

Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity

**A Study of a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship Process
at the Lighthouse Free Methodist Church**

A Thesis Project Submitted to
the Faculty of the Liberty University School of Divinity
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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The Lighthouse Free Methodist Church in Barryton, Michigan, lacks a systematic discipleship program that produces disciple-makers. This Doctor of Ministry project purposes to integrate a systematic discipleship program into the Lighthouse Free Methodist Church.

The research methodology includes pre-and post-surveys and interviews. Pre- and post-survey data were collected to compare the number of disciplers, salvations, worship attenders, and the number of new systematic evangelistic discipleship groups. Six People participated in the training provided. The Lighthouse FMC is located near a small community of three-hundred people and is in the middle of a ten-mile circumference with thirty thousand.

Thirteen people started to attend Worship services during and just after the completion of the project. One adult salvation was reported, which matched all the adult salvations reported in both 2017 and 2019. The six participants made eight new contacts and began to disciple six other people during the eight-week project.

The project participants learned how to engage people in spiritual conversations, pray at the moment people present a need, lead an inductive Bible study, set goals, work lead behaviors, lead people in a prayer of salvation, and engage in systematic evangelistic discipleship.

Keywords: Systematic, Evangelical, Discipleship, Church growth, Training, Action-oriented, Small-group

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The Lighthouse Free Methodist Church (FMC) is a small church in a rural area of Central Michigan. The church situates near Barryton, Michigan, which has a population of three hundred people. The community, including Fork township where Barryton is and the nine closest townships, is 38,974. The church has not had consistent growth in its Sunday Morning attendance since at least 1996.

There is no systematic evangelistic action-oriented discipleship process to help grow the church's Sunday Morning Worship attendance. There is no process to help people from the church focus on their biblical responsibility to witness, disciple, and multiply themselves. There have been no tools and training given to the people that include loving accountability and mentoring rooted in relationships. There is no process in place for encouraging and sharpening an individual's skill set in outreach and discipleship.

The leadership of the Lighthouse FMC has the following concerns: 1. The attendance number slipped from seventy to sixty in Sunday morning worship attendance this year. 2. People are no longer attending the church because some had died, some have moved into nursing homes or other locations because their health has declined, and other attenders have relocated to obtain jobs. These factors, combined with fewer new people coming into the church, resulted in a decline in attendance. 3. Offerings are lower than in previous years, and the church is running in the red.

The Lighthouse FMC leadership has concluded that the church needs to focus resources on outreach processes and structures for the church to grow and not close.

Ministry Context

Lighthouse Free Methodist Church (FMC) was formed in 1884. The first church building was a log church that was relocated to the Conference campground and served as the Conference Historical Center. The congregation relocated in 1977. They built a new church building and parsonage on the main road between Barryton and the county seat in Big Rapids. There were thirteen members of the church at the time of the relocation. Twelve of those members were women. In 1983 the church started a K-12 Christian School. At its height, the school had seventy students, and it closed in 2018. In 2002 the church began a Christian Daycare. There were twenty children enrolled in the Daycare when it closed in 2019. The pastor did not have a vision for the Daycare and stated that he could not find enough staff to run the program.

The writer of this thesis served as an assistant pastor at the Lighthouse FMC from 1983 until 1985. The writers' primary responsibility was to start and lead a K – 12 Christian School. The writer returned in 2001 and served through 2014 as the lead pastor of the church. In 2012 he served as the Lead Pastor of the church and the North Michigan Conference's Superintendent. The writers' current relationship with the Lighthouse FMC is that of Superintendent of the Conference.

The last five-years Sunday morning average attendance numbers for the Lighthouse FMC are:

2019 — 60
2018 — 55
2017 — 60
2016 — 60
2015 — 70
2014 — 75

Looking back to 1996, the Lighthouse FMC's Sunday morning average attendance numbers have ranged from seventy-eight in 1996 to a high of ninety-one in 1998 and a low of

forty-five in 2005 through 2008. The average Sunday morning worship numbers were eighty-five in 2011 and 2012. The averages went down to sixty people from 2013 through 2018. There has not been a consistent growth pattern since the year 2000.

The Lighthouse FMC is engaged in partnering with community organizations and other churches to feed over one hundred families a month. They have a presence in all of the community parades and events. Pastor Darwin Mowat is the Lighthouse FMC pastor, and he is the president of the Food Pantry Ministry and the President of the local Ministerium. This year the church is connecting with new families for the first time in several years. In the last twelve months, six new families have begun to attend the church. The church location is near a community of about three hundred people. Thirty-eight thousand nine hundred seventy-four people reside within the ten townships within driving distance of the church.

The church has engaged in Sunday School programs and Bible studies that have not had an evangelistic focus. They were geared toward deepening knowledge but lacked an action focus process specifically for outreach and evangelism. The most outward-focused discipleship process some of the people who are a part of the church went through was 1986 to 1988, a Timothy study program. This program combined biblical understanding, relationship building, and leadership development. When talking with the people of this era of the church, they point back to the time they engaged in the Timothy study as a time of authentic leadership and attendance growth.

Senior Pastor Darwin Mowat and Assistant Pastor Joan Mowat's appointment to the Lighthouse FMC was in 2014. Associate Pastor Joyce Rodriguez has been on staff at the church since 2004. Pastor Darwin is the lead pastor of the church. His primary focus is on preaching, administration, and counseling responsibilities. Pastor Darwin believes preaching and praying should be his primary focus to help the church grow. He thinks the church people need to be the

central connection point to the people in the community. Pastor Darwin believes that the people of the church should be bringing people into the church. He is calling the people to outreach, but he has not provided formal training to help them accomplish this goal. The Superintendent of the Conference came and taught an earlier version of the six-week class called “Every Church Grow’s.” This class introduced about fifteen people to principles and practices for outreach. Pastor Joan is not yet ordained but helps organize and lead Ladies and the children’s programs and events. She preaches a few times of the year. Her strength is in the organizational aspects of ministry. She has been able to build relationships with women in the church and community. She has not been able to leverage those community relationships into increased attendance. Pastor Joyce Rodriguez leads Women’s Ministry events and programs and preaches occasionally. Her strengths are as a prayer warrior and calling the people to a more expressive style of worship.

There are fifty-eight members of the Lighthouse FMC. The average age of the membership is sixty-two years old. When adding regular attendees who are not members, youth, and children, the average age of those attending the Lighthouse FMC dropped to forty-seven years of age. The average length of church membership is eighteen years. The lengthiest membership is currently eighty-one years, and the shortest period is six months. Eleven people have been members for less than one year. About fifty percent of the church members are involved in one or more of the church ministries. Many of these people have become members of the church in the last two years.

Lay people in the church hold leadership positions on the Pastors Cabinet, as a Church delegate to Annual Conference, Children’s, Youth, and Adult Ministry Directors. The people who serve in the Pastors Cabinet help with challenges related to the congregation’s spiritual walk. The church delegate represents the laypeople to the Annual Conference. They play an interictal role in expressing the vision to the local church and resolving conflict in the church.

The Lighthouse FMC has a solid group of leaders. The church leadership cares well for the ministries. In 2018 — 2019, they struggled to find an enthusiastic person to lead children's ministry. The church is working on reconstituting a midweek Youth program for the Fall of 2019.

