surrendered to the Holy Spirit becomes a vessel as God loves others through them (Barna 178). Thus, the true Christian is to engage their neighborhood with this love in unexpected places and in unexpected ways (Boren, *Difference Makers* 27, 48, 63). A God-kind of love motivates Christians to engage in the healing of their communities (Cartledge 519). This love has no design for self-advantage and even disregards the pleasure of loving (Bright 169, 177; Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Loc. 3545). A God-kind of love requires the Christian to be willing to forsake any goods, material or spiritual, which might offend God (O'Driscoll 472). This perfect love is beyond the capability of the Christian, and for Wesley, was the model of holiness seen in disciples empowered with love (Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* Loc. 1846).

Incarnational Love

As the Holy Spirit sanctifies the church, the church is transformed into the image of Christ (Liston 147). The purpose of this sanctification and transformation of believers is to enable the church to reflect the community of God as God makes them holy (Althouse 16). God's response to the lost and alone is always to send His church (Ferguson and Ferguson 105). Moltmann states that the Christian life in the everyday world is just as important as gathering for worship (*Source of Life* Loc. 1187). Incarnational ministry must take place among the lost and hurting in the community. Therefore, the church must practice love by engaging the community and by becoming a part of it (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Loc. 849-899). Hirsch and Hirsch challenge disciples to allow themselves to be drawn into the "numinous and somewhat dangerous orbit" of God and get to know the Holy Spirit on a deeper level so they may become genuine lovers of God (*Untamed* 91). Seamands states, "The Spirit who sheds abroad the

love of God in [Christian] hearts propels them in the overflow of that love to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth” (Seamands Locs. 1660, 1661).

Wesley on Love

The Christian experience grows when the Christian is guided by a love for God, continues in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and is committed to scripture (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 6491). Wesley said true Christians are those who have “the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them and who love the Lord his God with all their heart” (Frazier Loc. 6074; Wood, *Meaning* 120–121). The Christian, having been perfected in love, passionately loves God and others through the faith and love given by the Holy Spirit (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 58). This is Christian perfection, a heart cleansed from evil imaginations and a love for God which leads the Christian to love his neighbor as himself (Johnson 57–58; Wesley, *Christian Perfection* Loc. 1075). Wesley held that through the baptism with the Holy Spirit, though he preferred the phrase “filled with the Holy Ghost,” perfect love was possible in an instant, but it needed to be “nurtured and sustained” so it would not be lost. Perfect love was instantaneous but only continued as the Christian experience continued (Skuce 19).

Methodists made an impact following their arrival in the United States as over 30% of the population were receiving discipleship from the Methodists by the 1760s (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 6510). Wesley was concerned for the growing Methodist movement of the 1700s that it could become a dead sect “having the form of religion without the power” (Knight III and Powe Jr. Loc. 653). He believed that Christianity should be a “social religion,” as he felt turning it into a solitary one would destroy it. The Wesleys chose not to wait for their neighbors to come to the church but

took the gospel of Jesus to them. Loving service to one's neighbor was vitally important, because Wesley saw this as flowing from the Christian's love of God (Johnson 57).

Wesley said "I look upon all the world as my parish" indicating his belief that his call was to preach the gospel to all who would listen (Knight III and Powe Jr. Locs. 429, 80, 363, 499).

The Members of John Wesley's Epworth society were called to prayer and study of the Scripture, but Wesley also called them to the "edification" of their neighbors (Knight III and Powe Jr. Loc. 138; Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* Loc. 334). Wesley had a vision of the missional church, though he did not use that particular language. He spoke frequently of the Christian's need to be perfected in love. Christian perfection would shape the church's entire identity and mission recreating them to be missional (Rankin 83–84). For Wesley, a church moving toward perfection would increase in incarnational presence in the community around them (Knight III and Powe Jr. Loc. 158).

Wesley was compelled outward not only by the need to reach the unreached working class but by the absence of the Holy Spirit in the formal ecclesiastical structures around him (King 107). He believed that the "Pentecostal event of the Holy Spirit" continues throughout all generations and that through it, the Christian is assured of God's promises, is empowered to remain free of sin, and is given a new spirit (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Locs. 3002, 3116). Wesley was critical of the church saying there was only a dead form of it left as "the Christians had turned heathens again" causing a "waxed cold" love in and through the church causing an apparent absence of the Holy Spirit's power and gifts (Doles Loc. 6980; Wood, *Meaning* 252). Fletcher charged that many believers were lukewarm, only supposing they had the gift of the Holy Spirit, when in fact they stopped

the work of sanctification at being delivered from sin, thus failing to be “rooted in Christ and filled with the fullness of God” (Wood, *Meaning* 252).

Wesley understood salvation to awaken seeds of virtues with those seeds growing into maturity as the Christian “grew in grace” (Maddox 88). He acknowledged that “babes in Christ,” as he called those not baptized with the Holy Spirit, had received the Holy Spirit and some measure of assurance so that they may aspire to Christian perfection. Complete perfection in love rested on receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The primary reality of the baptism with the Holy Spirit was seen not only in the cleansing of sin but also in perfect love. The ultimate goal of the baptism with the Holy Spirit was perfection in love (Frazier Locs. 5664, 5963 Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 174).

Wesley believed that God’s grace made it possible for even the worst of sinners to “grow in grace” and be perfected in love (Willimon 84). He held that perfection in love was the cornerstone belief for Methodists, the reason they were “chiefly raised up” (Rankin 83). Wesley, although not specifically connecting perfection in love with the Holy Spirit, implied such a connection by associating it with Pentecost and by his belief that such perfection could be gained through an instantaneous experience with the Holy Spirit (Burke 746). Fletcher felt that “baptism with the Holy Spirit” and “perfection in love” could not be equated completely because sanctification hinges in some part on the measure of faith of the believer (Frazier Loc. 5963; Wood, *Meaning* 24, 163–164). Fletcher believed perfection in love came from “a particular degree of saving faith, and a particular operating of the ‘Spirit of burning’” (Cubie 24).

Power from/of the Holy Spirit

Inheritance of the Saints

Some Christians stumble in weakness because they have not received the full Pentecostal blessing, which Murray says is the birthright of the church, that is the inheritance of Christians while here on earth, which all Christians are destined and called to receive (Murray, *Full Blessing* Locs. 1185, 168, 643, 536). Jesus gave His disciples the Holy Spirit and the authority to minister in the Spirit (Tuppurainen 45). The gifts a Christian may have to offer come through the Holy Spirit and will match the ministry call given that person. If that call is to evangelism, then the person will receive power for evangelism. If it is for something else, the person will receive power appropriate for that specific call (Oden 276; Torrey 99, 97).

The church needs the Holy Spirit to provide the power and energy for sent ministry (Fox and Morris 132; Nathan and Wilson Locs. 2553, 2574). The gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit are as vast as God's creation (Moltmann, *The Church* 298). The spiritual gifts and powers present in a community as well as the tasks which confront it will determine the assignments to be fulfilled by that community (Moltmann, *The Church* 306). A bestowal of power from the Holy Spirit must be accompanied by a participation in righteousness and purity (Gause 101). These gifts and powers, given by the Holy Spirit, are given for the purpose of transformation and service to others, not for the benefit of the Christian alone (Dumitrascu 46). Through these gifts and powers, the Holy Spirit intends to awaken faith and hope for a new creation (Moltmann, *The Church* 198).

Signs and Wonders

Doles relates many excerpts from Wesley's journals chronicling signs, wonders, miracles, and healing. Wesley wrote of the agony of conviction for sin upon those "whom the power of God came" manifesting itself in convulsions, trembling, and quaking and in

cries so loud Wesley's preaching was disrupted (Doles Locs. 6350, 6382; Wesley, *Holy Spirit* Locs. 495, 510). He wrote of many who dropped "as thunderstruck" (Doles Loc. 6356). Others were delivered from demonic possession as he and others prayed for them (Doles Locs. 6359–6376, 6450, 6460). Others were instantly taken from agony or grief when they were "in a moment filled with peace and joy" (Doles Loc. 6382). Wesley described a "Pentecostal" event in his journal entry from January 1739, reporting that when the power of the Holy Spirit came many cried out with great joy and many fell to the ground. (Wood, *Meaning* 263). Through journal entries such as this, Wesley clearly acknowledges that the gifts of the early church were still operating in his day and in his ministry (Doles Loc. 6348).

Wesley recorded many healings in his journals. Some were near death, mute, nearly blind, or lame, and still others complained of severe headaches (Doles Locs. 6515–6516, 6545, 6522, 6702–6703, 6944–6946, 6962). Wesley likewise recorded instances when he experienced supernatural manifestations such as the feeling of being plunged into cold water while praying for one to be delivered from a demon (Doles Loc. 6549–6565). He even wrote of his own horse becoming suddenly lame and being healed instantly when he prayed (Doles Loc. 6940). On one occasion, Wesley's companions wrote of Wesley calming a storm while at sea, reporting that Wesley so expected to be heard that he took it for granted that he had been heard (Doles Loc. 7024).

Many of the church fathers wrote about Spiritual gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit they had witnessed (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 111). The baptism with the Holy Spirit typically results in the impartation of spiritual power and gifts for service (Torrey 96). Experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit through signs and wonders and healing

can create openings for witness (Yong Loc. 2476). God bears witness to His witnesses through signs and wonders, miracles, and various distributions of the Holy Spirit as He wills. The church that fails to recognize this is forced to rely upon their own talent, psychology, business abilities, and techniques (Tozer, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit* 144).

Prophecy

One gift of the Holy Spirit evidenced more than any other in the Old Testament is the gift of prophecy or speaking by divine revelation. Stronstad notes that in Judaism the manifestation of the Holy Spirit almost always comes as a Spirit of prophecy. Following the cessation of prophecy at the close of the Old Testament, the extracanonical literature expects the gift to be revived in the messianic age (Gromacki 8; Stronstad 42; Tyra Loc. 441). Its revival is demonstrated in the New Testament in the lives of Elizabeth, Zacharias, Simeon, and especially John (Stronstad 41). Luke-Acts demonstrates that prophetic experience is the work of the Holy Spirit (Burke 733).

The Spirit of prophecy has also been seen as a gift of speech leading to being a witness for the Gospel as evidenced in Acts chapter 2 when the once cowering Peter is enabled to preach boldly to any and all who would listen (Stronstad 60; C. J. Wright Ch. 15). Immediately following the Pentecost event of Acts 2, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit was demonstrated when Peter received and delivered the perfect message and the Holy Spirit effected the audience to receive that message (Kendall Loc. 2900–2903). Prophecy can be inspired speech or preaching that edifies, encourages, and consoles (Splitter 603). In Acts chapter 2, the baptism with the Holy Spirit is both personal and corporate as all those present receive both the Holy Spirit and various gifts of speech

(Stronstad 85). The church can no longer continue to quench the Spirit of prophecy or institutionalize the gifts of the Spirit, for it is the Holy Spirit who enables a spiritual revelation of Christ (Frazier Loc. 5098; Sproul 23). This new gifting given by the Holy Spirit in the area of speech indicates the importance of the sent ministry of Jesus.

Empowered Witness

The Father and the Holy Spirit, while invisible, are very present partners in the Gospel (Long, Stokes and Strickler 109). This work of the Holy Spirit is not something to be done without the church. Although Tyra states, that in the church, “the Spirit of prophecy has been quenched and the gifts of the Holy Spirit have been sanitized and institutionalized” (Tyra Loc. 1027). This work only continues as the church yields to the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Day of Pentecost may be considered the origination of the church as expectant Christ followers were baptized with the Holy Spirit and sent with the Good News into the world (Hastings 295). The work of the missional church is more than the feeding, clothing, or other relief it may offer, as it is the Holy Spirit who opens eyes and gives wisdom and understanding (Sproul 30).

Pentecost transformed the disciples into missionary people (Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 665). Followers of Christ, as sent people, should not expect to fulfill the *Missio Dei* without the power and presence of the Holy Spirit who makes a permanent relationship between God and humanity possible (Olajide 186). The ministry of the church, and one may argue especially the sent ministry of the church, is based upon and dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the believer (Breen Loc. 1955; Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* Loc. 2407). Origen believed that pastors, teachers, and other church leaders were qualified, not by ordination, but by the gifts and manifestations of the Holy

Spirit in their lives (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 23–24). The whole congregation has spiritual gifts and capabilities for the mission of God (Moltmann, *The Church* 10). The baptism with the Holy Spirit is about more than the deeper relationship brought to those who receive it, as it is meant to enable the disciple to continue that which Jesus did by providing unique gifts and skills to fulfill his/her apostolic calling (Fremont and Fremont 55; Stronstad 28, 55; Torrey 95). Fox and Morris plainly state that those who wish to be witnesses for Christ must be filled with the Holy Spirit (132).

John Wesley recognized the success of his own preaching should be attributed more to God than to himself, from which he concluded God could work through “unusual channels and unordained preachers.” (Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* Loc. 2403). Wesley focused primarily on Jesus, but the Holy Spirit played a significant role in his ministry and thought (Wesley, *Holy Spirit* 122). Early Methodists were genuinely Pentecostal as they sought to recover the power of Pentecost, and Wesley hoped they would bring a revival to the existing church (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 59; Wood, *Meaning* 6). In Wesley’s day, the Methodist movement was charismatic providing broad opportunities for spiritual gifts, but, for Wesley, the Spirit’s role in testifying to Christ was most important (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 57, 66).

Hastings states that it is important for the “church on mission by the Spirit” to remain true to its nature as the community of the Spirit (Hastings 296). The belief of “Pentecostal-charismatic” believers that they are divinely commissioned to proclaim the full gospel to the world has made them willing to do so in spite of cost and inconvenience (Tyra Loc. 1188). Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life conducted a study entitled “Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey,” reporting that Pentecostalism and charismatic

movements represent one of the fastest-growing segments of global Christianity (Tyra Loc. 1045). Grant McClung suggests this is because of an underlying theology, which formed an impulse for missionary expansion (Tyra Loc. 1152). According to some Pentecostal missiologists, there is more at work in Pentecostal evangelism than “an enthusiastic missional engagement in the presentation of the kingdom of God to their local neighborhoods” (Tyra Locs. 1141).

The power, authority, guidance and support of the Holy Spirit can be a reality for the witness (Long, Stokes and Strickler 34). Hirsch and Hirsch however, caution Charismatics and Pentecostals against any preoccupation with power and secret knowledge associated with the Holy Spirit (*Untamed* 86). Likewise, Torrey cautions that an attitude that the Holy Spirit is something the believer can possess and use will lead to spiritual pride, self-exaltation, and self-sufficiency (1). The Holy Spirit is always willing to empower those who will, so the Christian is challenged to willingly accept opportunities large enough he/she will fail unless God intervenes (Walt, “Secular;” Walt, “Jesus Wants The Most”).

Fruitful Ministry

Healing the sick and casting out demons was as much a part of the Apostles’ ministry as was their preaching (Nathan and Wilson Loc. 1137). Fruitful ministry is more a product of the Holy Spirit than it is the church, as the Holy Spirit brings about conversion, equips the saints, guides the church and accomplishes various ministries (Long, Stokes and Strickler 13; Newbigin, *The Open Secret* Loc. 1779; Seamands Loc. 244). The power and manifestations of the Holy Spirit still exist in the church today and is evidenced by the outstanding growth of the Pentecostal and charismatic churches

which celebrate the continuing acts and agency of the Holy Spirit (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 118). This is to be expected as the acts and agency of the Holy Spirit in Acts yields three results: the gospel spread, the church grew, and the gospel crossed cultural boundaries (Van Gelder, *Ministry* 40).

Awareness of Missional Opportunities

How the Church Got Here

The idea that the United States is a Christian nation continues especially among conservative Christians because the population mix was dominated by Protestants for more than 100 years after the Revolutionary War (Miller 117). Christianity dominated Western culture in the early twentieth century through its established churches and its partnership with the state (Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 165). Lingering in the church in post-Christendom, from its partnership with the state, is an attitude of subservience to the secular culture (Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 1683). Brueggemann maintains that the “immense force of the empire” continues in the church, causing its blindness to the reality around it (103). This “immense force of the empire” may be seen in churches that place utmost importance on order and tradition, causing rigidity in leadership and programs silencing the gifts of those who “think outside the box” (Sider, Olson and Unruh Loc. 4182).

The understanding of religion as a form of obligation has shifted to an emphasis on consumption and choice (Bolger 151; Rah Loc. 699). Newbigin believed that the compulsion to make numerical growth the criterion for success ushered the church into the world of military campaign or commercial slave trade (*The Open Secret* Loc. 1732). Hirsch estimates that up to 95% of evangelical churches subscribe to the contemporary

church growth approach even though success is rare (*The Forgotten Ways* Loc. 594). 95% of evangelical churches compete for 12% of the population, with that growth within the institutional church coming mostly from members who switch from one church to another or one denomination to another (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* Locs. 45, 36). Escobar calls this an “addiction to inspiration,” where people grow expectant of the place they go and the people with whom they spend time hoping to feel good, become happy, and be inspired or hopeful. When this does not happen, they move on to try something else (Escobar Loc. 641).

Salvation transcends the individual believer when that believer becomes a disciple of Christ who bears witness to the Gospel (Pinnock Loc. 2346). The mission of God works within, through, and outside his church (Wachsmuth 212). The missional church’s focus on the world shapes its understanding of its work and identity, and naturally makes mission their priority while limiting the size of their buildings and budget (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Loc. 4215; Halter and Smay Loc. 504; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 86; Minatrea 145; Van Gelder, *Ministry* 85). The missional church cultivates an environment which puts God in the center to shape the focus and work of the people (Roxburgh and Romanuk Loc. 388). It must be flexible to adapt to the changing community around them while making authentic disciples who are able to practice incarnational lives which represent Jesus to their family and neighbors (Minatrea 86, 112). This adaptability requires the missional church to consider where they are and where they want to go. Then they must live accordingly with these new practices of ministry in their community (Hirsch, *5Q* Loc. 4196). The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit calls the church into the world much as Christ was incarnate, thus producing the same fruit of the Spirit

(Guder, *Missional Church* 146; Newbigin, *The Open Secret* Loc. 1483; Moyhagh and Harrold Locs. 3791, 4012).

Third Places

For the missional church, incarnational ministry, bringing the presence of Christ to unexpected places, is more than ministry outside the church building (Frost, *Road* Loc. 2327, 271, 1322; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* Locs. 2258, 2228). It also requires abandoning some of the ways of the institutional church and taking the church to the people by becoming actively involved in their lives by embracing the community to whom they are sent (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Locs. 903, 3003). These churches, that “claim deed as sacrament,” will intentionally cross boundaries and build relationships by becoming fully involved in the life of their communities through acts of love and service (Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 11680, 5703). By this personal engagement, these churches will become known in the community as they focus on the stranger for the sake of the stranger alone, thus demonstrating incarnational expressions of faith and becoming more universal in their embrace of varying cultures (Kok and Niemand 507; Roxburgh and Romanuk Loc. 1916).

In the ministry of Jesus, the Holy Spirit worked mostly where people lived and worked (Walt, “Secular”). The church, filled with the Holy Spirit, that seeks to serve its community must embrace the wider culture around it and connect with those who will not naturally connect with the church (Moyhagh and Harrold Locs. 11680, 4660). The church may enter the ordinary and everyday life of its communities by entering “third places” or “proximity spaces” (Effa 66–67). Third places tend to be places outside of home and work where people regularly meet together for community and are therefore

good places for missional engagement (Halter and Smay 157; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 151). Berry said, “There are no unsacred places; there are only sacred places and desecrated places” (qtd. in Walt, “Secular”). It is in these places the missional church may enter to interact meaningfully with the “not-yet-Christians,” to carry out the *Missio Dei* in incarnational ways (Halter and Smay 169).

The importance of community in the missional church emphasizes a shift in perspective that faith is more than the result of evangelism but comes as a process which is exercised in the missional church through inviting the not-yet-Christian, into the community of church and Christ rather than an instantaneous moment of evangelistic salvation (Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 8939). However, the needs of the people already in church most often consume most churches and dictate their mission and activities (Zscheile Loc. 222). When these things—liturgy, pastoral care, and teaching—become the primary purposes of the church they begin to dictate how things are organized (Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 5706). Hauerwas relocates the Christian presence from the center to the margins and encourages the church to revision its engagement with the center (Hauerwas, *The Hauerwas Reader*, 346; Yong Loc. 4295).

Awareness of the Neighborhood

Not-yet-Christians are looking for stability and security. It is of great concern that no matter how great the institutional church’s embrace of innovation and change, it may not be enough (Zscheile Loc. 626). The church must discover and practice new ways of seeing and being in the world (Zscheile Loc. 198). To reach the not-yet-Christians, the church must abandon their identity as an institution and once again become a missionary movement (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Loc. 452). Missional practices must become more

than developing new skills and must include recovering ways that are in unity with the heart of Christianity (Roxburgh and Romanuk Loc. 2055).

Bonhoeffer stated that Christ stands between the neighbor and the church. Thus, the neighbor can be approached only through Christ (100). Missional churches must be intimately connected with Christ and grounded in his nature (Hastings 140–141). The church's dedication to the neighborhood's wellbeing, over its own, is its greatest witness (Zscheile Loc. 2061). Frost suggests the church displays the character of Christ when it embraces the place God has sent it (*Incarnate* Loc. 2086). The missional church must be committed to the *Missio Dei*, be flexible on mission, and see the community around them with fresh eyes (Roxburgh, *Missional* Loc. 2862).