The Lighthouse FMC has people who serve on various committees including, buildings and ground, finance, and the Stewards team. The Stewards take care of funeral and fellowship dinners, prepare and deliver meals for shut-ins and other events and projects. These areas are well-cared for, and there are at least ten people who serve on this team. Others are not on the committee but will help when there is a need to be met. The buildings and grounds group has taken good care of the buildings and property. The finance committee has done an excellent job of making decisions to keep the church on track and out of debt. The Pastors Cabinet cares for the spiritual well-being of the members of the church. The writer's thesis project addresses the problem of having no systematic evangelistic discipleship processes in most of the ministries of the Lighthouse FMC. These ministries are not effectively bringing people to the saving knowledge of the gospel. Most of the lay volunteers are over sixty years old and have been a part of the church for more than ten years.

One of the Lighthouse FMC's primary ministries is the Sunday Morning Worship, where current and new believers develop a deeper relationship with Christ and reengage in the church's primary mission of reaching out to the community with the gospel message. The desire is to use the morning worship services as a doorway to draw people into connection with the church family and Christ. The reality is that most of the people who are a part of the church service week to week are long-term attendees and members. The number of workers needed to do an adequate job with the weekly service is twenty, including the pastor, worship team, technical support team, ushers, greeters,

and cleaning staff. Sunday School is another primary ministry of the church, and the purpose is to connect with both new and current attendees. It is also used as a doorway to invite people to join the church. Currently, it takes about ten people to take care of this need. There is presently no outreach element to the classes.

Men's prayer breakfast focuses on reaching men who currently do not attend the church from the community and encourage the church's regular attenders. The group has grown from about six men to about twenty in the last two years. Nearly half of the new men attending are new to the church, and while the remaining men have been a part of the church, the group has helped them become more involved in the church. The overarching goal of the teaching in the men's prayer breakfast is to help men lead their families well, find their place in the church, and reach the community with Christ. Pastor Darwin brings instruction from the scripture each week that challenges and informs the men about how they can effectively lead their families into healthier relationships with one another and God. Pastor Darwin talks to the men about possible places for them to serve, but there is no process to help them in this endeavor. The pastor also consistently gives the challenge to reach out to the community with the gospel message, but there is no concrete training to accomplish community outreach. It takes about five people for this ministry to function well. There is currently no systematic and accountable process in place for outreach. There is a Bible study that is primarily to strengthen current believers in their walk on Thursday night. This meeting has been set up in two basic formats. At times it is a men's study and other times during the year it has been set up as a couples group. About three people are needed to lead this ministry, and there are no outreach components.

Several ministries occur no more than once a month, and for this project, they are classified as secondary ministries. The Annual VBS and Pig Roast Service are designed primarily for outreach.

Invitations are given intentionally to people whom the congregation knows do not currently attend church anywhere. There is an attempt to engage with parents when they are at VBS, but the follow-up has been a problem. They are more intentional about inviting kids and parents to the next event or service while attending VBS and the Pig Roast that follows the VBS program. They are working on processes and methods to gain contact information for follow-up. Currently, they struggle with personally reaching out and connecting with people who attend special events and services, having relied mainly on email and mail follow-up methods. This ministry takes about forty people to do it well.

Barryton Days Service is one of the community outreach efforts of the church. This service is held amid all the other activities on the township grounds during Barryton Days. The idea has been to connect with people who do not go to church. That goal has not been accomplished to the degree the churches of the community hoped. This service is centered around the community churches coming together for worship in song, special music, and the preaching of the Word. The community service takes about fifteen people to do it well. The methods used by people at Lighthouse Free Methodist church used for inviting people to this event and following up with those who attend have not produced consistent growth results. The assimilation into the Lighthouse FMC of the people who attend the community service has not been successful.

The Fall Family Fun Feast is another outward-focused event that has had great results in getting people to the church for the event but has not accomplished getting many visitors to become part of the church long-term. They are working on a better follow-up process. In 2019, they had over sixty people come to the event who lived in the area and did not attend a church somewhere else. One of the Fall Family Fun Feast organizers was able to get most of everyone's contact information. The church office staff compiled the contact information. Contact with the visitors was

made in several ways. An email or physical letter was sent to each visitor in the first week. If the church had a phone number and the visitor was unknown to anyone in the church, a phone call was made by one of the staff pastors or event organizers. If someone in the church knew the visitor, the person who knew them contacted the visitor. Finally, the visitors were contacted throughout the year when other special church events like Christmas and Easter programs or Vacation Bible School happened. The focus is on the unchurched. These events are not intended to be primarily focused on the people who are already a part of the church. It is an outreach event. There is no preaching, formal discipleship for Adults, Youth, or Children. The goal is to build relationships between those who come to the event and the church. The ultimate goal is to introduce visitors to Christ and connect them with the church. This ministry takes about thirty people to do well.

The Food Community Pantry focuses on connecting with everyone who needs food and other household items. However, it has not effectively related people from the food-line to the gospel message and receiving Christ or motivated them to attend a church in town. It takes about forty people from community churches and other organizations to accomplish the monthly distribution.

In 2012, Lighthouse FMC helped start the first successful church plant in the North Michigan Conference in the last seventy-eight years. Lighthouse FMC was the planting church for Mecosta Free Methodist church, located about thirteen miles from the Lighthouse FMC. The church plant began in the summer of 2012 with seven people in a home bible study. By the Fall of 2012, they were renting an Ice cream store that closed for the winter. Their average attendance was thirty-five through the winter. In the Spring of 2013, the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church bought them a closed bar for the next step in their development. Their average worship attendance has ranged from forty-five to sixty. The average worship attendance for 2019 was sixty people, with

the highest attendance for non-special Sundays of eighty-three people. They reached this peak three times in summer 2019.

Pastor Darwin has approved using the Lighthouse FMC to test the systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process that this thesis project is built around. There are five to ten people who have indicated a willingness to participate in this process.

Problem Presented

This project will address the problem that Lighthouse FMC in Barryton, Michigan, lacks a systematic discipleship program that produces disciple-makers. Since discipleship is the central focus of Kingdom development as directed by Jesus and lived out by the early church, the Lighthouse FMC must effectively engage in a discipleship process that is in line with the scriptural command to make disciples and bear Kingdom fruit.

The Lighthouse FMC currently has Sunday School classes for adults, youth, and children. In addition to Sunday School, the church provides two meetings during the week for adult women. They meet on Monday nights and Saturdays. One study for adult men meets on Saturday mornings and another for couples part of the year and for men at other times in the year that meets on Thursday nights. The church also provides Bible studies and prayer meetings on Sunday and Wednesday nights. These meetings are built around the concepts of Bible teaching and fellowship. Currently, there is no group meeting that has an action-format based process. The writer defines the “action-format-based process” as a learning process that teaches why, how, and what students need to do. They not only learn what the Bible teaches but why they need to engage with it and how to apply the principles they learn to their everyday lives. Each time these groups meet, there is an accountability element to the meeting to ensure students apply what they are learning.

There has not been consistent growth in attendance at the Lighthouse FMC for the last twenty-three years. As noted above, since 1996, the highest average worship attendance was ninety-one in 1998, and the lowest in 2005 to 2008. The most significant indication of a growth trend was from 2008 to 2012 when the Lighthouse FMC planted “The Village” FMC in Mecosta, Michigan, but that growth trend flattened out and declined until 2019.

Purpose Statement

This Doctor of Ministry project aims to integrate a systematic discipleship program into the Lighthouse FMC. This process will engage with those who are open and willing to receive training and become trainers themselves. The project will be an action-oriented process that will require participants to learn and intentionally seek out and train others to be trainers. It will use a method that teaches participants their biblical responsibility to evangelistically disciple others. This researcher defines the process as teaching the first-generation group to teach others how to engage people with the gospel message, lead them in an ever-deeper understanding of the Bible and mentor them in how to disciple people in discipling others. This project will introduce and train people from the Lighthouse FMC in an action-based method and process that will help participants integrate biblical study into actions that build the Kingdom in number, purpose, and depth of biblical understanding.

This systematic evangelistic discipleship process will lead people called “disciplers” through a weekly instructional process that the participants will duplicate and teach others in groups that they will establish. Training for the disciplers will include engaging people with the gospel message for a Kingdom purpose from their circle of influence, and persons of peace, that God brings across their life path. They will learn how to have bridge conversations, have spiritual conversations, and informally disciple people towards Christ. They will receive training

to invite people to systematic evangelistic home action-based discipleship groups, train others in outreach, and lovingly hold people accountable for the biblical commands, principles, and commitments. This training will teach disciplers how to mentor people in multiplying themselves and the discipleship groups they lead.

People engaging in this process will impact their circle of influence and beyond. They will come to understand authentic prayer, intentional conversations, and how to disciple people. They will begin to experience a fuller expression of what it means to be a Christian in at least the following: 1. They will engage in a Christian walk that is more than attending services and participating in ministries located primarily within the church for church people. 2. They will learn technics and principles to engage people in “Spiritual” conversations. 3. They will learn how to use resources like their time, friendliness, and home to more effectively lead people toward deeper encounters with Christ. 4. They will have the skill set to lead people to salvation encounters with Christ. 5. They will learn how to conduct systematic evangelistic discipleship meetings to grow the Kingdom.

Measurements that will indicate the impact of the systematic evangelistic discipleship process will include assessing: 1. the number of people involved with a systematic evangelistic discipleship process at the end of the project compared to the beginning, 2. the average Sunday morning worship attendance, 3. the number of salvations resulting from the Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process compared to the number of salvations in the three months before the project.

Basic Assumptions

The research will lead five to ten people from the Lighthouse FMC in a systematic evangelistic discipleship action-oriented process. The researcher will provide all the materials needed for the process, including copies for the next generation groups. The researcher will mentor all first-generation participants about engaging others to participate with them in their groups. The participants will be mentored in leading weekly groups and mentoring others in their Christian outreach. The researcher will train Pastor Darwin to be able to continue with the process long-term.

The researcher is making the following presuppositions: 1. There will be five to ten participants from the Lighthouse FMC who will participate in the Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process. 2. Sunday Morning average attendance baseline will be calculated and reported by the church statistician before the project. 3. The research anticipates that after completion of the eight weeks project, Sunday morning worship Attendance will increase. 4. The number of salvations per-quarter will be documented before the beginning of the project and reported by the church statistician. 5. The researcher anticipates that the number of salvations per-quarter will increase. 6. Each discipler will keep track of the number of people who make a commitment to Christ in their homegroup. 7. Each discipler will keep track of the average number of people participating in their homegroup. 8. The church statistician will track and report the average worship attendance from the beginning of the study until the end and compare that number to the average attendance before starting the project. 9. The researcher presupposes that the systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process will increase the average Sunday morning attendance and the number of people brought to salvation over the three-month time frame

before the project study. 10. A final presupposition by the researcher is that the number of people actively involved in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process will increase at the Lighthouse FMC.

Definitions

Terms and phrases defined for this project include:

Action-oriented

It is a principle that Smith and Kai write about in their book *Training for Trainers* (T4T). They write, “be a doer, not just a Hearer! Write down how God has spoken to you and what you need to obey as a result.”¹ By this term, the researcher means everything learned in this form of discipleship will be applied to everyday life. Each participant will have to account for how they are integrating what they learn into their lives.

Discipler

The principle that Jesus and many writers in the New Testament use. Smith and Kai use these examples. “He (Jesus) wants these new believers to be true disciples. And what do disciples do? Every disciple learns how to obey Jesus’ commands, including witnessing to others and then training these new believers to repeat the process. Every disciple should be a trainer.”² Smith and Kai connect the concepts of trainer and discipler. “every obedient believer could become a witness and discipler of others.”³ This researcher is using the term “discipler” to mean one who trains the next generation of believers.

¹ Steven Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*. (Monument CO.: WIGTake Resources, 2011), 222.

² Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 35.

³ Ibid. 25.

Generational

It is a term used to distinguish between one who is teaching and one who is learning. As Smith and Kai observe, these generations can be much more than one teacher and one student. The student of one generation is expected to become the teacher in the next generational training. “Yet in one random sampling, the assessment team met representatives of 18 generations of believers who had come to Christ throughout the 4—5 year time-span. That meant that the first generation in the room was responsible for leading the second generation to faith and discipling them. The group could track 18 generations of discipleship and church planting down to the 18th generation believer sharing a testimony. As they listened to this 18th generation believer, they were struck by how similar his evangelism and discipleship pattern was to that which was taught in the first generation.”⁴ The terms Generation or Generational will be used in connection with one person leading another into a relationship with Christ, with one group starting another group and with one group or several groups starting a church.

The Generational Concept

This is rooted in 2 Timothy 2:2, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” There are four generations of reproduction in this scripture. The model is Paul to Timothy, Timothy to faithful men (or people), trustworthy people to others. Each of these generations is a generation of spiritual birth. Loving accountability is a process in which disciplers are trained. Through this training, disciplers make commitments, and each week at the discipler meeting, they reported how they did in completing their commitments. When disciples accomplish their obligations,

⁴ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 21.

there is an appropriate celebration. There are struggles, proper counsel, and a correction when there has been a lack of follow-through.

Loving Accountability

The move to loving mutual accountability: Did the disciples do what God told them to do (Include yourself in this)?⁵ Smith and Kai were referring to the weekly process of training in which trainers (disciplers) participated. Each week people are asked if they completed what God told them to do. They talked about what went right or wrong and celebrated or processed alternatives. If they did not follow through, the instructor would lovingly confront and talk about why and how next week can be better? Smith and Kai also write, “One of the most critical parts is one we often neglect: loving accountability. If the command from Jesus is to 1) follow Him (love Him) and 2) fish for men (love others), then we ought to hold each other accountable to do this!”⁶

Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship

This is the central theme of this research. In his book *Biblical Church Growth*, McIntosh writes regarding church members, “They need to be recruited, trained, motivated, and deployed in ministry. They need to be provided with adequate resources and the necessary tools to do their ministry. Churches that experience biblical church growth systematically recruit, train, and deploy members in ministry. Declining churches rarely have any defined system to identify potential volunteers, assess their giftedness, and place them in appropriate ministry positions.”⁷

⁵ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 103.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁷ Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work With God To Build A Faithful Church*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 2003), 118.