The question the missional church seeks to discover in its own neighborhood is “What is the Holy Spirit up to here?” (Tyra Loc. 1069 ;Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 119). The church must then explore how the Holy Spirit may be sending them into their community (Guder, *Missional Church* 69). The *Missio Dei* is a joint venture between Christ the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the people of God (Guder, *Missional Church* 189). The missional church must therefore avoid viewing mission as a program or activity of the church but view it as the core principle which gives it its definition (Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church* 153). Believers should see themselves as missionaries who are called and gifted for the ministry of alerting others to the reign of God through Christ (Collins Loc. 770; Frost, *Surprise the World* Locs. 270, 274, 822; Tyra Loc. 199). The missional church is not bound by an inward focus but also focuses outwardly (Guder, *Missional Church* 200; Guder, *Conversation* Loc. 2378).

The contextual presence of the church in the community is important as relationships with believers and nonbelievers are the fabric of the church. This contextual presence of the church is more relational than religious (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 191; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 4395). Snyder and Scandrett charge that the church has spread throughout the earth but frequently fails to see the earth thus limiting its ability to bring healing (*Salvation* Loc. 4415). The missional church should recognize people are searching their communities for relationships that offer “belonging, empowerment, and redemption.” The church should therefore abandon the lines between the sacred and the profane and enter into the community to share joint projects (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Locs. 327, 655).

The missional church is cautioned to maintain its focus on spiritual renewal by participating with Christ in his mission (Sider, Olson and Unruh Loc. 2201). Holt connects neighborliness and neighborhood saying both are intimately connected with God’s call for the church to be the body of Christ in the world (Loc. 1023; Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc. 5949). Hall calls this an “ecclesia cruix,” ecclesiology of the cross, where the church becomes the cruciform body of Christ in the neighborhood (Peterson 164). The loss of power and influence by the Western church is an open door which enables the Christian to move closer to the poor. Entering mission in the community brings transformation to the church by challenging stereotypes, awakening its people to their “eternal origin and destiny,” helping the people see beyond their daily commitments, and understand Jesus’s teachings (Morisy 7, 152).

Incarnational Ministry

The early church believed they were God's incarnational mission in the world (Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc. 379). Like the early church, the missional church is called to more than missional activity (Akkerman and Maddis 18). The World Council of Churches adopted an understanding of the *Missio Dei* as a partnership with the missional God to engage the world directly rather than by world evangelism and church planting (Tyra Loc. 225). The church is called to a missional lifestyle by aligning itself with the life Jesus lived, embodying the gospel, and being incarnational in its very nature (Boren, *MissioRelate* 185). The church is called to fulfill the plan of God to heal all creation through Christ by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit (Snyder and Scandrett, *Salvation* Loc. 5504).

Halter and Smay recommend the practices of leaving, living among, listening to, and loving with no strings attached (Loc. 2532). Being missional requires living with people and developing relationships with them (Bolger 56). These types of relationships in the early church led to many converting to Christianity as they witnessed the love and care of the Christian disciples (Rah Loc. 1741). The church's presence among and with the people in the community is critical for the missional church (Boren, *MissioRelate* 184; Frost, *Surprise the World* Loc. 229 Minatrea 89; Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 11138; Tyra Loc 1476).

The church is called to be a redeemed community demonstrating the reconciliation God is bringing into the world (Hughey 49; Snyder, *Community* 85). Frost describes incarnational ministry as going out but also going deep with others (*Surprise the World* Loc. 723; Murray, *Revival* Loc. 725). Following the Holy Spirit into the neighborhood, the missional church is seen going out to fulfill the mission of God

(Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 409). Effa calls this “Messianic spirituality,” the spiritual dynamic found in the life of Jesus which sees God in the ordinary world (63). Incarnational ministry requires the church leave its place of security and adopt a new way of thinking about the church as sent in and among the community, not just to them (Collins Loc. 946; Minatrea 10).

Incarnational ministry will require the missional church to be an intentional and abiding presence among the community in a real and personal way, entering homes, sharing meals, and being present with those with whom they work without anxiety about saying the “right words at the right place” (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping* Locs. 849–899; Hirsch and Catchin, *Revolution* Loc. 5254; A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1167; Roxburgh, *Missional* Locs. 2161, 2253). Knowing that God enters into the very places in the world that seem absent of the sacred, the church will need to cross barriers and build bridges to connect with the community around it (Kok and Niemand 507; Zscheile Loc. 674). Tan encourages the church to maintain an inclusive and participatory action with the world but cautions it to both engage with and disengage from the world (282). When the church enters the ordinary and everyday life of its communities, taking the church to the people, it will discover what God is doing around it (Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 140; Roxburgh, *Missional* Loc. 2039) ().

Ross emphasizes the word “daily,” as opposed to Sundays only, in Acts 2.47b “the Lord added to their number *daily* those who were being saved” (NIV; Ross Loc. 92). The church began as a movement with organization developing as needed to support and spread the gospel (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God* Loc. 1052). Incarnational ministry takes on the nature of the New Testament church when it penetrates the community with

incarnational presence entering it to build relationships in all contexts (Effa 70; MacIlvaine III 91). It must continually test its understanding of Christ against that of the early church (Bosch, *Transforming Mission* Loc. 811). When mission is seen as a movement of God, the church becomes an instrument of that mission (Sider, Olson and Unruh Loc. 2916).

Research Design Literature

The research project was an intervention using mixed methods. A pre- and post-intervention survey was used to collect quantitative data regarding change in attitudes, practices, and behaviors brought about in the intervention. The survey was designed to assess participants' attitude toward and practices related to the missional life and the participants' knowledge, attitude, and experience with the Holy Spirit. This data was analyzed by a qualified analyst recommended by Asbury Theological Seminary.

Following the intervention, a six-question researcher-designed questionnaire was used to collect qualitative data which would give the researcher a deeper understanding of the participants' relationship with the Holy Spirit and practices of missional living (Sensing Loc. 2258). The questionnaire was given as one question per week for six weeks following the intervention, a small group experience. The qualitative data collected was analyzed by logically organizing the data into themes (Sensing Loc. 4608). This research sought to discover the relationship that exists between a relationship with the Holy Spirit and missional living.

Summary of Literature

The literature review revealed six themes which relate to the scope of this project: The Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit,

God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities. The Christian wishing to live missionally should desire to be perfected in love, as Wesley called a Pentecostal experience in a believer's life. The mission of God sends His church into the community to be the incarnational presence of Christ to share the love of God and the Gospel given by Christ. To this end, Jesus promised the disciples the infilling, presence, and power of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1.8.

The theme, Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission was discovered in the literature review. The *Missio Dei* is practiced in the Christian's life as he/she, sent by God into his/her context, becomes an incarnational presence in their community. In this way, the missional Christian enters an attitude of entertaining the specific mission God has for them as sent people. Therefore, they encounter a deeper awareness of the reign and the *Missio Dei* and God's specific call for them. As the Christian goes they discover the second theme, that of the Holy Spirit as their Paraclete. The work of God's kingdom can only be accomplished when the Holy Spirit is allowed to come alongside believers to be present with and empower the witness. In this theme, it was discovered that the Holy Spirit goes before and goes with the witness. Thus, the witness discovers they are not sent alone but are sent with a Helper, the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is with the witness in what Wesley and Fletcher call a Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit. In this theme, the Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit as they surrender to Him. They may experience what Wesley called a "second work of grace," where the receptive believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit. This begins a relationship in which the believer is sanctified and perfected in love enabled to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength and their neighbor as themselves (Luke

10.27). A God-kind of Love is the fourth of the six themes. The Christian filled with and surrendered to the Holy Spirit begins to love those in their neighborhood in incarnational ways. Like Wesley, the believer is compelled outward in the power of the Holy Spirit. This fifth theme, Power from/of the Holy Spirit revealed that the missional Christian can expect to experience the power of the Holy Spirit during their missional practices and activities and live missionally in the world as an empowered witness.

The final theme of Awareness of Missional Opportunities relates to the Christian's awareness of their context and their awareness of how the *Missio Dei* might be lived out in that context. As the Christian becomes aware of the missional opportunities around them, they begin to enjoy both their church community and the community of their church. They enjoy both their time and presence in worship, prayer, and study as well as their time in the community as ambassadors of Christ. Like the early church, the member of the missional church is called to a partnership with God in their own neighborhood to fulfill the *Missio Dei* by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in missional ministry.

These six themes helped guide the researcher as he sought to discover how the Western church today might rediscover the presence and filling of the Holy Spirit so we may fulfill the command of Jesus to be His witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Yin suggests qualitative research means balancing “the challenges of doing original research and pursuing three important objections: transparency, methodic-ness, and adherence to evidence” (3). This chapter outlines the method of the original research. It describes the instruments used and defines their purposes. The chapter addresses transparency by describing the participants, how they were selected, how they were engaged with the researcher and the research instruments, and how the researcher worked to protect their anonymity. The nature of the ministry context is also explained. “Methodic-ness” is defined as the research questions, the instruments, and the analysis. How the research instruments were developed with expert review is detailed as relevant to their reliability and validity. The evidence is outlined in anticipation of further examination in chapter four.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The Western church has awakened, at least in part, to their astounding decrease in membership in the last few decades, causing churches and pastors to respond in different ways in hopes of reversing this trend. This project has considered such a remedy from a missional perspective by recognizing the death of Christendom and the demise of the Consumer church. The attractional model, so widely practiced by large churches across the Western world, has lost its relevance. Attempts to grow churches have only led to decline in the Western Church at large and an inward focus which has contributed to this

decline. Remedying the decline in church membership and attendance will require more than a change in one's approach to ministry.

The literature review revealed there is common agreement that the Holy Spirit is important in a missional life. It also revealed a preconceived, though not tested, correlation between the two. There is a need for more exploration of the Holy Spirit's role and activity in such a life. This project has explored the relationship between the Christian and the Holy Spirit with perfection in love being key in a vital missional life. While there is some varying thought as to what perfection in love is, it is at least evident that it centers around the commandment of Luke 10.27, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (NASB).

Sensing notes that research methodology includes three primary areas, the rationale, the intervention, and the evaluation (Loc. 1730). The purpose of this project was to identify the impact of the Holy Spirit on missional living in ABCUMC in Marietta, GA using a small group approach with quantitative pre- and post-testing, as well as a qualitative open-ended exit email-questionnaire by focusing on three areas: personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices in daily living. Prior to and following the small group experience, each participant completed the thirty-item Missional Practices Scale (MPS) designed by Scott Nelson (Nelson, *Time, Belief, and Mission* 263-264). Ten researcher-designed questions were added to the MPS using the same five-point Likert scale which directly related to the participant's experience with the Holy Spirit and perfection in love. The goal of the pre-post survey, renamed the Missional Practices Scale Plus (MPS+), was first to reveal

attitudes and behaviors related to the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices in daily living and second to determine change in attitudes and behaviors related to these three areas.

The researcher-designed Holy Spirit Missional Questionnaire (HSMQ) was administered to each participant via email with a series of six pre-determined questions over a six-week period, one question per week. Questions 1 and 4 addressed a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. Questions 2 and 5 addressed missional practices, and questions 3 and 6 addressed perfection in love. The third source of information was the researcher's field notes from the small group meetings. The researcher led those meetings and encouraged all participants to participate in group discussions and activities. His administrative assistants observed from within the circle and took notes but did not participate in discussions or activities.

Research Questions

Research Question #1

What were the participants' personal experiences with and attitudes toward the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices prior to the intervention?

The MPS+ used a five-point Likert scale that required respondents to rate how well a statement described them (1 = Does NOT describe me at all; 5 = Describes me very well). The scale helped identify the key themes of a missional life in the Holy Spirit of the participants. The identified themes are considered to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive so that a particular unit of data could only fit in one theme (Sensing Loc. 4672). The literature review identified six key themes: The Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit, God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy

Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities. The ten additional researcher-designed questions used to make the MPS+ focused on missional activity and love for God and neighbor as promoted by Wesleyan theology. Sample items from the MPS+ include: “I go out of my way to care for the poor or needy,” “I feel God has accepted me as His child,” “I feel God’s love for me,” “I believe love is something you do regardless of how you feel,” and “When I feel God sending me somewhere I am eager to go regardless of where it may be.” Questions 35 and 39 were negatively scored: “People who say they feel God’s presence are probably just being emotional” and “I have difficulty telling the people closest to me I love them.”

Comparisons of the pre-intervention and post-intervention answers to the MPS+ reveal changes that were wrought through the small group intervention. Items 3, 5, 12, 14, 24, and 25, of the MPS+ addressed the theme “Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission.” Items 9, 17, 18, 26, and 31 addressed the theme “Parakletos.” Items 2, 11, 15, 21, 23, 32, 35, 37, and 40 addressed the theme, “Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit.” Items 4, 6, 16, 19, 20, 27, 34, 36, 38, and 39 addressed the theme “God-kind of Love.” Items 28 and 33 addressed the theme “Power from/of the Holy Spirit.” Items 1, 7, 8, 10, 13, 22, 29, and 30 addressed the theme “Awareness of Missional Opportunities.”

Research Question #2

What change in the participants’ personal experiences with, and attitudes toward, the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices were exhibited after the intervention?

A comparison of the pre-intervention answers with the post-intervention answers addressed this question. The researcher’s two administrative assistants attended the ten

group meetings, five each, and took summary notes of discussions, questions, and comments offered by the participants. The notes were not taken verbatim, but the notes were summaries of what participants said. For example, “P#1 was more aware of things throughout the day,” and “P#4 could recognize the light and darkness to a greater degree.” The notes of these ten meetings were analyzed by the researcher and five other graders the researcher felt were qualified to glean objective insights into the participants’ change in personal experience and attitudes. Each grader was given the six themes identified in the literature review (chapter 2) and asked to record the frequency of occurrences of those themes in the group notes and the participants’ answers to the HSMQ, as well as identify any additional themes which appeared. The themes identified by the graders were compared across the ten weekly small group meetings to discover changes in personal experience and attitude regarding the six major themes identified above.

Research Question #3

What practices, attitudes, and decisions in the participant’s life demonstrate they are being perfected in love?

This research question ascertains to what extent a relationship with the Holy Spirit affected, or empowered, the participant’s “ability” to love. As revealed in the literature review, Wesley equated perfection in love with sanctification and baptism with the Holy Spirit. Comparisons of the pre-intervention and post-intervention answers from the MPS+ reveal a positive increase in the participant’s attitudes regarding love. The MPS+ answers demonstrate perfection in love through specific examples of the participant’s practices and decisions. Questions 1 and 4 of the HSMQ addressed a personal relationship with the

Holy Spirit. Question 3 and 6 of the HSMQ addressed missional practices in daily living, and questions 2 and 5 addressed perfection in love. The HSMQ more specifically revealed those changes as well as whether that change could be attributed to an experience with the Holy Spirit or the intervention itself. The questions on the HSMQ revealed a general increase in missional practices. Each question, given one week apart, asked for specific practices in which they had engaged. The answers to the HSMQ email questions gave specific missional practices performed by participants and their attitudes toward those practices.

Ministry Context

One of the larger churches in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church is ABCUMC. It was founded in 1840 and grew to be a large church 30 years ago with the current membership reported to be 10,000 and an average attendance, across six services and two campuses, of almost 2,600. A Sunday bulletin from 1989 reported 2,507 in worship on Palm Sunday. The church entered a state of decline at some point in the 1990s, but it is difficult to judge when or to what extent because official numbers were likely inaccurate. A younger pastor was appointed after the previous pastor of 24 years retired three years ago.

The current senior pastor was an associate pastor at ABCUMC from 2006–2011. He was appointed senior pastor of a medium-sized church south of Atlanta where he had a difficult but successful ministry. He returned to ABCUMC in June 2016 after a search committee decided he was the best choice out of several national candidates. A pastoral search committee is not acceptable in the United Methodist Church in the US, but ABCUMC is allowed considerable latitude because of its size and financial prowess. The

current pastor's administration is very different from his predecessor's, as he has created a team atmosphere and greater accountability for staff members. This caused some staff members consternation as they were required to become healthy team players.

ABCUMC is located in an "upper crust" area of Metro Atlanta. In 2018, the average income within a three-mile radius of ABCUMC was \$151,949, compared to Georgia's average income of \$56,869, and the average house value is twice that of the state average. 97.2% reported living above the poverty line. The area was reported as 80.2% white, 7.5% Asian, 6.1% African-American, and 3.9% Hispanic with 48.4% male and 51.6% female. The gay and lesbian population is estimated to be 0.4%. Of adults 25 years of age and older, 42.9% report having a bachelor's degree and 28.6% report having a master's degree (MissionInsite). For many years, Cobb County has fought public transportation to avoid bringing in the "bad elements" deemed to exist in intercity Atlanta and neighboring counties.

A nearby Baptist church and ABCUMC are the largest religious influences in the area. These two large churches are approximately one-mile apart and both could be accurately described as attractional churches. Both have experienced decline in recent years, although the Baptist church seems to have been affected less than ABCUMC. ABCUMC, like the community, is predominately white with very few minorities.

Participants

Criteria for Selection

A truly diverse group, beyond age, would not have been representative of ABCUMC's membership. Diversity in age was intentional. Participants were chosen based on the following criteria: Participants were members of ABCUMC who attended

worship services at least twice a month, volunteered at ABCUMC at least once a month, and gave financially on a regular basis. “Regular basis” was deemed to be at least six times a year, or an annual amount exceeding \$1,200. Merriam and Tisdell state that qualitative researchers are interested in discovering how people construct their worlds and ascribe meaning to their experiences (6). In light of this, participants were selected from those who regularly attend both ABCUMC campuses. Staff members reporting directly or indirectly to the researcher were not allowed to participate to avoid tainting the results due to unintended influence by the researcher’s position as Associate Pastor.

Description of Participants

Twelve participants were chosen for the small group experience. It was felt that more than twelve would exceed the normal parameters of a small group. The study was limited to one small group as a large number of small groups would exceed the scope of this project. Project participants consisted of four males and eight females. Zero males were between 22 and 35 years-of-age, two between 36 and 47 years-of-age, zero between 48 and 59 years-of-age, and two between the ages of 60 and 70. Two females were between 22 and 35 years-of-age, three between 36 and 47 years-of-age, two between 48 and 59 years-of-age, and one was between the ages of 60 and 70.

Ethical Considerations

Participants completed a consent form, which assured them the researcher would strive to maintain their confidentiality but could not guarantee it. Participants were also advised numerous times they could elect to leave the study at any time or elect for their data not to be included in the study. To maintain confidentiality, participants’ emails were moved from the researcher’s general email inbox to a secure password protected folder. The

researcher's personal email address was used as opposed to his work or school address to give additional security. SurveyMonkey was used for the MPS+ and the HSMQ to give participants' greater anonymity.

Results from the HSMQ administered via email were saved to a .pdf file and kept in a folder on the researcher's password-protected computer. The researcher's notes and reflections from each small group meeting were kept in the same folder on the researcher's computer. A designated backup drive was kept in the researcher's home fireproof-safe along with all hand-written notes. Personal names and identifiers were not provided to those outside the scope of this project. Respondents' answers and biographical information were not shared with other participants, and identifiers such as age, race, and income were protected within the project.

Instrumentation

The project utilized two instruments, the Missional Practices Scale Plus (MPS+) (+ indicates the presence of ten additional researcher-designed questions) and the researcher-designed Holy Spirit Missional Questionnaire (HSMQ). The MPS was designed and used by Nelson as part of his Ph.D. project in 2015 to explore eight areas: (1) aligning oneself to God's mission; (2) interpreting the Bible from a mission perspective; (3) discerning where and how God is at work in the world; (4) alerting people to the reign of God; (5) engaging the local context; (6) contextualizing the Gospel; (7) transforming all that is marred by sin and evil; and (8) collaborating with a community of faith. The MPS uses 30 questions and a five-point Likert scale: (1) Does not describe me at all; (2) Does not describe me very well; (3) Describes me moderately well; (4) Describes me very well; and (5) Describes me extremely well (Nelson, *Time*,

Belief, and Mission 131–132). The researcher designed and added 10 additional questions to further address the participants' attitudes and behaviors related to the themes identified in the literature review. These items were developed in consultation with the dissertation coach and an academic mentor.

The researcher-designed Holy Spirit Missional Questionnaire (HSMQ) followed the progress of participants' missional life for a period of six weeks following the small group experience. The HSMQ was administered via SurveyMonkey, with one question being sent each week for six weeks following the last small group meeting. It encouraged participants to provide 100–300 word answers to each of the open-ended questions. Its goal was to evaluate each participant's attitude and ongoing practices with the Holy Spirit in missional life and their attitude and behaviors relating to the six themes from the literature review.

Expert Review

Sensing reports three options for piloting a questionnaire: three people taking the questionnaire and survey after which providing feedback, independent expert assessment, and field test (Loc. 2392). An independent expert assessment of the researcher-designed additional questions for the MPS+ and the HSMQ was conducted with the dissertation coach and an assistant dean at Asbury Theological Seminary. Once the suggestions from each were implemented, revisions were submitted again for review and found acceptable. Analysis proved each of these instruments was valid and reliable for data collection.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design

Careful review of the literature and biblical and theological themes related to the missional life revealed relevant themes used when developing the additional questions for

the MPS+, the HSMQ, and the small group format. The major themes which emerged were the Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit, God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities. The questions were presented to the dissertation coach as well as a faculty mentor. At their suggestion, adjustments were made to increase the strength of the data collected.

The additional questions on the MPS+ and the HSMQ were intentionally developed in consideration of the three research questions. Both instruments contained questions related to the research identified themes. Consideration was given to Nelson's eight key missional practices. When developing the instruments, careful consideration was given to language. The questions were worded to avoid theological ambiguity. Even though the participants all came from a single pool of possibilities, that pool was large enough to contain varying theological perspectives.

The results of this study are considered to be reproducible considering the assumptions and stated biases of the researcher, the method of participant selection, the collection of data using the MPS+, the HSMQ, and the same approach to the small group experience and evaluation of that experience. Using these factors and a like-minded approach, other researchers could replicate the study with similar results.