Consequently, for there to be church growth, there needs to be a “systematic” process to equip believers who are not effectively involved with evangelistic discipleship to be using tools, processes, and structures to connect people with the Gospel message effectively. At the center of the phrase, the word “evangelical” serves to focus on the central purpose of the Great Commission, which is winning others to Christ or evangelizing. It also implies that believers are to spend time with unbelievers, building life-giving relationships with them.”⁸ McIntosh states that winning people to Christ is equal to evangelizing. This researcher is equating evangelizing and evangelistic in that both of these terms hold the essential process of leading people from spiritual death to life. McIntosh also writes about the end product of evangelism, disciples; “Churches make disciples by finding the lost, folding them into the body, and building them up in the faith. They balance their disciple-making process around the three elements of evangelism, assimilation, and maturation.”⁹ Connecting this with Smith and Kai, who write, “In the weeks that follow, as your trainees go out to witness, some lost people will say “yes” to following Jesus. Once they do, how do your trainers systematically move them through the discipleship process in a way that can reproduce generation by generation? Short-term and long-term discipleship.”¹⁰

In his book *Strategic Disciple Making*, Malphurs wrote, “If we want to use it biblically, we must use it to describe the ongoing life of a disciple (believer in Christ) that involves following the Savior and becoming more like him. People become disciples through evangelism. Then they grow as Christians through the process of discipleship. To talk about Christian

⁸ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, . 65.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁰ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 223.

discipleship properly, we must use the term to refer to the growth of a disciple (Christian) in every area of his or her life.”¹¹ “Discipleship,” then, is the key to church growth.

Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship connects all the three elements above to form the central theme of this research. It is a system that will help a new disciple develop the skills, techniques, and principles to effectively reach out to people and engage them in spiritual conversation. And then successfully invite them to engage in a discipleship process that will result in their salvation and, subsequently, the reproduction of themselves. This process will have a reproducible system and structure and emphasize connecting with and leading people to salvation through Christ. There is a Biblically-based discipleship process that integrates the principles of the Bible, with First Church practices, in an action-based process that has loving accountability.

Limitations

Limitations for this project included that the Lighthouse FMC is a rural church in mid-Michigan. The Lighthouse FMC is located near a small community of three-hundred people and is in the middle of a ten-mile circumference with thirty thousand.

Delimitations

Delimitations for this project include choosing who will be included in the first group of discipler trainees. The researcher will have a developed process and material that the disciplers will engage with for their training. All the trainers will be adults from the Lighthouse FMC. The initial program will be set up for eight weeks, and a follow-up study will be outside the bounds of this thesis study and will continue for one to three years. Participants are adult members and attenders from the Lighthouse FMC who have accepted the gospel message and received Christ

¹¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making*: (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2009), 34.

as Savior. The participants have been part of at least one other discipleship group at the Lighthouse FMC.

Thesis Statement

The researcher expects that if the church engages in a systematic discipleship program, there will be growth in attendance. The proposed program will provide a process for the reproductive development of individuals, groups, and churches. The program will inform participants of their biblical responsibility and help them engage effectively in activities, processes, and methods of introducing people in their circles of influence to the gospel message and disciple them in doing the same with their circles of influence. This process will produce systematic growth in the number of people the Lighthouse FMC is working with, a deepening of their understanding of the early church's mission, and Christ's Call on all Christians to live a systematic evangelistic discipleship action-oriented lifestyle.

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

In chapter two, the writer will review the current literature related to discipleship and evangelism. The writer will review subject areas that are well written about by other authors. The writer will also explore “literature gaps” that are not researched in the current literature. The writer will examine both theoretical and theological implications impacting the subject matter of this thesis study.

In the literature review, the most robust themes were: 1. the importance of disciples making disciples and methods to accomplish this task, 2. the Holy Spirit’s role in disciple-making movements, 3. the missional and cultural aspects of discipleship, 4. Church growth and Church planting based on discipleship, and 5. the connection between evangelism and discipleship.

Discipleship Characteristics

Smith & Kia, Coleman, and Christopherson all agree that a part of a disciple’s definition is related to being a follower of Christ. Smith and Kia focus on disciples becoming like their master, emphasizing disciplers disciplining others as their master disciplined them.¹² Coleman writes about *obedience* being a core characteristic for disciples. Disciples obey their masters, and a part of what Christ told his disciples is that they would go and make disciples.¹³ Obedience is a foundational concept reflecting what these authors see in the Church’s early life and Christ’s ministry. Through his relationships with His disciples, he demonstrated discipleship practices that Smith and Kai, and Coleman point to as key for growth in the Kingdom. Jesus was relational and directive in His discipleship. He built into those He disciplined and demanded action to result

¹² Steven Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*. (Monument CO.: WIGTake Resources, 2011), 43.

¹³ Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1972), 29, 93.

from what the disciples learned. Luke 9, with the twelve disciples and Luke 10 with the seventy disciples, are examples of Christ's expectation of action from those He discipled. These concepts are biblically rooted and reflect essential elements of what this researcher intends the students will master in the Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process during the project phase of this thesis project. Christopherson makes the distinction that those being discipled are the fruit.¹⁴ Implicit in what these authors write is that disciples are to follow and reflect the character, nature, and mission of their master. Christopherson ties church planting into this understanding of making disciples.¹⁵ Church planting is a natural outflow of what evangelistic discipleship looked like in the first church, as recorded in the Bible. There is a fundamental expectation from the ministry of Christ and the early church. As demonstrated in the book of Acts, believers' multiplication is the natural outcome of healthy believers and local churches.

Christopher Payne looks at discipleship in terms of instruction, connection, and service. He did not frame discipleship as an evangelistic process.¹⁶ This understanding of discipleship does not reflect discipleship's fuller expression, as demonstrated in the first-century church. This writer believes that instruction for instruction's sake is a post-first-century development. Reflected in the book of Acts, Timothy, and other New Testament writings are action-oriented platforms for teaching the hearer and reader. Christ informs His disciples, both the twelve and the disciples' broader expression, what He wants them to do, and expects action.

¹⁴ Jeff Christopherson and Mac Lake, *Kingdom First: Starting Churches that Shape Movements*. (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2015) 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 204, 218.

¹⁶ Christopher R. Payne, "An Investigation of Adversity In Christian Living And Proposal for Discipleship response" Doctor of Ministry Thesis, Liberty University Baptist Seminary, 2014, 99—102. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/980> (access July 24, 2019).

J.D. Payne writes that evangelism is a part of discipleship, and it is through this process churches are planted. Matthew 28:19—20 records these words, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations teaching them to observe all that I commanded you ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”¹⁷ Jesus commands the disciples to go out and make disciples with specific instructions on how to accomplish this task with the expectation that they would do what He told them to do. The book of Acts is the story of the disciples engaging this task. This scripture supports Payne’s thoughts; there is a connection between evangelism and discipleship or training. J.D. Payne defines discipleship as a weapon in Spiritual Warfare. He focuses on fruitfulness as a disciple’s central characteristic. Specifically, the type of fruitfulness that Smith and Kai write about which is disciples who make disciples.¹⁸ This concept of discipleship has elements of conversion or evangelism, training, and expected outcomes for disciples. These expected outcomes include but are not limited to bearing the fruit of leading others in the process of evangelism and discipleship, the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22 — 23, “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”¹⁹ A disciple who produces this type of fruit becomes a weapon of spiritual warfare.

McIntosh, Stetzer, Beard, and Snellings agree with the previous authors on the critical role obedience plays in disciples’ lives. Obedience is a foundational characteristic for maturing healthy disciples. Hebrews 5:8 — 9, referring to Jesus, reads, “Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect”²⁰ Understanding perfection as a

¹⁷ Matthew 28:18—19,. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture referenced in this paper will be from the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible.

¹⁸ J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys and Hows of Global Church Planting*. (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 4, 17, 75, 87.

¹⁹ Galatians 5:22 – 23.

²⁰ Hebrews 5:8 – 9.

goal of a maturing Christian, we can make a connection in this scripture between obedience and Christian maturity. Snellings notes that disciples must believe in Jesus' assertion of his authority over death. It is their obedience to Jesus that, in part, allows them to access the benefits of Jesus' power over death. It is within this authority that Jesus commands disciples to go out and evangelize by making disciples.²¹

McIntosh writes about obedience in terms of adherence to the Great Command in Matthew 28, which is a “measure of a perfect church” and the “place that God can bless His people with a fruitful ministry.”²² McIntosh's statement agrees with Stetzer, who understands Jesus' command in Matthew 28 to be one that begins and ends with obedience. Stetzer goes on to write that Christians in the early church “acted on these commands and demonstrated that a healthy church reproduced itself.”²³ The concept of multiplying believers, groups, and churches is a fundamental theme and practice of the first-century church. These authors are not focusing on a legalist understanding of obedience. They focus on the fruit it produces in an individual's life and the growth in the Kingdom as new people become a part of Christ's family.

Beard makes a case for obedience to current revelation and to the Bibles as a baseline to discern and obey the Spirit of God.²⁴ He recognizes that the Bible teaches in John 16:13, “When

²¹ Carey C. Snellings, “Developing a Comprehensive Discipleship Strategy for Hunting Baptist Church” Doctorate of Ministry Thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016, 27—29. <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1845038109?accountid=12085> (access July 24, 2019).

²² Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work With God To Build A Faithful Church*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 2003), 77, 168.

²³ Ed Stetzer & Daniel Im, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches That Multiply*. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 30, 34, 321.

²⁴ Christopher Beard, “Missional Discipleship: Discerning Spiritual-Formation Practices and Goals Within the Missional Movement,” *Missiology: International Review* 43, no. 2 (2015): 183, 190—191, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/0091829614563059> (access July 24, 2019).

the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth....”²⁵ Disciples are people who obey the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

Coleman states this a little differently, “Obedience to Christ thus was the very means by which those in his company learned more truth.”²⁶ The disciples who lived with Christ learned in an experiential context. They saw the truth as well as heard the truth, and then lived the truth. Coleman understands this to be the best discipleship context and the only way for disciples to learn more and more truth. Disciples must act on the truth that they know if they want to receive additional truth. Kia and Smith build on the foundation of the great commission focusing on the statement, “Teach them all that I have commanded you.” They make an insightful distinction between disciples who study the Word and those who understand the Word to be authoritative and obeyed through acting on what they learn.²⁷ Although these authors state this a little differently, they make the case that obedience and disciple development is rooted in living out biblical truth. Therefore, when disciples act out the intellectual truth they have learned through life behaviors, the disciple is transformed into a closer reflection of Christ and is positioned to learn more. This writer understands this concept to be related to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. When disciples act on or invest what they know in obedience, they receive more. When they do not use what they see, they even lose that.

Christopherson points to *love* as an essential ingredient for obedience and that obedience is a healthy disciple’s natural fruit. Through this fruit of obedience, a disciple produces the fruit

²⁵ John 16:13.

²⁶ Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 48.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 42, 290.

of an expanding Kingdom.²⁸ In John 14:15, Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command...” Love is an essential ingredient if disciples are going to obey Christ’s commands.

Methods of Discipleship

J.D. Payne agrees with Smith and Kai at a fundamental level that church planting is a natural outcome of evangelism or evangelistic discipleship. They agree that disciples need to begin discipling others soon after they come to Christ. J.D. Payne writes that in the New Testament, Paul established churches and brought believers into them, teaching them to obey Christ. He quotes Patrick O’Connor, “Disciples who are shepherds-in-training should begin at once to train others...”²⁹ This concept is somewhat counter-intuitive in today’s education-driven culture. Smith and Kai teach that new believers need to immediately share the gospel message with the people in each person’s circle of influence.³⁰

Smith and Kai write that the goal is to make trainers out of everyone. The authors refer to 2 Timothy 2:2 as a foundational concept to their evangelic discipleship. They go on to teach that new Christians should immediately begin to witness to people.³¹ J.D. Payne writes about principles to develop discipleship strategies, whereas Smith and Kai give a particular process for evangelistic discipleship. J.D. Payne lays out five principles for forming discipleship methods. It must be biblically base, stewardship-oriented, contextually relevant, structurally adaptable, and reproducible.³² Smith and Kai, and J.D. Payne agree that there needs to be a systematic, reproducible approach to discipleship. These authors understand that the best practice is to make

²⁸ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 222.

²⁹ Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 105 — 106.

³⁰ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 52.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 90, 131.

³² Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 157.

outreach locally based as soon as possible. This locally-based discipleship is the best way to make discipleship contextually and culturally relevant. Only in the local context can a process be developed structurally adaptable and reproducible for that specific group. These authors also agree that the discipleship process should be financially locally supported and lead. Locally resourced and lead discipleship is the most effective way to leverage evangelism in the local church.

Smith and Kai have a detailed process for evangelistic discipleship that includes outreach, teaching, accountability, prayer, contextual strategies.³³ McIntosh focuses on the process of evangelism, assimilation, and maturation.³⁴ The distinction between Smith and Kai and McIntosh is that Smith and Kai advocate putting a structure in place that empowers, equips, and sends individuals out to evangelize, begin the assimilation process and develop disciples as they are making other disciples. McIntosh makes the case that accomplishing evangelism, assimilation, and maturing through a corporate structure is plausible. He argued that there are teams, experienced leaders, church structures in place to implement this process. Smith and Kai understand discipleship in the early church as accomplishing the process in relationships and small groups. Coleman wrote that the church should follow the method that Jesus used with His Disciples focusing on daily discipleship with the few who will disciple others.³⁵ Coleman agrees with Smith and Kai that discipleship should more closely reflect the church as described in the gospels with Jesus and His disciples and the discipleship model reflected in the book of Acts. One difference between these authors is that Smith and Kai give a detailed structure and process,

³³ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 35, 43, 115, 306.

³⁴ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 62, 133.

³⁵ Coleman, *Master Plant of Evangelism*, 21, 23, 25, 28, 33, 53, 65.

whereas Coleman writes about this in terms of principles that should guide the discipleship process.