Data Collection

The pre-test MPS+ surveys were collected one week prior to the first small group meeting via SurveyMonkey with all answers and results being stored appropriately on the researcher's computer. The MPS+ was then sent to participants the day following the last group meeting. Field notes taken during the group meetings were organized immediately

following each meeting. Notes were organized by timeline of the meetings and also organized by participant in an Excel spreadsheet on the researcher's computer. The HSMQ questions were sent via SurveyMonkey, one question each week for six weeks beginning one week following the last group meeting. These notes were organized by participant and correlated by topic also in an Excel spreadsheet on the researcher's computer.

Data Analysis

The collected data from SurveyMonkey for the pre-test and post-test MPS+ was examined for consistency by the researcher and dissertation coach. All available data was used. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test was made using the data analysis provided by SurveyMonkey, which calculated mean, medium, and mode. Graphs of the data were also created in SurveyMonkey. This data was backed up in a researcher-designed Microsoft Excel file.

Field notes taken during the group meetings described behaviors, comments, stories, and testimonies given by participants during the group meetings. Field notes consisted of a description of what selectively took place, particularly summaries of what was said by individual participants (Sensing Loc. 4429). These notes were analyzed in consideration of the three research questions and the six themes identified in the literature review. Six graders, including the researcher, were used to identify themes found in participants' responses to the HSMQ. Participants were identified by number only to protect their anonymity. The researcher solicited analysis and interpretation from five others deemed qualified to independently "grade" both the group notes and the participants' answers to the HSMQ (Taylor-Powell and Renner p. 9). The graders were

considered to be experienced and expert in their understanding and relationship with the Holy Spirit.

HSMQ questions were sent, one each week for six weeks, beginning one week following the last group meeting. These were organized by participant and HSMQ question and correlated by the themes identified in the Literature Review. Participants' responses were compared in three ways. First, a participant's response was compared along the timeline from week to week in consideration of the identified themes. Second, a participant's responses were compared with the other participants' responses for patterns of described behaviors to identify themes occurring each week following the small group experience. Third, a participant's responses were analyzed to determine the relationship between the participant's self-reported relationship with the Holy Spirit and their continuing missional activity.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The church, which once was a revolutionary and spiritual movement, has become a religious institution of buildings, clergy, and sacraments that is far removed from the Church of Acts (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping Loc.* 299). The Western church's inadequate engagement within their context continues to lead to further decline. For decades, the Western church satisfied itself with the knowledge that it was a vital part of society. The Western church thinks and acts as though it still belongs in the main stream and thus continues to act in the same manner as before (Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping Loc.* 324; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* Locs. 1015, 857). In the twentieth century, believers shifted from an attitude of service and worship to become consumers with self-serving attitudes (Rainer 30). The principal members in Western churches serves in leadership and in other groups spending the majority of their time serving only those who regularly attend (Guder, *Missional Church* 202). These attitudes and approaches have caused the church to lose sight of the *Missio Dei* and prevent them from engaging with their community in significant and life-changing ways (Moyhagh and Harrold Loc. 3235). That importance has waned as the church has become irrelevant for most Westerners.

The Missional church movement has shown promise in turning the tide of church decline; however, such a feat cannot be accomplished alone. As the early church was dependent upon the Holy Spirit, so the Holy Spirit is vital to the church today. The purpose of the study was to evaluate how a personal experience with the Holy Spirit

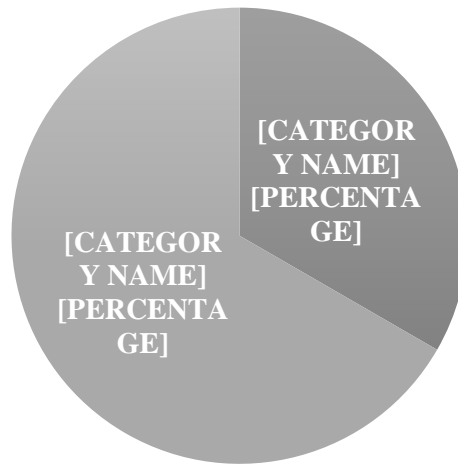
impacts missional living in ABCUMC following a ten-week small group experience focusing on the Holy Spirit and missional living.

Participants

Fifty people were suggested for the research project by the senior pastor and the pastor of adult discipleship. Each independently recommended 25 people, and there were no duplications in their lists. An e-mail invitation was sent to these fifty people with the intention of accepting twelve participants. Only twelve responded with interest in participating in the group, so these twelve were accepted, and the final group was formed. The number twelve was chosen as this was considered to be an appropriate and manageable size for a small group experience. Diversity within the group consisted of age, gender, years since conversion, and education. The group was homogeneous regarding race, which is congruent with ABCUMC.

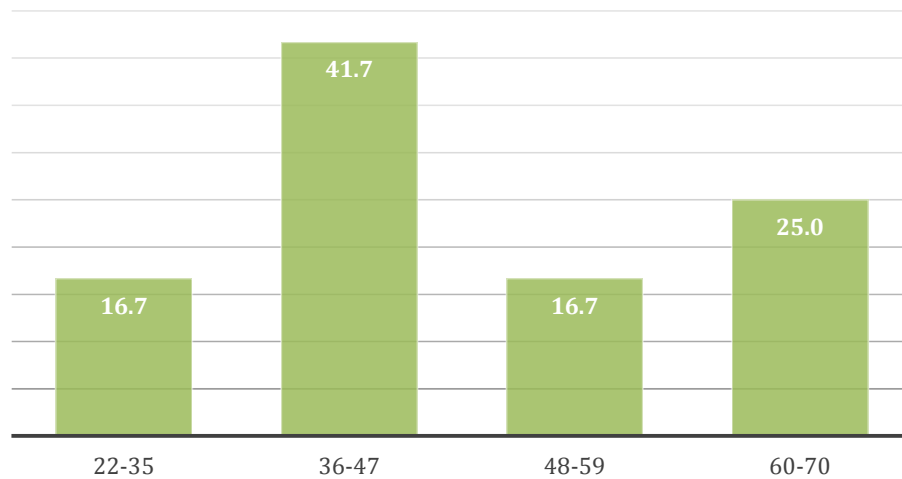
The group consisted of eight females and four males, or 66.7% female and 33.3% male respectively (see figure 4.1). All of the men were married, and three of the women were single. There were two married couples in the group. Participants were of middle class to upper middle class economically.

Figure 4.1. *Percent of Participants by Gender (n = 12)*

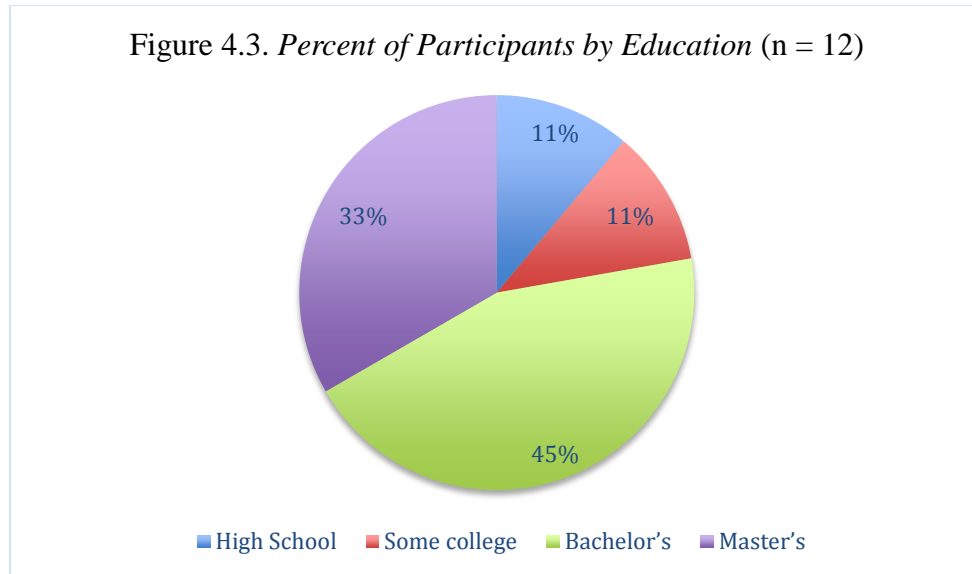


Of the 12 participants, there were 2 between the ages of 22 and 35, 4 between the ages of 36 and 47, 3 between the ages of 48 and 59, and 3 between the ages of 60 and 70. The median age was 47.25 (see figure 4.2).

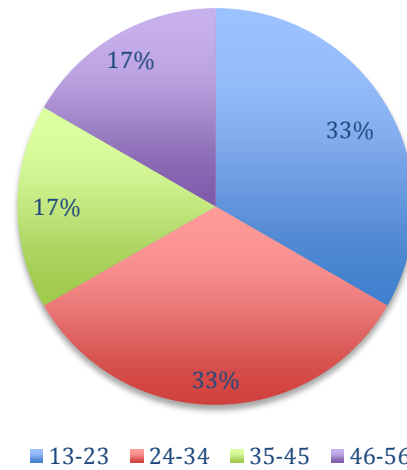
Figure 4.2. *Percent of Participants by Age Group (n = 12)*



Participants had varying levels of education. 3 have a master’s degree, 7 have a bachelor’s degree, 1 has some college, and 1 has no college (see figure 4.3).



Participants have been believers from 13 to 56 years. Prior to the small group experience only two had experience with the Holy Spirit, and none had demonstrated regular missional practices or had a reasonable understanding of being missional (see figure 4.4). “Regular missional practices” are considered to be regular established habits which include: intentionally connecting with neighbors, co-workers, and friends; intentionally “blessing” others by bringing them coffee, having a meal with them, sharing a small gift, or writing a note of encouragement; having a spiritual conversation with someone who is spiritually searching; and asking God to direct them to someone.

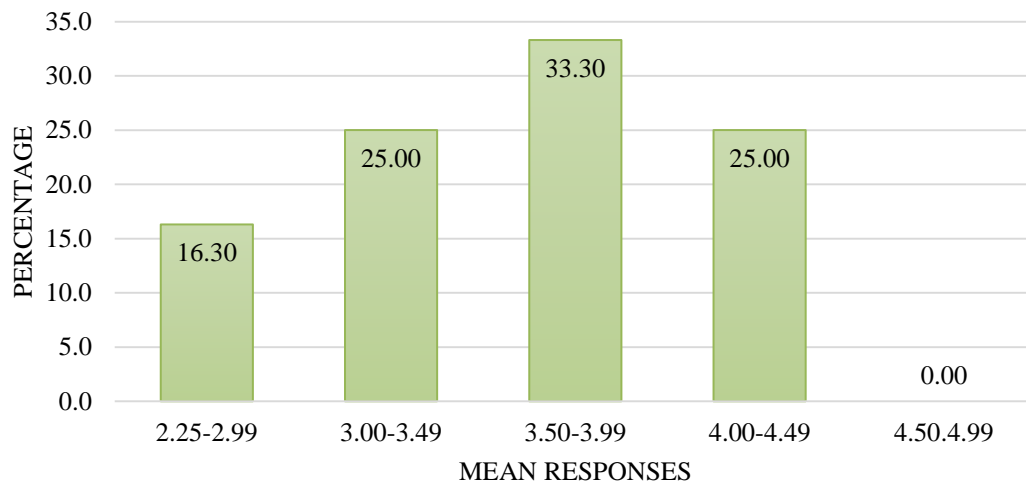
Figure 4.4. *Percent of Participants by Years Since Conversion (n = 12)*

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

What were the participants' personal experiences with and attitudes toward the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices prior to the intervention?

Research question #1 was approached with a pre-group survey, the Missional Practices Scale Plus (MPS+), which consists of forty questions created from the thirty questions of Nelson's Missional Practices Scale (MPS) plus ten additional researcher-designed questions (Nelson, *Time, Belief, and Mission* 282–283). The MPS+ was administered via SurveyMonkey pre-group and post-group. Participants completed the survey 24–48 hours prior to participating in the small group experience, which focused on the Holy Spirit and missional practices. Across all items, participants had a mean response of 3.51 (SD = 0.61), which indicates moderate to high agreement with the assessment items. There was some variance in the mean responses, which ranged from 2.33 to 4.35. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.97, suggesting strong internal reliability (see figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5. Percentages of Mean Responses at Pretest on the Missional Practices Scale Plus ($n = 12$).



Further analysis was done with nonparametric tests due to the small sample size. An independent-samples Mann-Whitney U test showed no significant difference between men ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.84$) and women ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.50$) in their mean response to the MPS+ at pretest, $U = 20.00$, $p = .570$. There also was no significant pretest difference in mean responses between younger participants ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.51$) and older participants ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.67$), according to another independent-samples Mann-Whitney U test, $U = 25.00$, $p = .268$.

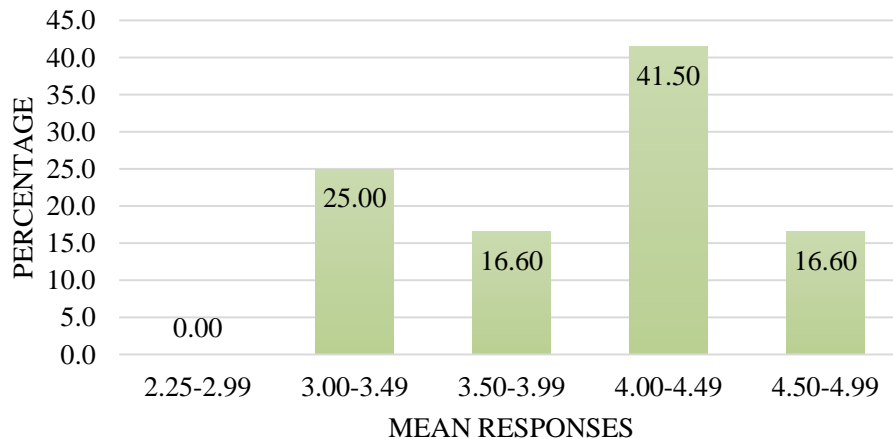
Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

What changes in the participants' personal experiences and attitudes toward the Holy Spirit, perfection in love, and missional practices were exhibited after the intervention?

Participants were again asked to complete the Missional Practices Scale Plus (MPS+), after participating in this small group experience focusing on the Holy Spirit and missional practices. Across all items, participants had a mean response of 3.98 ($SD =$

0.48), which indicates high agreement with the assessment items. There was some variance in the responses, which varied from 3.35 to 4.83. At posttest, this scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96, again suggesting strong internal reliability (see figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. Percentages of Mean Responses at Posttest on the Missional Practices Scale Plus ($n = 12$).



Further analysis was done with nonparametric tests due to the small sample size. An independent-samples Mann-Whitney U test showed no significant difference between men ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.46$) and women ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.50$) in their mean response to the MPS at posttest, $U = 22.50$, $p = .283$. There also was no significant posttest difference in mean responses between younger participants ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.41$) and older participants ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.61$), according to another independent-samples Mann-Whitney U test, $U = 21.50$, $p = .530$.

Pre- to Post-Intervention

A related-samples Wilcoxon signed rank test compared scores from pretest to posttest. There was a significant increase in mean response scores on the MPS+ over time. Participants reported less agreement with statements on the MPS+ at pretest ($M =$

3.51, $SD = 0.61$) than at posttest ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.48$), $W_{Standardized} = 2.98$, $p = 0.003$, Cohen's $d = 0.86$, suggesting increased involvement in missional practices after the small group experience.

In order to better understand the changes from pretest to posttest, a series of paired-samples t -tests¹ compared participants' ratings on each item between the two administrations of the MPS. See Table 4.1 for mean responses and standard deviations. Approximately half of the items ($n = 19$) showed significant differences in these preliminary screenings. Further analysis of these items was done using the related-samples Wilcoxon signed rank test. All item responses remained significantly different from pretest to posttest except for responses to Item 40. Among the item responses that changed significantly, participants reported higher agreement on Item 1, "I intentionally try to show others who God is by the way that I live my life," at posttest ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.52$) than at pretest ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.72$), $W_{Standardized} = 2.83$, $p = 0.005$. Ratings of item 2, "I allow the Holy Spirit's guidance to shape how I live," increased from pretest ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.89$) to posttest ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.84$), $W_{Standardized} = 2.12$, $p = 0.034$.

Table 4.1. *Pretest and Posttest Means and Standard Deviations for the Individual Items of the MPS+ ($n = 12$)*

MPS+ Items	Pretest	Posttest	t (df)	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Q1 I intentionally try to show others who God is by the way that I live my life.	3.83 (0.72)	4.50 (0.52)	4.69 (11)	.001***

¹ Given the small sample size, the more appropriate statistical test would be the related-samples Wilcoxon signed rank test. However, the paired-samples t -tests are easier to compute and are used here as a screening tool. Any item showing a significant difference on the t -test will then be assessed with the nonparametric Wilcoxon signed rank test.

Q2 I allow the Holy Spirit's guidance to shape how I live.	3.67 (0.89)	4.17 (0.84)	2.56 (11)	.026*
Q3 I focus on making a positive impact in the specific places where I feel God has sent me.	3.83 (1.03)	4.58 (0.67)	3.45 (11)	.005**
Q4 I help bring healing to the brokenness in the lives of people around me.	3.33 (0.99)	3.75 (1.06)	2.80 (11)	.017*
Q5 I intentionally work together with other Christians in my area to make our world a better place.	3.42 (0.79)	4.08 (0.79)	2.97 (11)	.013*
Q6 I go out of my way to care for the poor or needy.	2.75 (0.75)	3.25 (0.45)	2.17 (11)	.053
Q7 I am involved in global social justice issues.	2.00 (0.85)	2.33 (0.65)	1.30 (11)	.220
Q8 I regularly spend my free time interacting with people who are not Christians.	3.17 (0.94)	3.50 (1.09)	1.48 (11)	.166
Q9 I find ways to tell others about what God has done for the world.	3.25 (1.14)	3.83 (0.94)	3.92 (11)	.002**
Q10 I try to have spiritual conversations with people who do not share my faith.	2.83 (1.34)	3.75 (0.75)	3.53 (11)	.005**
Q11 I share my life with a group of Christians that supports me in my endeavors to make a positive impact in this world.	4.25 (0.87)	4.75 (0.45)	1.92 (11)	.082
Q12 I actively listen for what God is asking me to do when I am learning from the Bible.	3.75 (0.87)	4.50 (0.67)	3.45 (11)	.005**

Q13 I am involved in local social justice issues.	2.00 (0.85)	2.33 (0.65)	1.30 (11)	.220
Q14 I make sure the things that I am doing on a daily basis are in line with what God wants to have happen in this world.	3.33 (0.78)	3.83 (0.72)	3.32 (11)	.007**
Q15 I interact regularly with other Christians who challenge and encourage me.	4.08 (0.67)	4.67 (0.49)	3.92 (11)	.002 **
Q16 I intentionally try to help others around me move closer to God no matter where they are in life.	3.67 (0.99)	4.08 (0.79)	1.82 (11)	.096
Q17 I look for ways that God is at work in the world around me.	4.17 (0.84)	4.50 (0.80)	2.35 (11)	.039*
Q18 I constantly ask God to transform things that are unjust, sinful, oppressive, or dehumanizing.	3.25 (0.75)	3.83 (0.84)	2.55 (11)	.027*
Q19 I intentionally develop relationships with people on the “fringes” of society.	2.17 (1.03)	3.08 (0.90)	6.17 (11)	.000***
Q20 I regularly evaluate how I am living my life by comparing it to Jesus’ life.	3.42 (0.79)	3.75 (1.06)	1.30 (11)	.220
Q21 I study the Bible to learn more about how I can make a positive impact in the world.	3.33 (1.07)	4.08 (0.79)	3.45 (11)	.005**
Q22 I spend significant amounts of my time trying to make the world around me a better place.	3.33 (1.07)	3.58 (0.90)	1.00 (11)	.339
Q23 I determine how I can do good works in every area of my life.	3.58	3.92	1.48	.166

	(1.00)	(1.00)	(11)	
Q24 I often try to figure out what God cares about and then care about those things myself.	3.00 (0.74)	4.08 (0.79)	3.46 (11)	.005**
Q25 I study my local community to better understand how to communicate the Good News within it.	2.25 (1.29)	3.25 (0.87)	3.07 (11)	.011
Q26 When I study the Bible, I specifically ask what the passage can teach me about God's purposes.	3.75 (0.75)	4.25 (0.87)	2.17 (11)	.053
Q27 I intentionally make time for my neighbors.	3.58 (0.67)	4.00 (0.85)	2.80 (11)	.017*
Q28 I spend time asking God what he wants to do through me.	4.08 (1.00)	4.25 (0.87)	0.69 (8)	.504
Q29 I have specific things I do to protect the environment.	3.09 (0.52)	3.17 (0.58)	0.56 (11)	.586
Q30 I think about how the local culture would be changed (or not) if it lived by God's values.	3.75 (0.97)	4.08 (0.79)	1.17 (11)	.266
Q31 Sometimes I feel an urgency to pray even though I may not know why.	3.08 (1.24)	3.67 (0.99)	2.03 (11)	.067
Q32 Listening to God is essential in my life.	4.42 (0.90)	4.50 (0.67)	0.56 (11)	.586
Q33 I know the difference between ministering in the power of the flesh and the power of the Holy Spirit.	3.33 (1.37)	4.17 (0.72)	2.59 (11)	.025*

Q34 I feel God has accepted me as His child.	4.50 (0.80)	4.67 (0.65)	1.48 (11)	.166
Q35 People who say they feel God's presence are probably just being emotional.	4.67 (0.65)	4.50 (0.67)	1.00 (11)	.339
Q36 I feel God's love for me.	4.50 (0.80)	4.67 (0.65)	1.48 (11)	.166
Q37 When I am facing a difficult decision, I depend on the Holy Spirit to help me make the right choice.	4.42 (0.79)	4.58 (0.52)	1.00 (11)	.339
Q38 I believe love is something you do regardless of how you feel.	4.25 (0.97)	4.75 (0.45)	2.57 (11)	.026*
Q39 I have difficulty telling the people closest to me I love them.	4.58 (0.79)	4.50 (0.67)	0.56 (11)	.586
Q40 When I feel God sending me somewhere, I am eager to go regardless of where it may be.	2.67 (1.30)	3.25 (0.97)	2.24 (11)	.046*

[†]Item is reverse-scored.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$

Research Question #3: Description of Evidence

What practices, attitudes, and decisions in the participant's life demonstrate they are being perfected in love?