All these sources see the need for discipleship to be biblically based and culturally relevant. Christopherson's approach to discipleship is more about creating a culture that will help individuals engage in personal discipleship. They are encouraged to work at becoming like Christ. There are specific characteristics given to help measure if an individual is making progress. Is there fruit? By this, Christopherson means that disciples are bringing others to Christ, they are obedient to the Word, and they are experiencing character development. This growth is accomplished by disciplers spending time with disciples, asking people to do a self-assessment, and helping them to move one more step. This concept is similar to the principles on which Coleman writes.³⁶

Although these three authors all believe that discipleship is critical to Kingdom growth, they approach it very differently. Smith and Kai have a systematic approach that involves structures and methods. McIntosh lays out general principles to be applied. Christopherson takes a much more individualistic approach, which measures how one person develops in their Christian walk, using metrics focused on the person. Stetzer & Im understand small groups as a part of living life together, resulting in discipleship and maturity.³⁷ Johnson writes that discipleship is more organic than it is in a classroom situation.³⁸ Although McIntosh and

³⁶ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 188—191.

³⁷ Stetzer & Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 256.

³⁸ Troy Johnson, "A Discipleship-Driven Church Planting Manual: Beginning with the End in Mind" Doctor of Ministry Thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2013, 181—182, <http://liberty.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42JgAfZbU9kYePKT8yzNjIDVr6WxBSeDjqMCdJ9pKmgZkm5KESg3KySD7zxSKMhJBF-MoJCbCDqJk4eBNQ0Y-qm8UJqbwdDNNcTZQ7c4Px66qyBIZBRGg8d5IgHtAqckENI8KbPQago71JF0PADjlON8> (access July 24, 2019).

Johnson are focusing on similar outcomes, their methods and processes are dissimilar. McIntosh understands discipleship as a more centralized process, and Johnson believes that discipleship is best developed in the field, doing outreach, and developing others in their faith walk. Chai puts the focus on the need of the Holy Spirit to empower discipleship,³⁹ and Willis & Clements connect “joining God on *Mission*” with engaging with the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the Great Command.⁴⁰

The Impact of The Holy Spirit on Discipleship

Smith and Kai depict the Holy Spirit as Attacker, Teacher, and Comforter. An attacker in that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, Teacher referencing John 14:26, “... He (The Holy Spirit) will teach you all things...,” Comforter as in Acts 9:31, “being built up...and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.”⁴¹ They also write that “scholars of Acts agree: This movement (in the book of Acts) took place in the power of the Holy Spirit through the lives of ordinary people. Apostles equipped believers who were just a few weeks or months old to reach out and disciple others. A discipleship revolution ignited of loving evangelistic zeal and fervent obedience that took the Kingdom into the remotest corners of known the world in years and decades, *not centuries.*”⁴² Coleman points out that there were only one hundred and twenty people who stayed in Jerusalem to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and God used these people to spark

³⁹ Yan Chai, “The Spirit-Empowered Discipleship in Acts” Doctorate of Ministry Thesis, Liberty University Baptist Seminary, 2015, 3,12,61,65. ; ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1809104068). Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1809104068?accountid=12085> (access July 24, 2019).

⁴⁰ Dustin Willis & Brandon Clements, *The Simplest Way To Change The World: Biblical Hospitality A of Life*. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2017), 174.

⁴¹ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 29, 73—78.

⁴² Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 31.

a worldwide transformation.⁴³ Colman also writes, “From beginning to end, experiencing the living Christ in any personal way is the work of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁴ Specifically, as it relates to empowering discipleship, he writes there is a “direct relationship between bearing witness of Christ and ultimate victory over the world” that can only “be brought together by the power of the Holy Spirit.” “One cannot come without the other. Bringing these two dynamic facts together by the power of the Holy Spirit is the climactic genius of Jesus’ strategy of evangelism.”⁴⁵

McIntosh writes,

Reading further in John 15, we see that the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering the witness of the Twelve is expounded: “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father ... He will testify about Me, and you will testify also” (vv. 26—27). Why did Christ select and appoint his disciples? Why did he send the Holy Spirit to empower them? The answer is to win new converts to Christ, converts who would remain his followers.⁴⁶

Stetzer points out how the Holy Spirit moves in the lives of people when they have gone through a life crisis. Through these crises, the Holy Spirit brings people to faith in Jesus Christ.⁴⁷ Stetzer reminds his readers that Evangelistic Disciple-making can begin even in the most challenging times of life.

Christopherson writes, “As the spiritual transformation process happens through the Holy Spirit’s influence, people naturally become increasingly uncomfortable with certain former attitudes and behaviors.”⁴⁸ The Holy Spirit partners with the disciple-maker to move on a person’s heart to prepare to hear and receive God’s Word.

⁴³ Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 28.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 57.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 91.

⁴⁶ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 57.

⁴⁷ Stetzer and Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 303.

⁴⁸ Christopherson with Lake, *Kingdom First*, 199.

Christopher Payne focuses on Paul’s writing in Romans 5:1—5 that tells the reader God is discipling us to be people who look more like Christ through the process of suffering, and this is possible because the Holy Spirit infills the believer.⁴⁹ These writers emphasize the opportunity for evangelistic work to be accomplished in the midst of life struggles.

Johnson informs his readers, “We experience the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit, and He brings us comfort. In the same way that the Holy Spirit was with Jesus, he will be with us.” The Holy Spirit empowered Christ to follow the Will of God, and He will do the same for all Christians. His will, as recorded in Matthew 28, is to make disciples.

Chai’s writing focuses on the Holy Spirit and the need for His work to be present if evangelism will occur in any form. She writes, “Holy Spirit is the underlining story of the book of Acts,”⁵⁰ “He (The Holy Spirit) is the causal agent for the transformation of the Apostles Evangelism,”⁵¹ “The Holy Spirit is vital for today.”⁵² “The Holy Spirit enables us to offer deliverance today.”⁵³ Chai contends that the Holy Spirit is the underlining power for all that occurred in the book of Acts and will happen in the church’s ministry today.

Vanhoozer understands the Holy Spirit’s work as fundamental to all that God wants to do in and through the church. Vanhoozer writes, “The Holy Spirit is set apart to minister Christ: to witness to Christ, to illuminate our minds to receive the knowledge of Christ, to renew our nations to form Christ in us. To be in Christ through the Spirit is to have been transferred into his Kingdom (Col. 1:13) and thus to enjoy citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20). This change in

⁴⁹ C. Payne, *An Investigation of Adversity in Christian Living and Proposal for Discipleship Response*, 15.

⁵⁰ Chai, *The Spirit-Empowered Discipleship In Acts*, 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 12.

⁵² *Ibid.* 39.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 31.

citizenship may not be empirically verifiable, but it is neither fantasy nor pretense. On the contrary, the doctrine is simply the attempt to spell out (indicate) what is “in Christ.” Moreover, other research agrees that a model cannot determine evangelism and discipleship’s success if the church attempts to accomplish these tasks without the Holy Spirit. More detail is available in the literature reviewed and is included within the broader review of all the material.⁵⁴

Mission

This writer discovered a strong theme of missional-related concerns throughout the literature reviewed thus far. Smith and Kai write that the central mission in the Bible is to preach the gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world.⁵⁵ They build on this concept by writing that each disciple must be built up in Christlikeness to do works to fulfill God’s mission. “This is a perfect balance between being and doing.”⁵⁶ Coleman indicates that the primary mission is to “give a demonstration of what to believe,” to “mentor” and stand among the people and say, “Follow me, I know the way.”⁵⁷ These writers agree that action is key to the mission.