The group notes and participants' answers to the HSMQ were analyzed by six graders, researcher included, who were asked to identify the themes which emerged in the group notes and participants' answers using a researcher-designed grading rubric. The use of multiple data sources, methods, and graders increased confidence in the observed

findings (Sensing Loc. 4663). The Literature Review revealed six major themes, which were given to the graders to help organize and reduce large amounts of data to smaller analytic units and help understand the participants' responses in group meetings and the HSMQ (Sensing Loc. 4776; Taylor-Powell and Renner 2). Grader instructions and the grading rubric offered a check list for identifying the six major themes which emerged in the literature review of *The Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission*, Parakletos, Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit, God-kind of Love, Power from/of the Holy Spirit, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities as well as any additional themes they observed. Graders were allowed to count a theme only once per participant per group meeting and once per HSMQ answer. The data received from the graders was then used by the researcher to identify which themes appeared more frequently per participant, per group meeting, and per HSMQ answer by adding the graders' scores per participant, theme, meetings, and question to reveal which themes were most prevalent among which participants (Taylor-Powell and Renner 5). In this way, it became possible to determine which themes were most prevalent among all participants individually and corporately, indicating the participants' grasp of the concepts discussed in the group meetings and possibly their experience of the Holy Spirit and missional living.

Major themes:

1. The Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission.

The Father sent the Son into the world (Incarnation) to save the world. The Father and the Son then sent the Holy Spirit. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sent the church on God's mission to bring the not-yet-Christian to God for salvation. More significantly, in the small group experience, a recognition that sometimes the Holy Spirit sends the

Christian on a particular mission, or to a specific person, with a specific task or message was discussed. Participants in the research group were asked to look upon these missions as opportunities to be missional. Graders were asked to consider if the participant's answers and comments reflected an understanding or experience of this theme. In addition, graders were asked if the participant saw themselves as an extension of the mission of God into the world. The graders attended to phrases like, "Felt the urgency of the Holy Spirit," "Felt God opened a door," "Felt led to," "I get assignments from him," and "Given a mission."

2. Parakletos

The Holy Spirit comes alongside (*para*) those whom He calls and sends (*kletos*). The incarnational Christian should experience some sense that he/she is not alone but is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. Graders were asked to consider if the participant saw themselves as being on a mission accompanied by the Holy Spirit or mentioned or expressed a feeling they were not alone while being missional. The graders noted phrases like, "Could see God in the midst," "Holy Spirit is constantly with me," "Holy Spirit helped guide me," and "I could literally feel the presence of the Holy Spirit."

3. Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

"Baptism with the Holy Spirit," "filled with the Holy Spirit," "immersed in the Holy Spirit," "perfected in love," and "second work of grace," were deemed to mean basically the same thing in the literature review. Graders were instructed to observe the participant's mentioning or writing about being filled with the Holy Spirit or feeling the Holy Spirit working in and/or through them. Other phrases the graders observed were any mention of being sanctified or experience of sanctifying grace and a sense that God had

done something in them beyond salvation. For Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit, the graders noted phrases like, “I experience his manifest presence,” “the presence of the Holy Spirit within,” “I invite the Holy Spirit to fill me,” and “I rely on my relationship with the Holy Spirit.”

4. God-kind of Love

We are created, and recreated, for love. The real litmus test of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a “God-kind of Love.” This love is unconditional and beyond normal human ability. It is love that exceeds expectations. Graders observed the participant’s mention or discussion of feeling a real or surprising sense of love and those things that normally accompany love, like peace, patience, forgiveness, etc. Graders were asked to read 1 Corinthians 13.4–8a before grading and notice any reported experience of surprising unconditional love for another. The graders noticed, “Let His love in each day,” “His perfect love is unconditional,” “God’s love can change hearts,” and “God’s love is transforming.”

5. Power from/of the Holy Spirit

There is some expectation that those baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit will have the power, gifts, and/or fruit of the Holy Spirit. A participant’s mention or reporting of signs or manifestations of the Holy Spirit or particular gifts like discernment, a word of knowledge, or praying for someone with healing taking place were clues worthy of notice. A participant’s report of an ability or knowledge beyond themselves or their report of speaking prophetically were also considered signs of the power of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12.8–10 and Galatians 5.22–24 were recommended to graders to help them understand and recognize this theme. The graders observed phrases like, “I

experience his power and presence,” “I know the Spirit can do great things,” “I felt the power,” and “Experienced the sovereign power of the Spirit equip me.”

6. Awareness of Missional Opportunities

Every day, most Christians pass by dozens of missional opportunities.

“Missional” is what the Christian does with the everyday opportunities they have with their neighbors, co-workers, friends, and even within families. “Missional” means being intentional to build relationships with the goal of sharing Christ with that person when made aware, sent, and encouraged to do so by the Holy Spirit. Graders watched for reports of beginning a relationship with someone with a missional purpose in mind. The participant’s awareness of the community around them and their ability to see the needs around them and/or engage in a particular way were clues to the depth of the participants’ missional living. The graders discovered phrases like, “Looking at the needs of the neighborhood,” “More aware and looking for moments,” “I continue to enjoy missional practices,” and “I’m trying to engage with my neighbors differently.”

Research Group Meetings and Documentation

The ten group meetings were researcher-designed to help participants grasp God’s call of his people to the *Missio Dei* and to connect it to the infilling and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Each small group experience followed the general pattern of introduction of the night’s focus, opening prayer, dwelling in the Word (a different scripture each week), celebration of the previous week’s missional assignments, introduction of the current week’s missional assignment, and closing prayer. Dwelling in the Word is based on the belief that as God’s people sit together before Scripture they enter a place where the Holy Spirit is able to speak to them (A. J. Roxburgh, *Joining God*

Loc. 2050). Notes were taken during the ten group meetings. The group notes are considered to be less reliable for identifying themes than the answers to the HSMQ, because of the nature of the learning experience and the group dynamic created by some of the participants who were prone to wander off subject and introduce subject matter not conducive to this project, such as romantic entanglements. In addition, certain themes were expected to emerge in the group discussions due to the focus for that week and the scripture selected for dwelling in the word. The scriptures and expected themes each week are displayed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. *Themes Anticipated by Scripture and Meeting Focus*

<i>Week</i>	<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Week 1	John 16.1–15	Holy Spirit is coming; Jesus is leaving so the Holy Spirit can come
Week 2	Acts 1.1–14	Promise of Baptism with the Holy Spirit; Anointing of the Holy Spirit with power to be witnesses; Disciples devoted to prayer; Patience/waiting
Week 3	1 John 4.7–21	Love; Abiding in Christ; We love because God first loved us.
Week 4	Matthew 10.1–20	Authority; Disciples are sent people; Missional living is not always easy
Week 5	Acts 2.1–18	Baptism with the Holy Spirit; Pentecost; Tongues
Week 6	Acts 19.1–12	Baptism with the Holy Spirit
Week 7	Acts 2.38–47	Baptism with the Holy Spirit; Signs and wonders; Repentance; Fellowship of Christians
Week 8	John 14.15–27	Parakletos; Obedience; Peace
Week 9	Acts 5.12–16	Signs and wonders; Believers held in high esteem; Growth in numbers; Power
Week 10	Luke 4.14–22	Power; Anointing

Table 4.3 highlights the expected weekly themes from group meetings which were identified by the participants.

Table 4.3. *Themes Anticipated in Group Meetings Highlighted by Participants (P#s)*

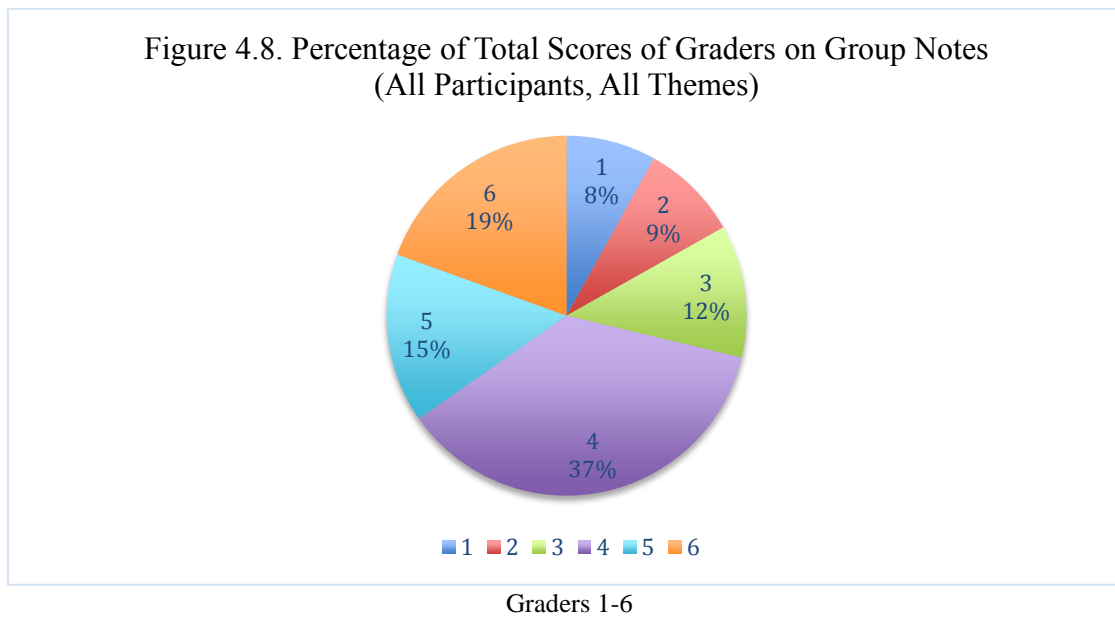
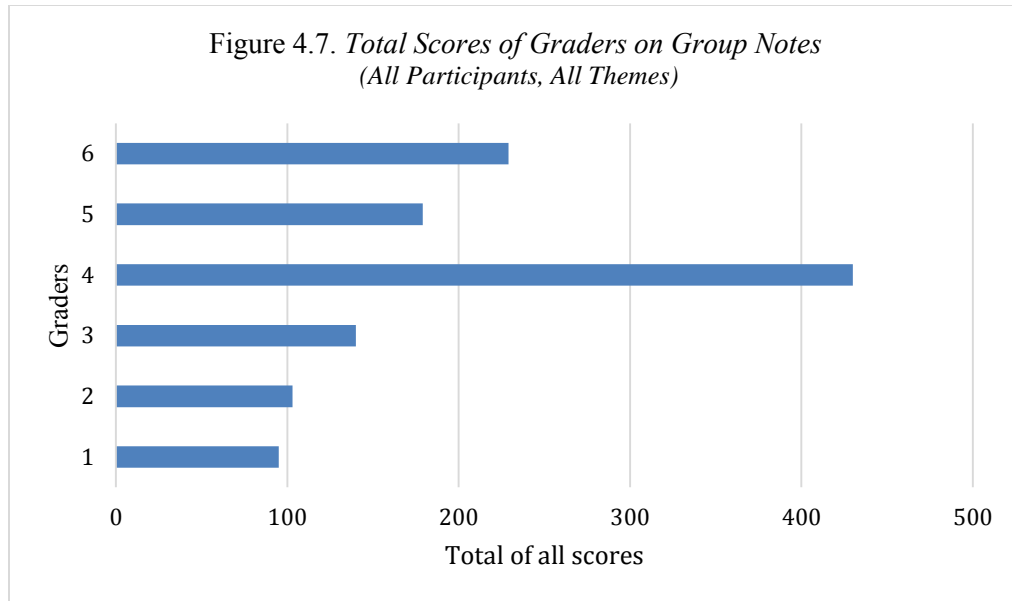
Week	Themes
Week 1	Holy Spirit is coming (P#1, P#3, P#4, P#6); Jesus is leaving so the Holy Spirit can come (P#1, P#4, P#6)
Week 2	Promise of Baptism with the Holy Spirit (P#5, P#12); Anointing of the Holy Spirit with power to be witnesses (P#2); Disciples devoted to prayer; Patience/waiting (P#1, P#3, P#8, P#9, P#10)
Week 3	Love (P#1, P#2, P#3, P#4, P#5, P#7, P#8, P#10); Abiding in Christ (P#1, P#4, P#5); We love because God first loved us (P#6).
Week 4	Disciples are sent people (P#3, P#4)
Week 5	Baptism with the Holy Spirit (P#2, P#4, P#5, P#7, P#8, P#9, P#10, P#11, P#12); Tongues (P#11, P#12)
Week 6	Baptism with the Holy Spirit (P#1, P#2, P#4, P#5, P#7, P#9, P#11)
Week 7	Baptism with the Holy Spirit (P#2, P#4, P#6, P#9, P#10, P#11); Signs and wonders (P#6, P#10); Conviction/Repentance (P#12); Fellowship of Christians (P#9)
Week 8	Parakletos (P#2, P#3, P#4, P#5, P#6, P#7, P#8, P#9, P#10, P#11, P#12); Obedience (P#10); Peace (P#8)
Week 9	Signs and wonders (P#2, P#3, P#4, P#5, P#7, P#8, P#9, P#10, P#12); Believers held in high esteem ((P#2, P#3, P#4, P#5, P#6, P#7, P#8, P#9, P#10, P#11, P#12)1); Growth in numbers (P#10, P#11); Power (P#3, P#7)
Week 10	Power (P#1, P#2, P#4, P#6, P#7, P#9, P#10, P#11); Anointing

The graders also observed several themes which were neither anticipated by weekly scriptures or focused discussion but were shared in group meetings. These included: the Holy Spirit is a mystery (Group meeting 1, P#8); awareness of God's presence and working in people (Group meeting 3, P#2); love is greater than fear (Group meeting 3, P#3, P#5, P#8); confidence in God (Group meeting 3, P#7); discomfort in being "stretched" by the Holy Spirit (Group meeting 4, P#12); the Holy Spirit as a

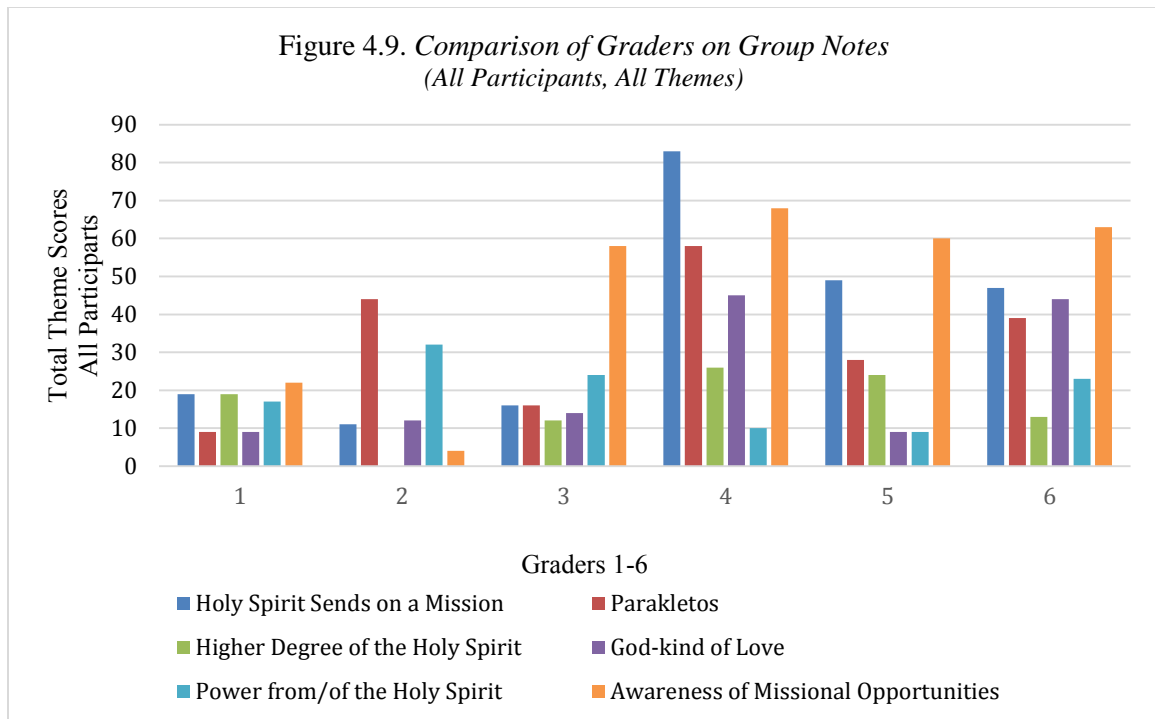
burning fire within (Group meeting 5 and 6, P#9); missional practices are difficult (Group meeting 9, P#1); and missional living is scary (Group meeting 10, P#5, P#10).

Reliability of the Graders

The graders were considered to be experts on the Holy Spirit and missional living; however, some deviation was noted in their grading. Comparisons of the graders' analysis of participants' comments and responses recorded in the group notes revealed one grader graded significantly higher than the other five across all participants, group meetings, and themes ($SD=125$). In a comparison of the total grader scores across all themes, grader #4 represented 36.56% of the total appearances of all themes. Graders #1 and #2 represented 8.08% and 8.76% respectively. The other three graders represented between 11.9% and 19.47%. Grader #4 also had the greatest standard deviation of the graders across the six themes of 27.06. The standard deviation for the six themes for grader #1 was the lowest at 5.53. The remaining four graders had standard deviations that ranged between 17.16 to 20.89. Variation among the graders was expected, but to what degree could not be anticipated. Grader #4 is of greatest concern, as a standard deviation among the themes was expected, but a high standard deviation indicates a grader may have focused on one or more theme(s) more than others. Figure 4.7 compares the scores of all graders for the participants' themes found in the group notes. Figure 4.8 displays the percentage of each grader's total scores of all participants in the ten weeks of group notes.



Overall, within the group notes, graders discovered the themes Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission and Awareness of Missional Opportunities to be more prevalent. The theme Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission represented 19.13% of the total, while Awareness of Missional Opportunities represented 23.38%. The theme of Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit scored lowest at 7.99% followed by Power from/of the Holy Spirit at 9.78%. Figure 4.9 compares the graders’ theme scores for group notes.

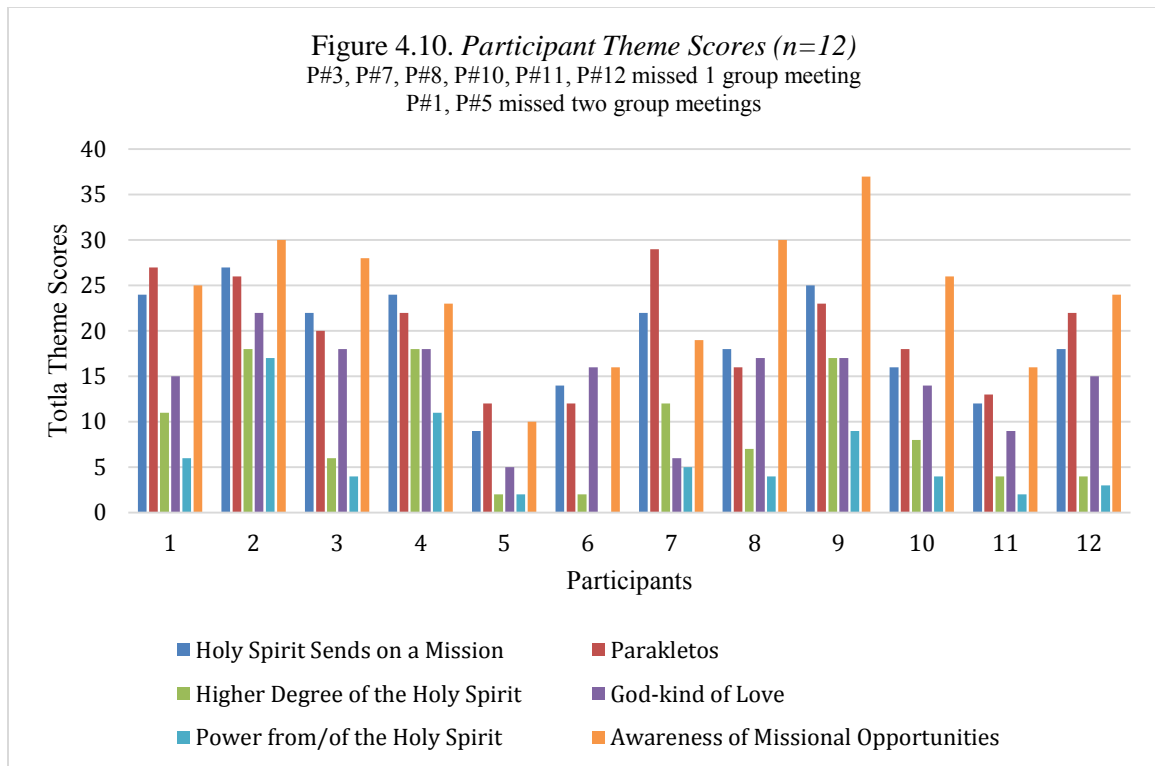


Comparing the scores of individual participants is complicated by the lack of 100% attendance at all group meetings. Participants #2, #4, #6, and #9 attended all meetings. Participants #3, #7, #8, #10, #11, and #12 each missed one meeting, while #1 and #5 missed two meetings each. Reasons for missing meetings seemed to be valid and pertained to the participant’s work, travel, or health. One participant attended one meeting via Skype and was considered present. This difficulty cannot be easily reflected with numbers or easily quantified. Table 4.4 displays the total of all grader scores for all group meetings for each participant and each theme. The number of meetings missed by participants is noted.

Table 4.4.
Total Grader Scores of Group Notes
*missed 1 group meeting
**missed two group meetings

P#s	Holy Spirit Send on a Mission	Parakletos	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit	God-kind of Love	Power from/of the Holy Spirit	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Participant Total
1**	12	8	2	9	1	14	46
2	25	22	20	22	23	30	142
3*	14	12	1	10	7	22	66
4	19	25	21	13	11	23	112
5**	24	28	9	12	8	26	107
6	16	12	3	7	12	17	67
7*	19	17	2	15	13	24	90
8*	16	11	5	12	9	25	78
9	24	22	16	13	13	31	119
10*	18	7	5	5	6	23	64
11*	19	17	6	8	5	25	80
12*	19	13	4	7	7	15	65
Theme Total	225	194	94	133	115	275	

Figure 4.10 charts the total scores of the 12 participants for each of the six themes found in the group meetings.



P#2 and P#9 had the highest total scores with standard deviations across the six themes of 3.5 and 7.14 respectively. P#1 and P#10 had the lowest total scores with standard deviations of 5.24 and 7.81 respectively. P#1 had the lowest standard deviation of 3.5, while P#5 had the highest of 9.13. Figure 4.11 charts participants' scores for all group meetings and all themes.

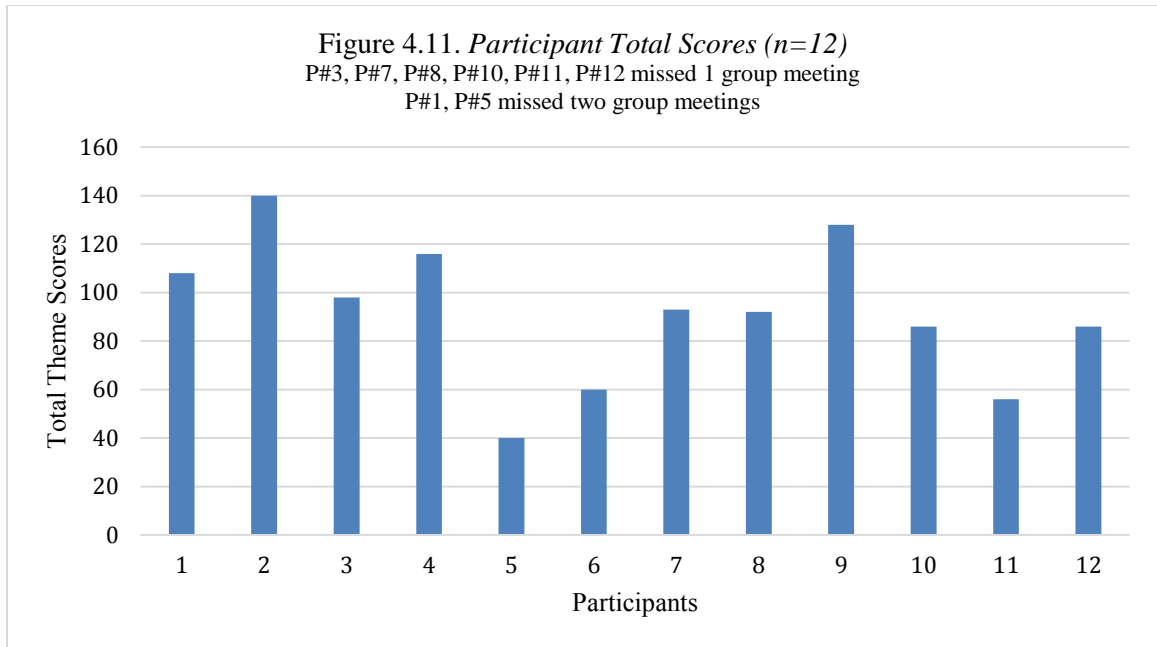


Figure 4.12 displays the average scores for the group notes for each individual participant. The average of the individual scores for all participants was 9.36. P#2, P#5, P#9, P#4, and P#7 scored above average, in that order highest to lowest. P#11, P#8, P#3, P#12, P#10, P#6, and P#1 scored below average in order from highest lowest. Those participants who failed to answer all questions scored lowest when scores were averaged by total number of questions answered.

Table 4.5. *Participants' Highest and Lowest Theme Scores Group Notes*

*missed 1 group meeting

**missed two group meetings

Participant	Highest scored theme	Lowest scored theme
1**	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
2	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
3*	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
4	Parakletos	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
5**	Parakletos	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
6	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
7*	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
8*	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
9	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit; God-kind of Love
10*	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit; God-kind of Love
11*	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
12*	Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

HSMQ

Research question #3 was also approached with the researcher-designed questionnaire, The Holy Spirit Missional Questionnaire (HSMQ), consisting of six open-ended questions administered post-group one per week via SurveyMonkey. Each question invited the participants to answer in 100-300 words. The six questions were:

Week 1: Please describe your missional practices during the group experience and how they have shaped your understanding and appreciation for the Holy Spirit working in your context (neighborhood, workplace, etc.).

Week 2: Please describe the ways love has compelled you to engage your context through missional practices.

Week 3: Please describe the ways you have experienced the power and manifest presence of the Holy Spirit in your missional life.

Week 4: Please describe the ways you have experienced perfection in love, and to what do you attribute such transformation and why?

Week 5: Please describe the impact (influence) of your relationship with the Holy Spirit on your missional practices.

Week 6: Please describe your missional practices in the weeks following the group experience and how you have seen/experienced the Holy Spirit working in your life and in the lives of the sojourners you have encountered.

Certain themes were expected to emerge due to the questions contained in the HSMQ. Question 1 anticipated the themes of Awareness of Missional Opportunities, Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, and Parakletos. These three themes scored highest on this question. Question 2 anticipated the themes of Awareness of Missional Opportunities and God-kind of Love. These two themes scored highest on question 2. Questions 3 anticipated the themes of Parakletos and Power from/of the Holy Spirit. Parakletos was the most prevalent theme on question three, while Power from/of the Holy Spirit scored among the lowest. The themes of God-kind of Love and Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

were expected on question 4. God-kind of Love did score highest, while Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit scored third. Question 5 anticipated Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit and Awareness of Missional Opportunities. Awareness of Missional Opportunities did score highest, but Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit scored fifth just above Power from/of the Holy Spirit. The themes of Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, and Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit were expected on question 6. Awareness of Missional Opportunities scored highest followed by Parakletos and Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission with Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit being fifth. The design of the HSMQ was not intended to solicit these themes but to determine each participant’s awareness and understanding of them. Table 4.6 shows the total of the participants’ scores arranged by theme for each individual HSMQ question. Figure 4.12 displays the ranking of the themes for each question discovered by the graders from the participants’ answers to the HSMQ.

Table 4.6. *Total of Participants’ Answers on HSMQ by Question*

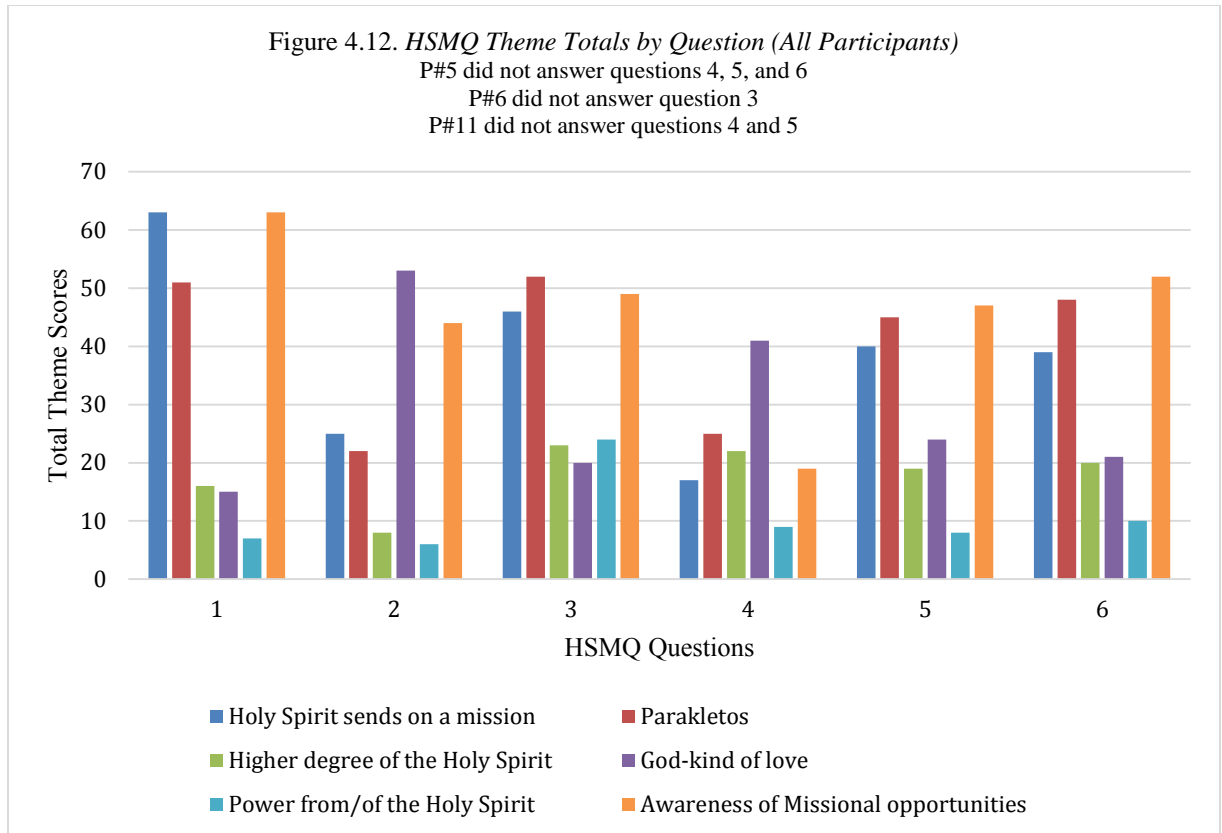
Shaded cells indicate themes anticipated by the HSMQ question

P#5 did not answer questions 4, 5, and 6

P#6 did not answer question 3

P#11 did not answer questions 4 and 5

HSMQ #	Holy Spirit Send on a Mission	Parakletos	Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit	God-kind of Love	Power from/of the Holy Spirit	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Question Total
1	63	51	16	15	7	63	215
2	25	22	8	53	6	44	158
3	46	52	23	20	24	49	214
4	17	25	22	41	9	19	133
5	40	45	19	24	8	47	183
6	39	48	20	21	10	52	190
Total	230	243	108	174	64	274	



Comparisons of the graders’ analysis of participants’ responses on the HSMQ revealed a moderate internal consistency ($SD=48.48$) among the graders. One grader tended to grade higher. In a comparison of the total grader scores across all themes, grader number 4 (G#4) represented 24.89% while G#2 graded low representing 12.44%. The other four graders represented between 14.27% and 18.12%. G#4 also had the greatest standard deviation of the graders across the six themes of 21.78. The remaining five graders had standard deviations that ranged between 12.21 to 19.34. Some variation among the graders was expected on the HSMQ just as it was on the group notes. Grader #4’s (24.89%) percentage of the total score was significantly less on the HSMQ than on the group notes. Therefore the graders scores on the HSMQ are considered to be more reliable than their scores on the group notes. Figure 4.13 charts the percentage held by each grader (all themes, all participants).

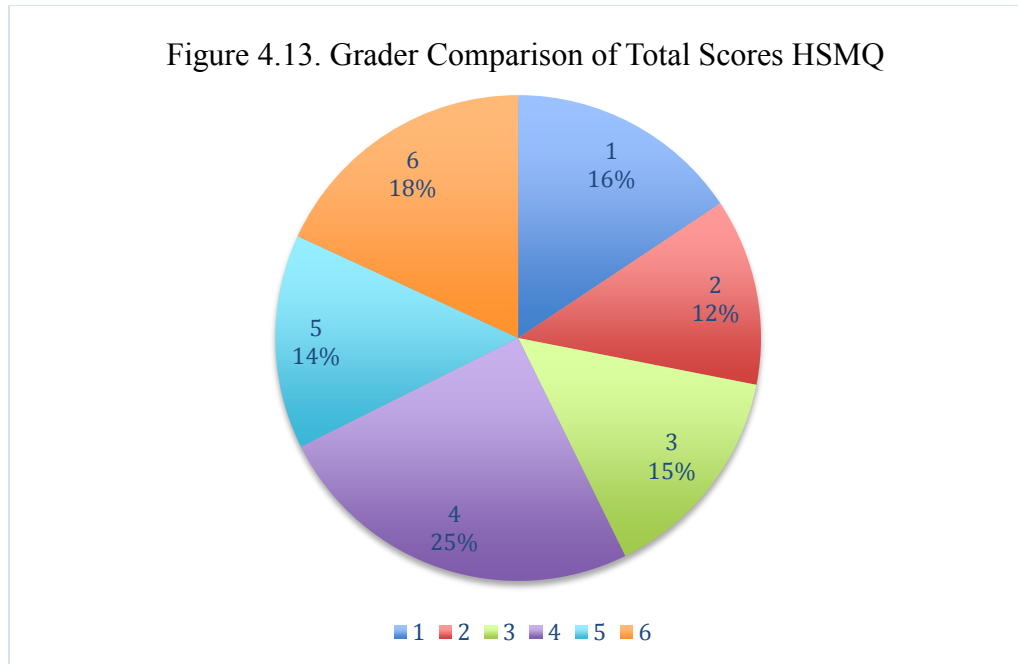
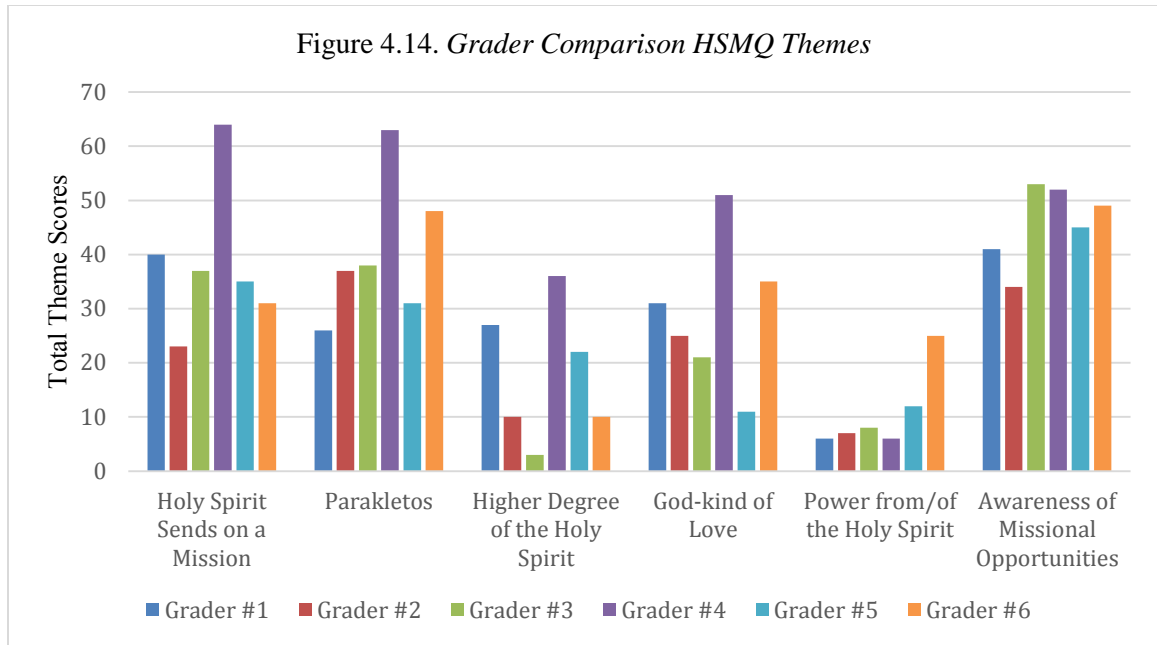
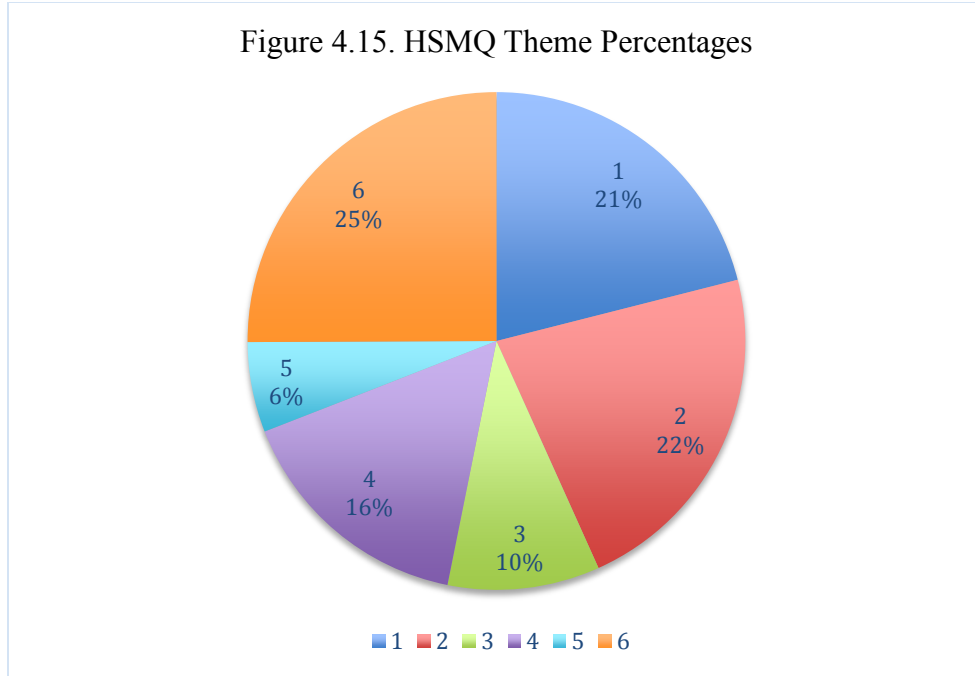


Figure 4.14 displays a comparison of how the graders scored each theme. It indicates that there was variation in the graders' recording of the themes. G#2, G#3, and G#6 scored Awareness of Missional Opportunities highest, Parakletos second, and Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission third. G#1 and G#5 scored Awareness of Missional Opportunities highest with Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission and Parakletos following. G#4 scored Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission, Parakletos, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities as his/her top themes. All graders scored Power from/of the Holy Spirit lowest except G#3 who scored it slightly higher than Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit.



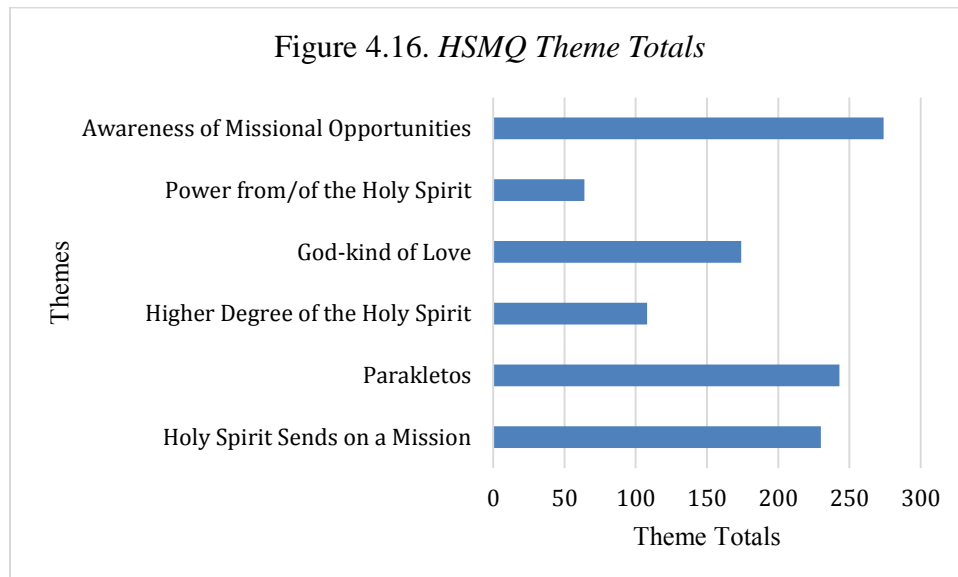
Overall, graders discovered the themes Awareness of Missional Opportunities and Parakletos to be more prevalent in participants’ answers to the HSMQ. The theme Awareness of Missional Opportunities represented 25% of the total, while Parakletos represented 22% and Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission represented 21%. The theme of Power from/of the Holy Spirit scored lowest at 6%. Figure 4.15 displays these percentages while Figure 4.16 displays the totals.

Figure 4.15. HSMQ Theme Percentages



- 1 Holy Spirit Sends on a Mission
- 2 Parakletos
- 3 Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit
- 4 God-kind of Love
- 5 Power from/of the Holy Spirit
- 6 Awareness of Missional Opportunities

Figure 4.16. HSMQ Theme Totals



In a comparison of participants’ scores across all themes, P#2 and P#9 scored the highest, 140 and 128 respectively. P#5 and P#11 scored the lowest, with scores of 40 and 56. It was expected that these participants would score low, because P#5 did not answer questions 4, 5, or 6 and P#11 failed to answer questions 4 and 5. The participants gave no

reason for not answering. The lowest score among those who answered all questions was P#10 and p#12, who each had a total score of 85. Figure 4.17 displays the participants' total scores.