McIntosh writes that the “Church is on a life-giving mission.”⁵⁸ He also writes the ultimate goal of the church is to bring glory to God, and the way to do that is to accomplish the purpose of the Great Commission.⁵⁹ Stetzer and Im write that *Missional* churches who are *on a mission* “focus on the Great Commission by reaching the unchurched, not by seeking to attract area Christians.”⁶⁰ Christopherson states, “The goal of the church isn’t to gather people into the

⁵⁴ Vanhoozer, *Putting on Christ. (Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care.)*, 163.

⁵⁵ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 64.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 186—187.

⁵⁷ Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 100—101.

⁵⁸ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 34.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 63.

⁶⁰ Stetzer & Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 7.

sacred assembly but to equip to release into the sacred Kingdom mission.”⁶¹ Wills and Clements understand hospitality and the use of home as key to engaging in the mission of the gospel.⁶² A foundational theme among all these writers is that the Great Commission is central to its mission.

Each source has expected results for its method, model, or principles for building a model. Smith and Kai’s model expands the Kingdom through disciples multiplying disciples and planting churches as the expected result. They believe that through the process of discipling others, each disciple will grow into Christlikeness and maturity.⁶³

Coleman expected the church to repeat the world-changing power of the example of Jesus pouring into His disciples and their ministry to others.⁶⁴ Christopherson gives four marks of Kingdom success as his expectations, new believers, new disciple-makers, new communities of faith, and transformed communities.⁶⁵

Stetzer and Im, and J.D. Payne agree Kingdom expansion is a natural outcome of evangelistic discipleship. Stetzer and Im write that biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches being planted rather than transfer growth.⁶⁶ J.D. Payne writes, “Biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches.”⁶⁷

Christopher Payne’s focus was on adversity in a Christians’ life and how discipleship needs to address healthy ways of working through it. He expects that if churches engage in this

⁶¹ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 180.

⁶² Wills and Clements, *The Simplist Way To Change the World: Biblical Hospitality As a Way of Life*. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2017), 51—52.

⁶³ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 34, 64, 305.

⁶⁴ Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 89—93.

⁶⁵ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom first*, 28—31.

⁶⁶ Stetzer & Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 252.

⁶⁷ J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 87, 141.

type of discipleship, the church will be more beneficial. ⁶⁸ Wilson also sees Kingdom expansion as a natural outcome of biblical discipleship. ⁶⁹

Literature Gaps

In the literature reviewed by this researcher, there is a lack of exploration in at least four areas: Discipleship focused on family, separating culture from evangelism and the gospel message, storytelling the Bible and gospel message, and the use of home as an evangelistic and discipleship tool.

Discipleship Focused on Families

Smith and Kai write, “To begin that process, trainees are taught to witness regularly, mainly to their Oikos (Greek word for “household” meaning your circle of influence). Your Oikos is composed of family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. After people believe, trainees then begin to form training groups (whether just two people or 20 people) in which they pass on to the new trainees what they have learned. They train this next generation to become trainers by regularly witnessing to their own Oikos and forming other training groups in which they pass on what they have learned, in order to help the next generation become trainers.” ⁷⁰

McIntosh adds to this stream of thought by writing about what God planned to redeem the world. McIntosh points to the account of Abram as an example of God’s approach. God reaches out to one person, Abram. Through that connection, God was able to connect with Abram’s family, his extended family or “tribe,” and finally, in Abram’s case, a nation. The nature of this strategy, according to McIntosh, is to target a specific person with the gospel

⁶⁸ Christopher Payne, *An Investigation of Adversity In Christian Living And Proposal for Discipleship response*, 90 — 94.

⁶⁹ Wilson, *The Description of Church Growth in Acts*, 330.

⁷⁰ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 94.

message. Build a relationship with this person and grow the Kingdom in her or his culture through each specific person's family, friends, and community, and the world.

McIntosh quotes the Bible, "I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Isa. 49:6). The coming of Jesus through the nation of Israel was the key to bringing blessing to all the nations of the world. Indisputably, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Jesus loved the entire world, not just certain select segments of it. He eventually would die for "our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).⁷¹ The thrust of this part of McIntosh's argument is the coming of Jesus was the beginning of the fulfillment of Isa. 49:6 and that the gospel must reach through individuals to get beyond cultural barriers so that every tribe or group of people can be reached with the message of redemption.

Snellings writes about the need to train parents to fulfill their biblical responsibility to disciple their children in Hunting Creek Baptist Church. The fundamental element of this strategy was to focus on training parents how to have deepening levels of spiritual conversations with their children. This was accomplished in part through weekly accountability and training groups for parents. A specific curriculum is used to help parents effectively engage their children in ever-deepening spiritual conversations. The parents become the primary tool in an intentional intergenerational multiplication process. The other authors this researcher has read did not focus on this fundamental area of discipleship.

⁷¹ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 137—138.

Separating Culture from Evangelism and the Gospel

This researcher understands evangelism to be a part of the discipleship process. Smith and Kai write,

Perhaps the single most important start you can make to a CPM strategy utilizing T4T is to mobilize believers from within your context or from a near culture people group.” (Near culture is defined as national believers from another community who speak the same or a similar language). Mobilization means that you cast vision to these believers about what God can do in and through them and then begin to train those who agree to walk forward in the T4T process.⁷²

There is a difference in each culture that requires an understanding of history, politics, economics, current events, as well as language and imagery. These and other cultural differences, if not understood, can cause challenges to a credible presentation of the gospel and continued efforts in discipleship.

McIntosh points out that Paul adjusted his approach to expressing the Gospel message when he connected with different groups. “An example of how Paul adjusted his style to reach various cultures is revealed in Acts 17. While they were all part of the Roman Empire, the people of Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens were culturally different. Each group had distinct attitudes, customs, values, symbols, and idioms. Paul met and adapted to a new set of cultural circumstances in each city, approaching the people in defined ways.”⁷³ Chan’s focus is on how culture has altered the gospel message when he explains how to evaluate what cultural concepts have invaded each of our gospel presentations and how to use local cultural context to express the gospel message.⁷⁴ The two aspects of this are that the communicators have to understand the culture they are evangelizing and disciplining to communicate the gospel message effectively.

⁷² Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 189.

⁷³ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 128.

⁷⁴ Chan, *Evangelism In a Skeptical World*, 129—143.

Second, the communicators need to make sure that their culture filter has not added to or altered the biblical gospel message.

Storytelling the Gospel

The use of “Storytelling the Gospel” as a theme in the written material was minimal in the information this researcher discovered. Smith and Kai wrote, “One common misperception about oral methods is that stories are all that is needed. We often remember the stories Jesus told and therefore assume that stories alone are sufficient. Examine Jesus’ interactions. Even though He used stories a lot, He almost always switched modes to a didactic application or gave a moral to the story in terms of propositional truth.”⁷⁵

McIntosh wrote, “Adapting to his culture, Jesus spoke in the languages and communication patterns of his time, used illustrations and stories that were understood by people of his culture, ate the food appropriate to his people, observed the customs of his family, and wore the dress of his contemporaries. To do otherwise would have been ludicrous as well as ineffective.”⁷⁶ The writer of this thesis contends that the power of the story has become a lost tool to many Christians in effectively expressing the saving good news of the gospel.

Chan lays out the power of “story” for his reader. He focuses on how to tell stories and how to convey the gospel message story.⁷⁷ McIntosh and Chan both write about the power of story, illustrating its effectiveness by referencing the ministry style of Jesus and the stories of ordinary people who have been impacted by His ministry.