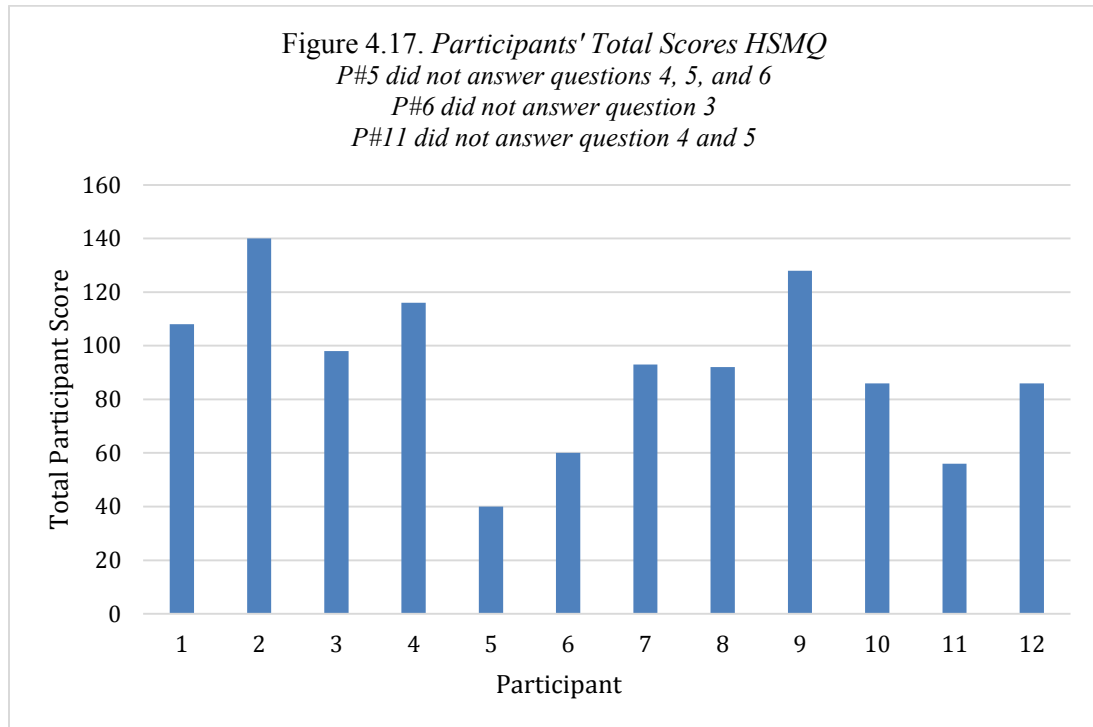


Figure 4.18 displays the average scores for the HSMQ questions answered by each participant. The average of the individual scores for all participants was 16.43. P#2, P#9, P#4, and P#1 scored above average, in that order highest to lowest. P#7, P#8, P#10, P#12, P#11, P#5, and P#6 scored below average in order from highest lowest. Those participants who failed to answer all questions scored lowest when scores were averaged by total number of questions answered.

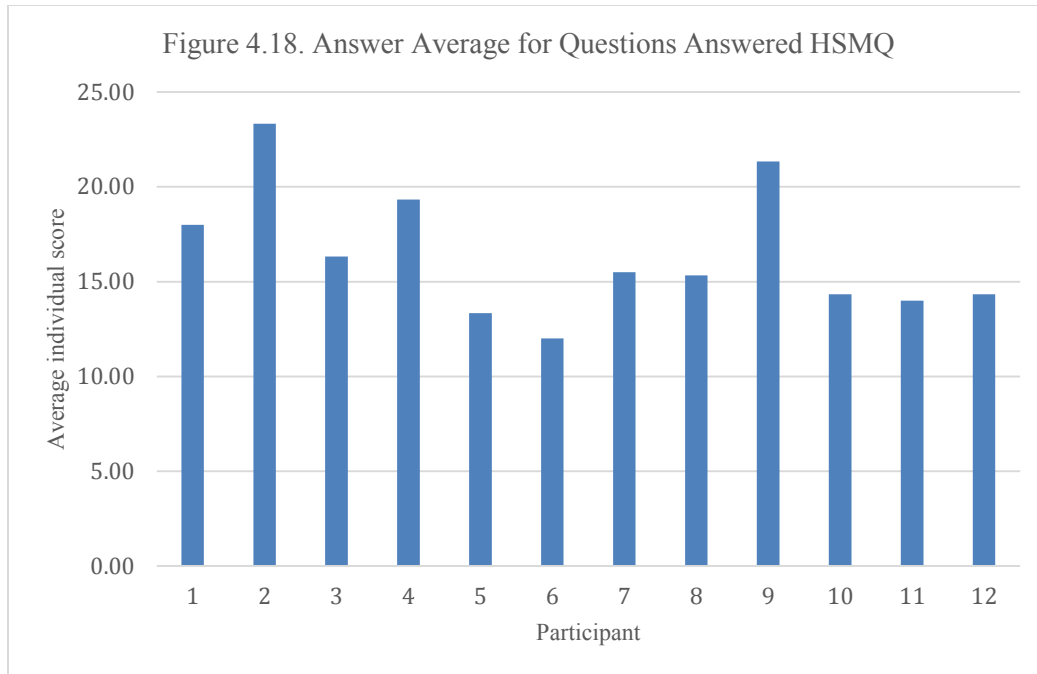


Table 4.7 displays the highest and lowest scoring themes for each participant.

Figure 4.19 charts the theme scores for each participant. Theme scores among the twelve participants were highest with P#2 and P#9.

Table 4.7. *Participants' Highest and Lowest Scoring Themes HSMQ*

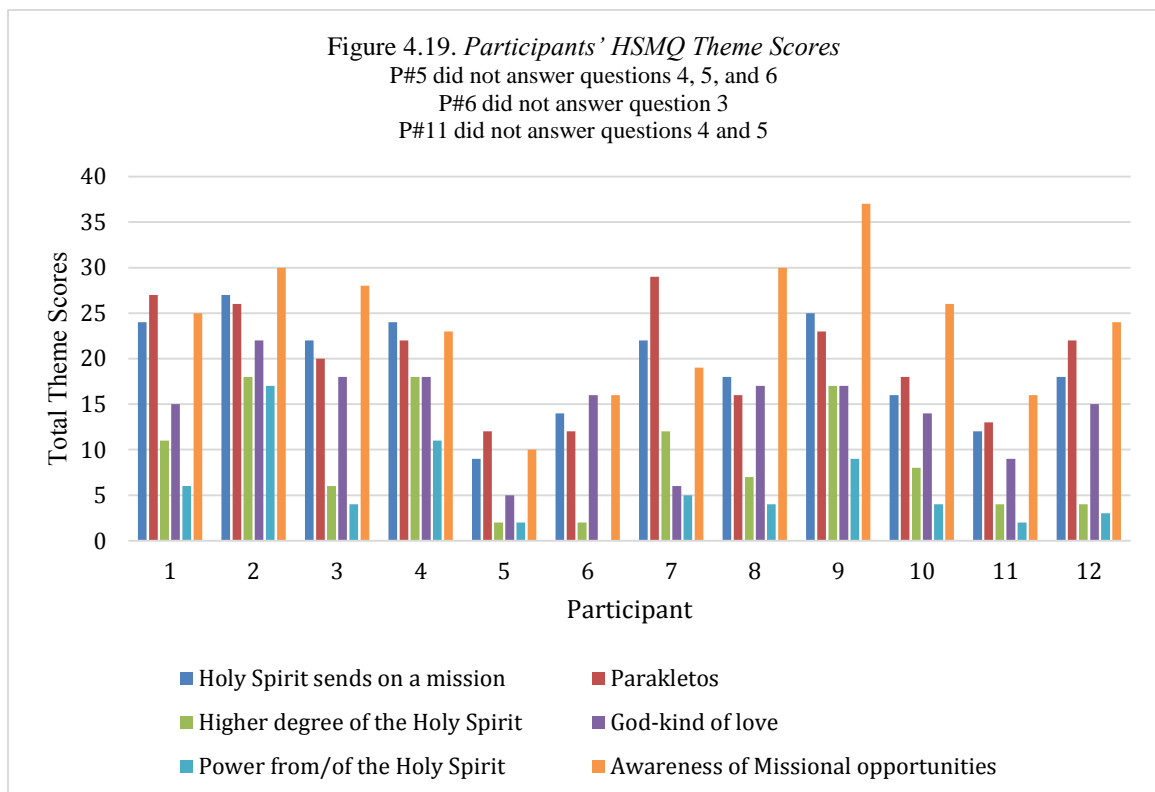
P#5 did not answer questions 4, 5, and 6

P#6 did not answer question 3

P#11 did not answer questions 4 and 5

Participant	Highest scoring theme	Lowest scoring theme
1	Parakletos	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
2	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
3	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
4	Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
5	Parakletos	Power from/of the Holy Spirit; Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

6	Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
7	Parakletos	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
8	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
9	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
10	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
11	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit
12	Awareness of Missional Opportunities	Power from/of the Holy Spirit



Although the use of multiple expert graders gave greater depth in identifying the participants' comments in the group notes and their answers on the HSMQ with the six

identified themes and identification of additional themes, the quantification of the participants’ comments in group meetings and discussion answers on the HSMQ was made more difficult by the lack of 100% attendance at group meetings and by three participants’ failure to answer all the questions on the HSMQ. However, greater reliability can be brought to the research data by considering the participants’ comments in group meetings and their answers to the HSMQ. Table 4.8 shows the responses found in the group notes and answers to the HSMQ, as found for each participant. Table 4.8 is arranged by theme. Cells within the table were left blank when a major theme could not be identified in the participant’s group comments and HSMQ answers.

Table 4.8. *Participants’ Comments from Group Notes and Answers from the HSMQ (sorted by theme and participant)*

Holy Spirit Sends Us on a Mission	
P#1	“[Holy Spirit] is more present than I ever realized.” HSMQ1
P#2	“I get assignments from Him to reach out to certain people.” HSMQ3
	“Partnering with God in the things that are important to Him. He sets up encounters.” HSMQ5; Felt God tell her Group8
P#3	“I can feel the nudge like ‘go see if that person is having a good day. Tell them why they matter.’ Speaking some truth into them when it feels like it's coming from my heart straight into theirs.” HSMQ3
	“I have felt specific things I need to inquire about, and that has unexpectedly led to me being able to share my faith in a receptive way.” HSMQ6; Very Holy Spirit driven to have lunch with two co-workers of different faiths. Group7; Nudged by the Holy Spirit Group8
P#4	Let God lead Group6
	Obedient to being sent. Group9 “It is a big deal to be sent.” Group10
P#5	“The more I trusted where the Holy Spirit was leading, the less uncomfortable it became.” HSMQ1
	The Holy Spirit has led her to the right person. It is scary to be sent. Group10
P#6	Asks for nudges. HSMQ1
	Felt the Holy Spirit set up a meeting with neighbor Group7
P#7	Opening eyes wider to look for needs. Asks for Holy Spirit leading and nudges. HSMQ1

P#8	[She felt led to purchase a gas gift card for someone] “I heard the Holy Spirit tell me to double the amount of the gift card.” HSMQ3
	“Looking for Holy Spirit opportunities and Holy Spirit nudges.” HSMQ6
P#9	“The Holy Spirit helped to guide me” [group homework assignments]. HSMQ1
	“I prayed to God to put someone in my path, and that’s exactly what occurred. An openness and acceptance of the Holy Spirit led to a pure and sustaining joy.” HSMQ3
	Felt led to speak with a family member Group7
P#10	“The Holy Spirit directed me to provide blessings to those who needed it.” HSMQ1
	“I found the Holy Spirit directed me towards neighbors that I normally would not engage with on a personal level. I have been pushed by the Holy Spirit to engage and support others even when I didn’t have time or felt uncomfortable.” HSMQ3
	“I feel the Holy Spirit wanted me to stay connected to a few of those I have encountered while continuing to reach out to new people.” HSMQ6
	God was pushing her Group7
	Felt led to speak to someone Group8
P#11	God opened the door Group8
P#12	“The Holy Spirit clearly showed me my three people.” HSMQ1
	“When I pray and ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance before going into a situation, things work out much better.” “Since being in this small group, I have also added asking Him to show me my mission, to show me my one.” (“Transforming Lives 1x1” is a slogan used at ABCUMC) HSMQ5
	“I have continued to begin my day by asking the Holy Spirit to show me my mission.” HSMQ6
	Burdened to minister to a family member Group9
Parakletos	
P#1	“Asking for the Holy Spirit to be present actively searching for God at work through my prayers is where I have seen my greatest areas of growth.” HSMQ6
P#2	“I hear Him leading me. I experience His manifest presence. I experience His power and presence.” “The Holy Spirit is with me.” HSMQ3
	Feels missional opportunities are a fun adventure Group6
	God is working on a particular person she has been missional with. Group10
P#3	
P#4	It was great to be in the passenger’s seat and found it easy to be intentional. Group7
P#5	
P#6	“I believe the impact of just being more aware of the Holy Spirit being in my life has had a profound effect to stopping and just ask guidance more frequently than ever before.” HSMQ5
	“I find myself praying for almost any decision.” HSMQ6
	The Holy Spirit showed up. Group8
P#7	I have been more faithful to respond to the [Holy Spirit] leading.” HSMQ2
	Be confident that the Holy Spirit will give you the words to share. Group4
	God always show up in her conversations. Group6
P#8	
P#9	“We must surrender our own desire to control” “In order to remain missional, I’ve realized that

	the Holy Spirit is an absolute and necessary component. Even Jesus needed the Holy Spirit!" HSMQ5
	Felt God stopped him to speak to a neighbor. Group5; Felt the Holy Spirit was present Group8
P#10	
P#11	"I felt His presence and experienced opportunities that only He could have put in front of me." HSMQ3
	Felt like God used him. Group5
P#12	
Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit	
P#1	"Asking the Holy Spirit to come into my days and guide my decision-making." HSMQ1
	"Praying more intentionally for the Spirit to move and work in my heart and mind." HSMQ3
	"I am trying to be more intentional in my reflection on the Holy Spirit as I look for ways to see and hear him." HSMQ4
	"I feel that inviting the Holy Spirit into my days, into my conversations, into my 'blessing others' completely shifted my mind and heart toward more intentional, Christ-like living." HSMQ5
	"I see and hear the Holy Spirit more clearly and feel I am more able to discern God's direction in my life." HSMQ6
P#2	Opens up each morning to the Holy Spirit. Partnering with God. Group4
P#3	"I invite the Holy Spirit to fill me and am overcome with a feeling of God's love." HSMQ2
	"When I forget to start my day properly by inviting the Holy Spirit in, I have a tension that I pass on to those around me." "When I am filled with the Spirit I feel like I can encourage without being short or yelling. By opening up to be filled by God's love the channel is widened and easier to pour back out--both because there is more love and it's more easily shared." HSMQ4
P#4	"Just before our final Group meeting, the Holy Spirit came on quickly like fire! The moment was surreal, like very few moments I've had in my life." HSMQ3
	"When I do invite Him in, listen to Him, and surrender to Him, I absolutely get to experience His perfect love. I've received it personally by means of grace." HSMQ4
	"My relationship with the Holy Spirit has complete influence on my missional practices." "My desires are becoming aligned with His." HSMQ5
	"I am confident He leads me on the path of righteousness – including missional prompts." HSMQ6
	Can recognize light and dark with greater depth. Group4
	Hit in the head by things during prayer. Group9
P#5	
P#6	"I asked the Holy Spirit to equip me for change." HSMQ1
P#7	"I prayed for the Holy Spirit to direct the conversation." HSMQ3
	"I felt the Holy Spirit dwell in me." HSMQ6
	Ask God every day to direct her steps Group9
P#8	Asking and waiting. Praying for others Group10
P#9	"To experience the incredible and sovereign power of the Spirit equips me." HSMQ3
	"My pace of missional practices may have slowed a bit, my intent has deepened. What I'm experiencing now with the Holy Spirit is an intersection of being missional with my context and it's creating true transformation that is clearing away the clutter in my mind." HSMQ6

	He feels like a fire has been set inside of him, and he is feeling it all the time. Group6
	Has experienced miracles within himself. Group10
P#10	“I continue to rely on my relationship with the Holy Spirit.” HSMQ5
P#11	“My missional practices have lessened a bit without the group and homework assignments, however I sense and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit more than ever before.” “I feel the Spirit within me and am not afraid to share my experiences and am more willing to witness. Emboldened and not afraid to speak up and out.” HSMQ6
P#12	“When I am too lazy, busy or scared to do what He tells me then I find that I hear from Him less.” HSMQ3
	“I’m not sure that I completely understand it or am convinced that it is humanly possible.” “I believe in sanctification but I’m not sure entire sanctification is possible.” HSMQ4
God-kind of Love	
P#1	“Love is an action. I have deepened that understanding to include those I wouldn’t necessarily interact with.” “From that time with him, from my reading his word, from my listening and looking for the direction of the Holy Spirit, I can then allow that love, His love, to flow out to those around me.” HSMQ2
	“Perfection in love. How Christ lived while he was in the world. How we can love others, regard others, be moved in our living without the influence of the Spirit.” HSMQ4
	This love is freely given by God and we are to give it generously. Group4
	Actions are different than before group started. Group9
P#2	“Love compels to love others; to help others; to go the distance.” HSMQ2
	Repented of anger toward a family member and is now overwhelmed with love for them. Group9
P#3	
P#4	I’ve begun to love others in the same way I love my children.” HSMQ2
	Perfect love is in us if we allow him to abide in us. Group3
P#5	“Love has compelled me to engage in my context. I may have been resistant to engage within the past. Love has allowed me to remove that fear of engaging. “HSMQ2
P#6	"Agape love. Getting easier to be a witness.” HSMQ2
	“Most churches do a poor job of showing what Christ means for us.” HSMQ4
	People are hard to love, but we still love because of Christ. Group3"
P#7	“I have found myself loving [a particular person] more completely than I ever imagined.” HSMQ4
P#8	"Love is a verb. Love is a choice. Love is action in motion. If I pay attention, the Holy Spirit will guide my actions and choices through love.” HSMQ2
	“Even with the Holy Spirit, I don’t see myself as perfection in love. I’m trying to live more openly and aware of opportunities that are placed in front of me to love others.” HSMQ4
	She is looking for ways to love on [a girl who has a miserable home life]. Group8"
P#9	“Love is an action and not an emotion.” “Looking at love in in this way caused me to be more intentional so that the people around me felt the love in a much different way and in what I would call an expression of pureness. It also made me look at the use of the word Love in the Bible in a whole new way. Realizing the number of times love is mentioned, and how Jesus directs us to love our God, but also our neighbors, it was reinforcement of one of the most important things we can do.” HSMQ2
	1 John 4.19 “We love, because He first loved us.” “We become perfect vessels of his love.

	Conduit of his love. Love like God allows us to remove pre-conceived notions.” HSMQ4
P#10	“Perfection in love comes in small ways. God’s love can change hearts.” HSMQ4
	Fear and love do not mix. Group3
P#11	“God's love is transforming my life.” HSMQ2
P#12	"Love has compelled me to do the opposite of my human nature. The Lord put on my heart. These reactions are definitely from the Holy Spirit as they are completely opposite of my natural nature.” HSMQ2
	We have the same relationship [with God] as God and Jesus Group8"
Power from/of the Holy Spirit	
P#1	
P#2	“I love seeing the Holy Spirit work in the lives of others I encounter.” HSMQ6
P#3	“I know the Spirit can do great things through me.” HSMQ1
	“The Holy Spirit is the only reason I seem to have missional practices at all.” “I must rely on God, specifically the Holy Spirit.” HSMQ5
P#4	I am not only filled with power of Christ, but also the compassion and emotions of God, as well as the fruits of the Spirit.” HSMQ2
	Felt God tell her Group8; Had a word of knowledge for someone. Group9
	Was at the healing service when she saw a man come in. She knew immediately this was the man she has been praying for even though she had never seen him before. She felt an urgency from the Holy Spirit. Group10
P#5	“When I began the prayer, I was filled with the Holy Spirit and given the specific words that needed to pray.” HSMQ3
P#6	Reinvigorated Group10
P#7	
P#8	
P#9	Particular words kept coming up during the prayer times. Group4
P#10	“I saw my prayerful questions being answered and healing begin.” HSMQ1
P#11	
P#12	
Awareness of Missional Opportunities	
P#1	“I am more aware and looking for moments.” HSMQ3
	People are more guarded. Group2
P#2	“I have noticed that certain places attract people. I'm usually not attuned to a larger scope like this when in public.” HSMQ1
	Believers need to be willing to be involved. Group2
	God wants all people. Group4
P#3	She is looking at the needs of the neighborhood and getting traction to make a plan. Group10
	“I am trying hard to listen to the Holy Spirit.” “There are plenty of opportunities in my context to live missionally. HSMQ1
	“I try to make people feel better and worthwhile.” HSMQ2
	Lunch - let man confide in him. Group6

	Shared his faith Group9
	Excited about missional opportunities Group10
P#4	“My missional practices from our group homework included stopping to talk to people I wouldn’t normally speak to, simply because I slowed down to pay attention to what God was putting in front of me.” HSMQ1
	Took cookies to neighbor. Group9
P#5	Intentional about being authentic. Group6
P#6	Missional Practices since the beginning has made me more aware and intentional about my prayer life and bible study. HSMQ6
P#7	People are keeping to themselves. Group2
	Very intentional regarding missional practices. Looks for opportunities for purposeful engagement. HSMQ1
P#8	“I’m trying to engage with neighbors differently.” “I am trying to talk about Jesus more openly.” HSMQ5
	“I am trying to be increasingly aware of opportunities to bless others.” HSMQ6
	Wrote a letter of appreciation to a difficult co-worker and brought her coffee. Group5
	Planting seeds Group9
P#9	
P#10	“I attended neighborhood events to engage others.” HSMQ2
	It is scary helping someone move in the right direction. Group10
P#11	“I found myself becoming intentional with a desire to be more Christlike and felt the nudge to shine the light and shake the salt.” HSMQ1
	Took someone to lunch and just listened to him. Group6
	Ongoing mission with a friend. Group10
P#12	

Summary of Major Findings

1. There was a marked difference between the participants responses to the themes, Holy Spirit Sends on a Mission, Parakletos, God-kind of Love, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities and the themes Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit and Power from/of the Holy Spirit.
2. A relationship with the Holy Spirit was more evident with some participants than with others.
3. Beginning a relationship with the Holy Spirit was difficult for some of the participants. This has been evident in the Western church as well.

4. Perfection in love indicates a higher degree of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter continues the exploration of the research project by considering four major findings which will include my personal observations, the literature review, and biblical and theological framework of the project. The implications which arise from these findings will also be discussed. The study is transferrable to other churches and denominations, but there are some important limitations to consider. There were some unexpected findings which warrant some attention. I will also share my recommendations for going forward as well as my final thoughts in the postscript.

Major Findings

The hope of the Gospel is the transformation of all people into the image of Christ. This project sought to discover how the Western church might recover the presence, power, and gifts of the Holy Spirit necessary for the transformation of the world. This was approached with a small group experience which focused on developing a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and raising an awareness of the missional opportunities in the participants' contexts. The result of the project raised the following findings:

Disparity Between the Themes

A marked difference exists between the participants' responses to the themes, Holy Spirit Sends on a Mission, Parakletos, God-kind of Love, and Awareness of Missional Opportunities and the themes Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit and Power from/of the Holy Spirit. In my experience in the United Methodist Church, Methodists do

little to recognize and work with the Holy Spirit. Little understanding and appreciation exist for the presence, power, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. I believe this has much to do with the fear of losing control. The Holy Spirit is often viewed as a wildcard. One cannot be sure what He might do or require. I have experienced frustration with the resistance to embrace the Holy Spirit among denominational and Conference leaders, ordained clergy, and church laity. Many fear losses of membership and attendance if the Holy Spirit were allowed to have His way.

During the small group experience it was noticed rather quickly that I was not the only one excited about the possibilities of connecting a relationship with the Holy Spirit with missional living. Many of the participants became excited as they learned more about both the Holy Spirit and missional living, but they also grew in appreciation as they embraced the homework assignments and began interacting with their neighbors and co-workers in new ways. Two of the participants already had a relationship with the Holy Spirit, but there was no manner of hierarchy within the group itself. All participants worked as equals.

Since the completion of the small group experience and the analysis of the data collected, I have experienced new excitement about the project, the implications for the future, and most importantly about the Holy Spirit and what He might want to do in and through the missional church movement. I am also excited about the transformation I witnessed in some of the participants through the group project. As I continue to see them at ABCUMC, I see they are continuing to grow in transformation and in seizing the missional opportunities around them. Two participants in particular stand out as self-

professed introverts but yet continue in their missional zeal. Being an introvert myself, I understand the challenge of engaging with people with whom one is not familiar.

The group was designed to help participants deepen their relationship with the Holy Spirit and enter into what Wesley and Fletcher called a higher degree of the Holy Spirit or receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. In two of the ten group meetings, we had prayer with laying on of hands for those present specifically for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. I was confident that three participants, and possibly four, received the baptism with the Holy Spirit as expected. However, the difference discovered in the total scores of the themes identified by the graders was greater than I had imagined. Power from/of the Holy Spirit ranked lowest for all the participants and Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit ranked next for most participants, even those I believed to have come to the group having previously received the baptism with the Holy Spirit and those who came to receive it during the group. Evidence of a building relationship with the Holy Spirit for most participants is seen in other ways including their comments in group discussions, their answers to the HSMQ, and conversations that have taken place outside the scope of this project.

The literature review revealed a deficit in the literature related to the connection between the Holy Spirit and the missional church. There is ample literature on each of these subjects, but literature addressing the relationship of the two is insufficient. It is important this relationship be explored more fully. This project sought to discover more about this relationship, and while questions still exist, the importance of the Holy Spirit to the church seeking to fulfill the *Missio Dei* should not be minimized.

The Holy Spirit, the Paraklete, came to function “as another Jesus,” but the church has virtually denied His existence (Kim 268). Within this institution, which denies their Paraklete, it is errant to expect too much of its members. Snyder pointed out that Methodists ceased to be charismatic with the decline of the class meeting and the establishing of clerical orders (Snyder and Runyon, *The Divided Flame* 66–67). Wesley feared the Methodist would become a dead sect, and in many ways his fears have come to pass. Moltmann pointed out that we are no longer devoid of the Holy Spirit but that it is possible to grieve and quench the Spirit and hinder His power (Moltmann, *The Church* 300). Fruitful ministry is more a part of the Holy Spirit than the church. However, we act as though it is something we can do on our own rather than something in which we are privileged to join with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1.8, the key scripture for this project, assures us the power of the Holy Spirit will come upon us to empower us to be His witnesses. It is reasonable to expect power if indeed the Holy Spirit has come upon us and if we are living witnesses for Christ. 1 Corinthians 12.4–11 and Galatians 5.22–23 lists the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit which should be considered part of the power given the witness who is filled with the Holy Spirit. With the exception of the fruit of love, these gifts and fruit were hardly noticeable. It is believed then that there was not enough time for the participants to develop in their relationships with the Holy Spirit to overcome the life previously devoid of the Spirit.

Participants’ Relationship with the Holy Spirit

A relationship with the Holy Spirit was more evident with some participants than with others. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is God’s response to our surrender. As we

surrender more of our selfish ambitions and vain conceits, we make room for the Holy Spirit to have more of us. God can give us no more of Himself for He has already given us everything—His Son and His Spirit. We can receive more of Him by making more of ourselves available to Him. It has been my experience that some Christians are more receptive to the Holy Spirit and more willing to surrender. Two of the participants in this study group came already with a relationship with the Holy Spirit. This was reflected in their comments and identified by the graders. One grader commented of one participant, “This individual seemed to come into the group with a very personal and powerful relationship with the Holy Spirit.” Most came into a closer relationship with Him during the ten-weeks of meetings. While all participants demonstrated a higher degree of the Holy Spirit, seven made significant progress.

The participants’ awakening to the need around them began with their asking the Holy Spirit to show them their context. Soon they began reporting a sense of seeing people in ways they had not previously seen. One participant reported, “I feel that inviting the Holy Spirit into my days, into my conversations, into my ‘blessing others’ completely shifted my mind and heart toward more intentional Christ-like living.” Another said, “I can feel the nudge like ‘go and see if that person is having a good day.’” Another said, “I love seeing the Holy Spirit work in the lives of others I encounter.”

There is hope for mainline churches who have ignored or denied the Holy Spirit. The leadership of these churches, like the participants in this study, must surrender their selfish ambitions and vain conceits and allow the Holy Spirit to empower their members for missional opportunities. They must be willing to lose everything for the kingdom of God. The focus must be redirected from the denomination and local church to the

kingdom of God. Fullness of life in the Holy Spirit does not occur without intentional cultivation (Guder, *Missional Church* 149). Wesley, Bright, Murray, and others agree that believers must be willing to sacrifice to walk more fully in their relationship with the Holy Spirit. The missionary Spirit of God longs to lead the church to be open to the world in divine mission (Moltmann, *The Church* 11). This is the purpose of a higher degree of the Holy Spirit, that believers would be empowered and enabled to reflect the image of God.

Throughout the book of Acts, receiving power and being a witness are linked. Frequently, after the disciples worked signs and wonders people put their faith in Jesus (see Mark 16.20, Acts 8.6, Rom. 5.19, and Heb. 2.4). Many other scriptures portray the disciples' authority to perform signs and wonders by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.43, 5.12, 6.8, 14.3, 19.11). In Acts 8.9–24, Simon the magician saw many come to accept Jesus through the ministry of Philip. Even Simon himself came to believe and was baptized (Acts 8.13). Simon, even after his conversion, continued in his ignorance of the works of the Holy Spirit and how to obtain them, for he sought to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit with money and received a severe rebuke from Peter because of it. Many have believed and lived fruitful lives but have done so without the higher degree of the Holy Spirit Wesley and Fletcher believed came through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Wesley and Fletcher would have admonished them saying they could have been more fruitful and had boundless joy had they also been filled with the Holy Spirit.

Developing a Relationship with the Holy Spirit

Beginning a relationship with the Holy Spirit was difficult for some of the participants. This has been evident in the Western church as well. Fortunately, the

number of believers baptized with the Holy Spirit at ABCUMC is growing, but it remains a small percentage. It seems that in this small group experience there were two participants that did not understand what the small group was about. Each seemed fixated on one thing of importance to them. They seemed to have grasped the concept of acting upon missional opportunities, while missing the importance of a relationship with the Holy Spirit for making missional living possible. During the group meetings and later in their answers to the HSMQ, some participants highlighted how important listening to God, prayer, journaling, and regular missional practices had become in their lives. Prior to, during, and after this project, I have recognized regular spiritual disciplines are important in the divine-human relationship.

One participant wrote of the importance of his/her “daily reflection and time in prayer,” “inviting the Holy Spirit into my days,” working most intentionally on his/her prayer journal, and “asking the Holy Spirit to be present and actively searching for God at work.” Another wrote, “When I invite the Holy Spirit to fill me, I am overcome with a feeling of God’s love.” Another wrote, “When I do invite Him in, listen to Him, and surrender to Him, I absolutely get to experience His perfect love.” Comments like these cause me to wonder why we have not been more diligent as spiritual leaders to build the practices of listening to God, prayer, journaling, and missional practices into our discipleship programs. Personally, this research project has made me more diligent to take time each morning to surrender my day to the Holy Spirit and to be more intentional about tending to the needs of those around me.

Breen called these daily rhythms, Up, In, and Out (Breen Loc. 2625). Up, or passionate spirituality, includes practices identified in the small group experience like

listening to the Holy Spirit, prayer, and journaling. Wesley called practices such as prayer, praise and worship “spiritual respiration” to emphasize their importance to the spiritual life. The small group itself was In, or radical community. Out, or missional zeal, was discovered in the small group experience through intentional missional practices. The literature review bears out that certain intentional daily practices are not only important, but necessary in a relationship with the Holy Spirit and missional living.

Moltmann wrote, “The whole of bodily and earthly life becomes a spiritual experience when the Spirit of life lays hold of us and we are ‘born anew’” (*Source of Life* Loc. 736). Conner stated that the Holy Spirit is available for everyone (32). Many believers do not allow the Holy Spirit to “lay hold” of them, not because they have little interest in the things of God, but because they have not been shown the way. God sustains and renews His creation. Listening to God, praying, journaling, and missional practices are all spiritual practices which bring renewal when done in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Paul challenges us to pray in the Spirit at all times (Eph. 6.18) and Peter assures us we will be heard in 1 Peter 3.12, as does John in 1 John 5.14-15 (see also Ps. 66.19).

Perfection in Love as an Indicator of a Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit

The Christian’s turn to God implies a turn from the world. My own personal turn to God meant turning from a selfish life. Prior to the baptism with the Holy Spirit, I thought almost wholly about myself. Following the baptism with the Holy Spirit, a process of transformation began to take place. I did experience an instantaneous change but also continued, and still continue, a process of change. Through years of pastoral ministry, dozens of foreign mission trips, and more than one hundred local ministry

events I have witnessed the instantaneous and continuing change of many. This change leads us away from self to the love of God and the love of others. However, love is a decision not an emotion. We love because we decide to love. Then, the Holy Spirit shows us how to act upon that decision to love, and the Holy Spirit empowers us to do so. Loving with a “God-kind of love,” perfection in love, is a Holy Spirit empowered decision. Perfection in love is loving with the love God puts within us through the Holy Spirit. Not all participants expressed a clear understanding of perfection in love, but all did seem to experience an increase in their missional attitudes, behaviors, and practices through love.

During the Dwelling in the Word exercise using 1 John 4.7-21, in the third group meeting, one participant observed, “People are hard to love, but we still love because of Christ.” Another noted that “Fear and love do not mix.” “God’s love can drive out fear,” was the observation of another participant. Another seemed to recognize the importance of the Holy Spirit within them, “Perfect love is in us if we allow him to abide in us.” These participants’ comments indicate the realization that love is from God and can be affected in the lives of believers.

The participants’ responses to question 4 of the HSMQ also revealed their understanding of perfection in love as a ministry of the Holy Spirit. One participant wrote, “No matter what awful things I have done, He still loves me and is overjoyed with me! I’m precious to Him and everything is ok with Him around.” This person has come to realize God’s love for him/her and for others. He/she goes on to say, “His love is unconditional.” He/she also wrote about a “new empathy” they had saying, “this new empathy I possess when in the Spirit has brought me great joy because I see these people

as God's precious children." Another participant wrote, "Perfect love is somewhat hard to imagine or totally fathom...I have found myself loving more completely than I ever imagined. I attribute that to asking the Holy Spirit into the relationship." Getting "stuck" was an issue for another participant who said, "even with the Holy Spirit, I don't see myself as perfection in love...I am trying to live more openly and aware of opportunities that are placed in front of me to love others." Another participant quoted 1 John 4.19 and spoke of experiencing perfection in love and true transformation. He/she said, "Studying love in the group has enhanced my understanding of the grace and salvation that God's offers, and what a wonderful thing it is."

Perfect love is beyond the ability of the Christian; therefore, dependence upon God is absolutely necessary. The Christian, filled with and surrendered to the Holy Spirit, becomes a vessel through whom God can love others. God implants love in the believer's soul (Decock 18). For Wesley, this experience of God's love grows as they continue in their relationship with the Holy Spirit. He felt that a church which was moving toward perfection in love would naturally increase in incarnational presence as well. Wesley criticized the church of his day calling it a dead form because "the Christians had turned heathens again" which caused the church to become "waxed cold" in love. However, he maintained hope for the church for he believed the "Pentecost event of the Holy Spirit" continued through all generations. Thus, Wesley felt that perfection in love was not only possible but critical for the believer and the church to fulfill the mission of God in the world. This research shows such love is possible and that it can begin and grow in a relatively short period of time.

God, compelled by His love for sinners, sent Jesus to walk into their midst and restore them to the family of God. In Luke 10.27, Jesus gave the great commandment to love God with all your heart, soul, and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself. Many have strived and found the difficulty of this task. Paul, however, gives us hope in Romans 5.5 “hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” Where sincere and perfect love exists, the Holy Spirit must also be present. Love is from God (1 John 4.7). “No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit” (1 John 4.12–13). Perfect love and the Holy Spirit cannot be separated. To attempt to separate them is to attempt to love with human strength alone. As the participants of this research project noted, people are hard to love, and perfect love is hard to fathom. However, each participant, in one way or another, demonstrated that love in their missional living.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

There is a second work of grace which is currently being virtually ignored in ABCUMC and the United Methodist Church in the West. There are many at ABCUMC who embrace the Holy Spirit and His ministry, but their number is small in this large congregation. The good news for ABCUMC and mainline denominations is believers can be helped to discover and receive that which Jesus promised in John 15 and 16. The intervention did show many, though not all, participants were significantly impacted through interactions in the group setting and the missional assignments. Teaching, responding, and reacting worked together with the Holy Spirit to bring transformation to

those who were willing and open. Many of the participants had a deeper experience with the Holy Spirit which led to greater missional living even though some expressed it was challenging for them.

ABCUMC should embrace the Holy Spirit as a vital part of their ministry and focus more attention on creating missional discipleship practices which include the practices demonstrated in this project. Even though ABCUMC is a large church, it is still possible to slowly bring transformation to the whole congregation through a small group format, missionally focused sermons, and informed and directed missional practices. The small group missional format used in this research project could be used in other mainline Wesleyan churches as well. The theology is Wesleyan, which might cause some problems for traditions which do not affirm baptism with the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace.

The Holy Spirit missional small group focused on a relationship with the Holy Spirit more than on education and equipping the participants. This should remain its focus even if a church chose to expand it in some way or incorporate more elements. Though some churches may be concerned because this small group experience embraced the person of the Trinity most often ignored, this group format is applicable for small, medium, and large church discipleship programs. While there have been abuses and misunderstanding of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the past, church leaders should move past that to see the relevance of a relationship in the believer's personal life and the missional life of the church at large.

Implications beyond the small group experience also exist. The church has ceased searching for God at work expecting God to join the work of the church. We have

forgotten the work of the church is the work of God. Participants in this project reported actively searching for God at work in their context, and many found Him waiting for them there already working more than they imagined. Mainline churches should diligently search for God at work in their context. These churches might then discover what they have been doing to be very different than what they should be doing. The struggle of church leaders to “maintain and bring in” would then be transformed to “build and send out.” Believers growing with the Holy Spirit and with one another will be sufficiently equipped and eagerly available to seek the missional opportunities in their community, workplace, and third places.

Love is both the object and the catalysis of our missional activities. One small group participant compared the love he/she feels during missional activities to the love he/she feels for his/her children. Many would consider this to be excessive or contrary to a parent’s nature. In this way, love catalyzes our missional activities. If we love our neighbors like we love our children, nothing will stop us from entering their world to meet their needs. In this way, love is the object of our missional activities. Perfect love loves the stranger as perfectly as it loves the family member. A church perfected in love could not be restrained from reaching their neighbors. Its members would allow nothing to keep them from going out.

Limitations of the Study

The difficulty of measuring one’s relationship with the Holy Spirit led me to a small group approach. I designed the small group experience to balance teaching, reflecting, and activating. I did not want participants to simply tell me what they had been told or had read in the small group meetings. Nor did I want to prove I could write an

effective small group curriculum. In addition, I was challenged by a shorter timeframe for the small group experience than I would have liked. Achieving the balance of these factors was difficult. Had it been possible, I would have liked to expand the number of the small group meetings. However, this would have exceeded the scope of this project by the sheer volume of data alone, but for the personal transformation of the participants I feel significantly more time was needed.

The small group as designed used a different scripture each week for the Dwelling in the Word activity and accelerated the missional homework assignments.

Transformation would have been more significant had participants been afforded the opportunity to dwell in one scripture for one month at a time and allowed to move much slower through the homework assignments by being given two or three weeks to practice some missional assignments before moving to the next one. This would have also allowed for greater bonding and trust to build within the small group. Participants would have then felt more comfortable sharing their stories with the additional time this would have allowed.

The instrumentation was adequate. However, greater attention could have been given to insure equal representation of the six major themes in the MPS+ and the HSMQ. Unfortunately, only one HSMQ question focused on God-kind of Love. As such, research question 3 was not able to be answered to the fullest measure.

SurveyMonkey simplified and organized the collection of data. The use of graders required extra time for data analysis. The graders were each given 14 days to analyze the notes taken during small group meetings and participants' answers to the HSMQ. One grader in particular did not begin his/her analysis until three days before the deadline, and

I received analysis from three graders a couple days after their deadline. I would have liked time to sit with them individually to talk about the six themes and my expectations of them. Time did not allow this, though I did call each one and received phone calls and emails from a couple of them for clarification.

Generalizing this study will require consideration of the context as the small group experience was researcher-designed for ABCUMC. Training for small group leaders would also be required if the project were to be scaled to be used simultaneously in numerous small groups.

Unexpected Observations

Less balance between the themes was observed than expected. Two themes that scored particularly lower than expected were Higher Degree of the Holy Spirit and Power from/of the Holy Spirit. This may be due to time restraints as both of these are typically experienced more than taught. I was surprised not only by the participants' willingness to attempt the missional assignments but by their excitement regarding them. Participants immediately began to open up in the small group to talk about their celebrations and their disappointments, even though most of them did not know one another and some of them did not know me. I now believe the missional assignment for the second week was a big part of this. The missional assignment from week one was to take three pictures of God at work and come prepared to explain to the group. Celebrating this assignment the next week helped "break the ice" and build trust within the group.

One of my initial concerns was the commitment required of participants. Weekly missional assignments were demanding and required boldness and risk. The participants took joy in reporting to the group how they had been missional each week. The

celebration time near the end of each meeting was very important. Two participants self-identified as introverts but attempted the missional assignments even though some of those required taking some risk like “Start a spiritual conversation with someone in your context,” “Bless three people this week, at least one of whom is not in church,” and “Do something bold for the kingdom of God.” One of these participants wrote, “I am led to interact with many others, which is hard for an introverted person. I have also noticed that by praying for those who are unkind and troubled, I am equipped to interact with them and provide encouragement/support.”

Recommendations

Expand the Timeframe to Span the School Calendar

An expanded timeframe would enhance the small group experience and make it more transformative. It was discovered that ten weeks was not long enough for participants to connect in a deep relationship with the Holy Spirit. Leading this small group over a 30-36 week timeframe would be more effective as participants would be given more time to personally process what the scriptures are saying to them, build trust with their fellow group members, and move into missional practices at a pace conducive to building habits that last. A 30-36 week plan would allow one or two weeks for the introductory group meetings then three to five weeks for the remaining meetings. Scriptures for Dwelling in the Word would then be allowed at least 3 weeks each. Homework assignments could be discussed over three or four weeks each, allowing participants more time to discuss the celebrations and concerns they had experienced. Additional time could be devoted to helping the participants engage the Holy Spirit in the group meetings.

Celebrate the Celebration

Celebrate the celebration. The participants took great joy in sharing the stories of their missional assignments. Embracing this time is vitally important to building group trust, realizing the victories associated with missional living, and understanding missional living is for the kingdom of God much more than it is for the church.

Qualitative Data

The group should be no larger than twelve participants due to small group dynamics and the difficulty in managing large amounts of qualitative data. If the number of group meetings were increased to 30–36, the amount of data from group meeting notes would be excessive. Another way of handling such volume would need to be devised. A brief weekly quantitative survey or a brief qualitative question, from a grader perspective, would be easier to analyze. The design of such an instrument would determine if it could be as effective.

Small Group Leaders

Small group leaders would need to be participants first and receive training second. Future group leaders would need to be those participants who had demonstrated a grasp of the six major themes, had experienced the baptism with the Holy Spirit, were pursuing and experiencing continuing transformation, and were acting upon missional opportunities and Holy Spirit appointed missions. In addition, a training method and materials would need to be devised. This makes the small group experience less transferable as it depended largely upon the experience and expertise of this researcher.

Postscript

The journey, filled with peaks and valleys, was a Spirit-filled project. I sensed the presence and heard the voice of the Holy Spirit in class sessions, while reading for the literature review, and while writing and editing this paper. There were numerous “ah-ha” moments. At times it felt as though the challenges outweighed the celebrations, but there was an abiding presence cheering me on along the way. The D.Min. staff of Asbury Theology Seminary has been most helpful and talked me “off the ledge” more than once. My gratitude for them is deep. I have grown in my devotion to God and in my relationship with the Holy Spirit and now have new ways of communicating the love of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit. My awareness and appreciation for my own context and my call to missional living has grown tremendously.

Throughout my ministry, I have worked to let the Holy Spirit lead me in the way He chose for me. There were times I failed Him miserably, but hopefully, there were more times I was right where I should have been, when I should have been. My appreciation for the importance of following the voice and timing of the Holy Spirit has grown, as has my desire for the Holy Spirit to be allowed freely into His church, wherever it may be found. I have attempted to put the kingdom of God even before the church I served; sometimes successfully, sometimes not so much. I now see the kingdom of God and the work of God in all places in new ways. My desire has increased to be an agent in bringing the Holy Spirit and transformation of the saints to the church and to the individual found inside and outside that church.

In the depth of despair, which I felt from time to time, the presence of the Holy Spirit was there, as was my family and senior pastor, cheering me on, encouraging me,

and understanding my absences on many occasions. Six months after the last small group meeting one participant sent me a card, unsolicited, in which he/she said,

The closeness, excitement, and stirring I felt could only be the Holy Spirit – and you are right – He continues to stir and fan the flame. The activities you asked us to do have become contagious in my daily activities and life... Thank you for the nudging, prodding, and encouragement. And thank you for opening my heart to the *Missio Dei!*

I am reminded of A. W. Tozer who said, “If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference” (qtd. In Kendall Loc. 565). I want to be part of a Holy Spirit-filled movement that makes a difference in the kingdom of God, in the church, and in the world—a movement empowered by the Holy Spirit to transform the world. The Holy Spirit makes a difference in the missional life.

APPENDIXES

A. Instrumentation

B. Ministry Intervention (Researcher Designed Weekly Guides for Small Group)

C. Consent to Participate in Research

APPENDIX A

Instrumentation

The Holy Spirit Missional Questionnaire

One question was sent to individual group participants each week in the order provided via SurveyMonkey.

- Sept 4, 2018: Describe your missional practices during the group experience and how they have shaped your understanding and appreciation for the Holy Spirit working in your context (neighborhood, work place, etc.).
- Sept 11, 2018: Describe the ways love has compelled you to engage your context through missional practices.
- Sept 18, 2018: Describe the ways you have experienced the power and manifest presence of the Holy Spirit in your missional life.
- Sept 24, 2018: Describe the ways you have experienced perfection in love and to what do you attribute such transformation and why.
- Oct 2, 2018: Describe the impact (influence) of your relationship with the Holy Spirit on your missional practices.
- Oct 9, 2018: Describe your missional practices in the weeks following the group experience and how you have seen/experienced the Holy Spirit working in your life and in the lives of the sojourners you have encountered.

The Missional Practices Scale Plus
 (Questions 1-30, Scott Nelson 2015)
 (Questions 31-40, John Freeland 2018)

Please read each statement below and indicate how well the statement describes you IN GENERAL (i.e. how you are most of the time) by choosing one of the alternatives from the five-point scale.

- 1 = Does NOT describe me at all
- 2 = Does Not Describe me very well
- 3 = Describes me moderately well
- 4 = Describes me very well
- 5 = Describes me extremely well

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| 1. I intentionally try to show others who God is by the way that I live my life. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. I allow the Holy Spirit's guidance to shape how I live. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I focus on making a positive impact in the specific places where I feel God has sent me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. I help bring healing to the brokenness in the lives of people around me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I intentionally work together with other Christians in my area to make our world a better place. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. I go out of my way to care for the poor or needy. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I am involved in global social justice issues. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. I regularly spend my free time interacting with people who are not Christians. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. I find ways to tell others about what God has done for the world. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I try to have spiritual conversations with people who do not share my faith. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. I share my life with a group of Christians that supports me in my endeavors to make a positive impact in this world. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. I actively listen for what God is asking me to do when I am learning from the Bible. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. I am involved in local social justice issues. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

14. I make sure the things that I am doing on a daily basis are in line with what God wants to have happen in this world. 1 2 3 4 5
15. I interact regularly with other Christians who challenge and encourage me. 1 2 3 4 5
16. I intentionally try to help others around me move closer to God no matter where they are in life. 1 2 3 4 5
17. I look for ways that God is at work in the world around me. 1 2 3 4 5
18. I constantly ask God to transform things that are unjust, sinful, oppressive, or dehumanizing. 1 2 3 4 5
19. I intentionally develop relationships with people on the “fringes” of society. 1 2 3 4 5
20. I regularly evaluate how I am living my life by comparing it to Jesus’ life. 1 2 3 4 5
21. I study the Bible to learn more about how I can make a positive impact in the world. 1 2 3 4 5
22. I spend significant amounts of my time trying to make the world around me a better place. 1 2 3 4 5
23. I determine how I can do good works in every area of my life. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I often try to figure out what God cares about and then care about those things myself. 1 2 3 4 5
25. I study my local community to better understand how to communicate the Good News within it. 1 2 3 4 5
26. When I study the Bible, I specifically ask what the passage can teach me about God’s purposes. 1 2 3 4 5
27. I intentionally make time for my neighbors. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I spend time asking God what he wants to do through me. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I have specific things I do to protect the environment. 1 2 3 4 5
30. I think about how the local culture would be changed (or not) if it lived by God’s values. 1 2 3 4 5
31. Sometimes I feel an urgency to pray even though I may not know 1 2 3 4 5

why.

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| 32. Listening to God is essential in my life. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 33. I know the difference between ministering in the power of the flesh and the power of the Holy Spirit. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 34. I feel God has accepted me as His child. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 35. People who say they feel God's presence are probably just being emotional. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 36. I feel God's love for me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 37. When I am facing a difficult decision, I depend on the Holy Spirit to help me make the right choice. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 38. I believe love is something you do regardless of how you feel. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 39. I have difficulty telling the people closest to me I love them. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 40. When I feel God sending me somewhere I am eager to go regardless of where it may be. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

APPENDIX B

Ministry Intervention (Weekly Guides for Small)

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #1

Date: July 10, 2018

Focus: Promise

Introduction:

- Go over the rules: (see Informed Consent letter)
- Explain purpose of the group and purpose of the research:
- Personal introductions and what they hope to gain from the experience
- Explain the process
- 1 Corinthians 2:13
- Define “Missional”:
- Define “Missio Dei”:
- Define “Incarnational”:
- Define “Context”:
- Ask if there are any questions

Prayer:

- The research is important.
- Our personal relationships with Jesus and the Holy Spirit are more important.
- The relationship our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers have with Jesus are more important.
- Help us be “all in.” Help us hear and answer God’s call.

Dwelling in the Word:

John 16:1-15

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Each week we will have a homework assignment, I am calling it a missional assignment
- Explanation of God working in everyday life and in life everyday

This Week’s Missional Assignment:

- Take three photos of where/how you see God at work in your context. (Nelson, Mission, p. 25.3)
- Email them to me at johnfreeland@me.com
- Be prepared next week to explain your photo

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #2

Date: July 17, 2018

Focus: Promise; Missio Dei; Power; Transformation

Introduction:

- Ezekiel 36:26-27
- Remind them of the definition of “Missional” and “Missio Dei”
- Confidentiality – Protect the anonymity of others.
- Ask if there are any questions

Prayer:

- God called us to be witnesses
- God has promised us power to be witnesses
- Encourage us to be of “one mind were continually devoting ourselves to prayer”
- Invite Holy Spirit
- Remove our hearts of stone and put in us your Holy Spirit
- Ask God to disclose to us the things of God

Dwelling in the Word:

Acts 1:1-14

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- Show photos and hear explanations from each participant
- After all photos have been shown:
 - What new thing did you learn?
 - What struck you the most?
 - In what ways do you feel challenged?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Explain Missional Exegesis of the Neighborhood:
 - Look for where people spend their time (fenced back yards, where are the park benches, where are the parks, which parks are populated, which restaurants are most popular, where do people shop, what do the houses look like?)
 - Where do you see God at work?
 - Where do you see the greatest light?
 - What are the greatest needs in the neighborhood/context?
 - Where do you see the deepest darkness?

This Week’s Missional Assignment:

- Missional Exegesis of the Neighborhood
 - Walk or drive around your neighborhood/context
 - Make notes (or a recording)
 - Bring your notes to next week’s group meeting.
- Continue to look for God at work

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #3

Date: July 24, 2018

Focus: Love; Perfect Love

Introduction:

- Romans 5:5 Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- Remind them of the definition of “Missional” and “Missio Dei”
- God is at work in our neighborhoods, we have just been programmed to ignore Him.
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Invite the Holy Spirit to lead us, to transform us.
- Call us to the Mission Dei
- Perfect us in love

Dwelling in the Word:

1 John 4:7-21

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- Describe your neighborhood.
 - Where did you see God at work?
 - Where did you see the greatest light?
 - What are the greatest needs in the neighborhood/context?
 - Where did you see the deepest darkness?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Prayer is simply talking to God. It is really quite simple. We just have to start talking.
 - But prayer is more than talking to God. It is listening to God as well.

This Week’s Missional Assignment:

- Spend a significant amount of time in prayer every day for the power and for the power of the Spirit to be present in your life and for your ability to depend on the Spirit on a daily basis.
 - Pray for those around you in your neighborhood or work place.
 - The lady you see walking the neighborhood on your way to work, or the guy who is always working in his yard.
 - Pray for your closest neighbor.
- Listen to the Holy Spirit and try to be specific in your prayers even if you don’t know them personally.
- Keep a journal of your prayers.
- Continue to look for God at work

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #4

Date: July 31, 2018

Focus: Missio Dei

Introduction:

- 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
- Define “Incarnational” and discuss being incarnational in their neighborhood/context.
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Invite the Holy Spirit to lead us, to transform us.
- Call us to be incarnational
- Perfect us in love
- Help us do all things for the sake of the Gospel.

Dwelling in the Word:

Matthew 10:1-20 (NIV)

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- How did it feel being intentional about spending a significant amount of time in prayer every day?
- In what ways did you experience, or were more aware, of the power of the Spirit present in your life?
- Was there anyone specific you prayed for in your neighborhood or work place?
- Did you see any results? What results do you expect to see in the future?
- Did you experience any moments during your prayer time that you felt God was speaking to you or answering your concerns? Describe them.
- What did it feel like to have God reveal things to you?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Love is a decision, not an emotion. Be intentional to love others.
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue praying for those around you in your neighborhood just like you did last week. Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #5

Date: August 7, 2018

Focus: Pentecost; Baptism with the Holy Spirit

Introduction:

- Luke 11:13
- We are called to be like Christ. One of the primary purposes of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is to bring transformation.
- Define sanctification.
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Invite the Holy Spirit to lead us, to transform us.
- Invite the presence of the Holy Spirit to bring transformation to individuals and to our group.
- Perfect us in love

Dwelling in the Word:

Acts 2:1-18

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- What was the reaction of those whom you blessed?
- How did you react? How did it feel intentionally being a blessing?
- In what ways did you see God at work. Did anything unusual or miraculous happen?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Engage with a stranger, or a co-worker that you do not know very well. This can be someone you perceive to be needy in some way. It maybe someone you normally would not engage. Take them for coffee or lunch.
- No need for a heavy spiritual conversation or conversion. Simply show an interest in someone you haven't noticed before or not paid much attention before.
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue praying for those around you in your neighborhood just like you did last week. Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #6

Date: August 14, 2018

Focus: Baptism with the Holy Spirit; Second Work of Grace

Introduction:

- Luke 4:1
- God loves us just the way we are, but He loves us too much to leave us that way.
- Part of being incarnational is being an instrument for God's salvation and transformation to the world.
- The Missio Dei is our call to action, but we cannot do it alone. We need the Holy Spirit.
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Fill us with your Holy Spirit, for the first time, or for the one-hundredth time.
- Empower us to be faithful witness, enabled to make a difference in the world.
- Remind us that we are called to be incarnational just as Christ was. Sacrificially and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Dwelling in the Word:

Acts 19:1-12

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- How did it feel spending a significant amount of time with someone for a kingdom purpose?
 - How did it feel engaging with someone new, someone different than you?
 - Did it feel risky?
- How did you see God at work in your engagement?
- Did you experience any particular guidance from the Holy Spirit?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- We engage with people all day long. Maybe it is related to work. Maybe it is family. Maybe it is a neighbor or a friend. But how often do we really engage in a conversation about God?
- What does a spiritual conversation look like?
 - Where is the best place/time for such a conversation?
- Find someone, maybe the one from last week, maybe a family member or friend, or a neighbor or co-worker, and **begin a spiritual conversation** with them.
- Have coffee or eat with three people, at least one of which is not in church
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue your prayer life as you did last week.
 - This week specifically ask God to reveal His Holy Spirit to you.
 - Invite the Holy Spirit into your life and into your daily routine.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you. (You may have to empty yourself first)

- Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #7

Date: August 21, 2018

Focus: Baptism with the Holy Spirit; Signs and Wonders

Introduction:

- Acts 2:46-47
- This past week you were to enter into a spiritual conversation with someone. We will hear how those went it just a little bit.
- When Peter got up to preach to the thousands of people on the day of Pentecost he may have felt a little like you did this week. Whether it is one or thousands, sharing Christ can be intimidating.
- Tonight, let's consider how God might help us with that which prevents us from moving forward in mission.
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Fill us with Your presence and power.
- Forgive us when we fail to share the Gospel. Help us understand why it is so important.
- Restore to us the joy of our salvation.

Dwelling in the Word:

Acts 2:38-47

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- How did it feel to participate in the Mission Dei? Was it easy to be intentional about asking God to show you someone to talk to?
- Did God give you any specific revelation or specific direction? Did He show you someone with whom you should talk?
- What percentage of the exercise did you do on your own, and what percentage would you attribute to God?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Love is a decision, not an emotion. God calls us to love others.
- Be intentional to show God's love. Ask God to lead you to someone and expect that person to be someone different than you usually hang with. Expect God to take you out of your comfort zone.
- We most often build community over food.
- Have coffee or eat with three people, at least one of which is not in church
- Continue the spiritual conversation from last week or start a new one with someone else, whatever you feel led to do.
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue your prayer life as you did last week.
- Add these prayers to your prayer journal.

- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #8

Date: August 28, 2018

Focus: Proclamation; Helper

Introduction:

- Acts 16:6-10
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- We are called to proclamation to a world that has missed God's grace. To this we are called to love, yet we don't fully understand what love is.
- Show us Your love and strengthen our love for others — for those like us, and those nothing like us.

Dwelling in the Word:

John 14:15-27

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- Did you feel led to someone particular?
- Describe the ways you were intentional with love.
- In what ways did you sense the presence of the Holy Spirit during your "love fest."

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- In Acts 1:8, God sent the apostles on a mission and the Church grew. Church is not growing, at least in part, because we don't see ourselves as being on a mission.
- Ask God for a mission and journal about that assignment.
 - *Shoulder Taps video:* <https://youtu.be/aNPhdy3qgOs>
 - When you go to the store, walk the neighborhood, or before you get in your car, ask God to specifically show you someone to whom you can minister.
- Be intentional to show God's love.
- Continue the spiritual conversation from last week or start a new one with someone else, whatever you feel led to do.
- Have coffee or eat with three people, at least one of which is not in church
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue your prayer life as you did last week.
- Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #9

Date: September 4, 2018

Focus: Proclamation

Introduction:

- Acts 8:26-29
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Remind us of what to say.
- Give us a heart for people
- Give us boldness.

Dwelling in the Word:

Acts 5:12-16

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- What happened when you asked for a divine mission?
- How did it feel to be specifically sent?
- Did anything unusual or miraculous happen?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- If you have fully participated in the previous weeks' assignments then you have already done some bold things for the Kingdom of God.
- Make it a goal to do something bold for the Kingdom at least three times a week for the next 7 weeks.
 - This will require you to constantly look for opportunities for boldness.
 - Keep a journal of your attempts.
 - Be sure to give a good description of the opportunity, your observations about your feelings, thoughts, strengths, and weaknesses.
 - Briefly describe what happened and what your hope is for the future regarding the opportunity.
 - "Asking God for a mission" requires that we put ourselves out there in ways that are sometimes scary.
 - It takes boldness to participate in the mission of God.
- Ask God for a mission and journal about that assignment.
 - When you go to the store, walk the neighborhood, or before you get in your car, ask God to specifically show you someone to whom you can minister.
- Be intentional to show God's love.
- Continue the spiritual conversation from last week or start a new one with someone else, whatever you feel led to do.
- Have coffee or eat with three people, at least one of which is not in church
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue your prayer life as you did last week.

- Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.

Close in prayer:

Missional Living Small Group Meeting #10

Date: September 11, 2018

Focus: Power; Anointing

Introduction:

- Thank them for their participation in the group and the research project.
- John 3:8
- Define anointing
- Confidentiality — What we say is confidential. If you share something from this group it should be your own story and not someone else.
- Protect the anonymity of others.

Prayer:

- Invite the presence of the Holy Spirit and ask for an anointing to do His will tonight and every night.
- 2 Timothy 1:7
-

Dwelling in the Word:

Luke 4:14-22

Celebration of Missional Assignment:

- What happened when you asked for a divine mission?
- How did it feel to be specifically sent?
- Did anything unusual or miraculous happen?

Introduction of New Missional Assignment:

- Tomorrow you will receive an email with the link to the post-group survey. Please complete this asap while everything is still fresh.
- Each week for the next six weeks you will receive one reflection question via email. Reply to that email question with your answer as soon as possible.
- Ask God for a mission
- Make it a goal to do something bold for the Kingdom at least three times a week for the next 7 weeks.
 - This will require you to constantly look for opportunities for boldness.
 - Continue journaling your attempts.
- Be intentional to show God's love.
- Continue the spiritual conversation from last week or start a new one with someone else, whatever you feel led to do.
- Have coffee or eat with three people, at least one of which is not in church
- Bless three people this week, at least one of which is not in church.
- Continue your prayer life as you did last week.
- Add these prayers to your prayer journal.
- Continue to look for God at work around you.
- Tomorrow you will receive an email with the link to the post-group survey. Please complete this asap while everything is still fresh.

- Each week for the next six weeks you will receive one reflection question via email. Reply to that email question with your answer as soon as possible.

Close in prayer:

APPENDIX C

Consent to Participate in Research

Title of the study: Determining the Importance of the Acts, Agency, and Person of the Holy Spirit in Missional Living

Type of Study: Post-intervention

Principal Investigator: John Wetherford Freeland

Institution: Asbury Theological Seminary

Dear, _____

I am a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury Theological Seminary and I am conducting research on the topic of missional living. I would like to lead a small group of twelve people from the congregation, and you have been selected from a larger pool of names given me by your Senior Pastor and/or your Pastor for Adult Discipleship to assist in this study. The study will include a ten-week small group experience followed by six weekly discussion questions emailed one per week.

A missional life is one in which the sharing of one's faith is carried outside the church into every aspect and place of life including daily activities at home, work, and community. Missional opportunities occur in everyday life from coffee shops to soccer games. A missional life connects with the unchurched in their neighborhoods and the greater community with the purpose of growth for the Kingdom of God. The purpose of this study is to determine the importance of the Holy Spirit in such a life.

Since one's relationship with God is often a sensitive matter, I assure you that your responses will be kept confidential. I do not want to jeopardize your relationships in your church, so I will not include your name in the results of the study. The data will be reported using a code and all of the surveys will be collated to give a blended view rather than identify any one person.

I believe living a missional life is an important element for church growth and I believe the findings from this research will allow me to assist other Christians as they seek to share Christ in their own life. My hope is that churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have taken the time to participate. Once the research is completed in approximately four months, I will destroy the individual surveys and keep the anonymous data electronically for an indefinite period of time, at least until my dissertation is written and approved.

Confidentiality and protecting your identity are vitally important to me, however confidentiality can only be guaranteed on written responses to questionnaires. Our church

encourages confidentiality in all Life Groups. Study participants will most certainly be encouraged to maintain confidentiality at every small group session in this study, but it cannot be guaranteed.

Please know that you can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions on the survey and questionnaire. Should you feel the need, you may exit the study at any time by contacting me. I realize that your participation is entirely voluntary and I appreciate your willingness to consider being part of the study. Feel free to call or write me at any time if you need any more information. My number is 770-301-1649 and my e-mail is johnfreeland@me.com.

If you are willing to assist me in this study, please sign and date this letter below to indicate your voluntary participation. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

John Freeland

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

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