⁷⁵ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 228—229.

⁷⁶ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 127.

⁷⁷ Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World*. 173—180.

Home as a tool for Evangelism and Discipleship

The more profound concept conveyed by some of the authors this researcher found was hospitality. McIntosh pointed to John Wesley and wrote, “Wesley followed this path when he began speaking the gospel directly to the miners of England and gathered them into small groups that met in homes rather than in cathedrals. Both Luther and Wesley appropriately adapted to the cultural setting of their day.”

Wills and Clement focused the most on Home and Hospitality than any other writer that the research writing this thesis discovered. They wrote that one of the best evangelistic tools Christians have is their home. They also note that we should transform our families from a retreat to an outreach center.

The secret weapon for gospel advancement is hospitality, and you can practice it whether you live in a house, an apartment, a dorm, or a high-rise. “the world could use more ordinary Christians opening their ordinary lives so others can see what life in light of the gospel looks like. And what better place to watch Christians than in their homes?”⁷⁸

They continue,

“Pursuing biblical hospitality as a way of life will take a very intentional shift in your life and mentality. It will happen only by offering the entire way you view your home to God and letting Him turn it upside down in the best way possible. You’ll have to learn to think of your home primarily from a Christian perspective and let that mindset uproot the ways your culture has taught you to view your home.”⁷⁹

They also make the point, “Any time we practice hospitality, we put human flesh on this gospel story.”⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Wills and Clement, *The simplest Way to Change the World*, 18—19.

⁷⁹ Wills and Clement, *The simplest Way to Change the World*, 35.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 42.

Theological Foundations

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, there is a theme that training is God's desire for His people. Actions-oriented discipleship is one type of practice found in the Bible and the current literature. This training directs people to act or live a lifestyle that reflects God's desires for each of our lives. In Genesis 18:19, God says that he chose Abraham, "that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice." In Psalms 78, the writer asks the reader to listen to the teaching and pass the instruction on to the next generation. There is a theme that expresses the need for generational training. Jesus makes a case for the need for training as recorded in Luke 6:40, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone, when he is fully trained, will be like his teacher." Verse 40 describes what Jesus is doing in this discourse: he is training disciples to be like him, forming a people of God who will "see," who live by the norms and commitments of the reign of God. That also means, in the world that they inhabit, that like him, they will experience rejection."⁸¹

Bob Russell writes, "Excellent leaders watch out for the dangers of Boyle's Law: If not controlled, work will flow to the most competent person until he is swamped." When Moses became overburdened with counseling responsibilities (Ex. 18), his father-in-law wisely advised him to delegate the duties by training several men to help him. When the Church in Jerusalem grew to the extent that the twelve apostles began experiencing time pressures, they decided to select seven men to care for welfare needs so they could continue giving themselves to "prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4)."⁸² Making the agreement that teaching needs to be delegated or shared with many others to impact the world as God intends.

⁸¹ John T. Carroll, *Luke*. (Ebookcentral-Proquest, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2012) 156.

⁸² Bob Russell, *When God Builds a Church: Ten Principles for Growing a dynamic church*. (Kindle Edition, Howard Books, 2000), 87.

Building on the concept that teaching/training/discipleship is a desire of God for His people is the commands and directives of Jesus, the example of His life and instructions of Paul. Jesus gave instructions to the twelve disciples in Luke 9 and the seventy-two disciples in Luke 10 to engage people with the message that the Kingdom of God has come near them. He instructed them to build relationships, heal the sick, cast out demons, and engage with persons of peace. Paul gives Timothy a structure that establishes the Old Testament understanding of training the next generation about God and how people live in the right relationship with God and one another.

In Luke 9:1 —2, we read these words, “Jesus gave the (twelve) power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, he sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal.” In Luke 10:1—3, “... sent them on ahead of him, two by two, in every town and place where he was about to go.” “... he said the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way...” In Matthew 28:18—19, he gives similar commands to the church at large, “... All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”

Christopherson writes, “Multiplication inspires churches to move from general and detached prayers for the lost to an informed, passionate, and desperate prayer life for their harvest. The church becomes personally responsible for the harvest that surrounds them, and the urgency of their prayer life correlates with that responsibility (see Mark 9:38; Luke 10:2).”⁸³ When people take the responsibility to “Earnestly Pray to the Lord of the Harvest for workers,” the hearts of those praying are changed, and then they can hear and respond to Jesus’ directive in

⁸³ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 227.

Luke 10:3, “Go.” This directive was restated in Matthew 28:19, “Go therefore and make discipleship of nations.”

Carson writes,

1. Because he now has this authority, therefore his disciples are to go and make disciples-i.e., the dawning of the new age of messianic authority changes the circumstances and impels his disciples forward to a universal ministry he himself never engaged in during the days of his flesh. His promotion to universal authority serves as an eschatological marker inaugurating the beginning of his universal mission. 2. Because of that authority, his followers may go in the confidence that their Lord is in sovereign control of “everything in heaven and on earth” (cf. Ro 8:28).

In Greek, “go” like “baptizing” and “teaching” is a participle. Only the verb “make disciples” (see below) is imperative... In Greek, “go” like “baptizing” and “teaching” is a participle... While it remains true to say that the main imperatival force rests with “make disciples,” not with “go,” in a context that demands that this ministry extends to “all nations,” it is difficult to believe that “go” has no imperatival force.⁸⁴

For our purposes and focus, one can see that Carson leads his reader to understand that with authority, Jesus commands His disciples to “go,” “make disciples,” “of all nations.” No matter if the making of disciples is intended to be done as one goes along one’s way or if there is a directive to go to other nations or people groups to make disciples, the command to make disciples of all people groups needs to be preeminent in a Christian’s life.

To this writer, Acts 1:8 indicates that we, the church, need to do both, make disciples where we are, and intentionally make disciples of others near and far away groups. Acts 1:8 reads, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul gives Timothy a structure that helps us understand what God intends for his people, and the power of possibility rests in this structure. It reads, “and what you

⁸⁴ D. A. Carson, *Matthew: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. (Kindle Additions: Zondervan, 2010), location 20329—20463.

have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”⁸⁵ Smith and Kai understand this scripture to mean, “2 Timothy 2:2 encourages multi-generational growth of trainers. The Great Commission itself commands us to teach others to obey all that Jesus commanded (which includes the Great Commission). Every generation is to be a training generation.”⁸⁶ This is one of the leverage points of this type of discipleship process. A group of people understands their biblical mandate, the command from Christ. They accept that Jesus has the authority and is empowering them as they obey the command of Jesus. They (all Christians) make disciples of others, who make disciples of still others, and even in the short run, they win many to Christ. Paul’s training element indicates that Timothy, faithful people, and others will be training the next generations what Paul had instructed Timothy. Paul’s teaching follows in line with what Jesus said, as recorded in Matthew 28:20, “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”⁸⁷ These two scriptural passages instruct us on what to do, how to do it, and in general, what to teach.

Theoretical Foundations

The research that most closely matches the thesis project is the T4T movement. Writers like Smith and Kai, whose book *T4T* gives a method for discipleship group gatherings, points to Christ’s commands to disciple others and the model He used while training his disciples.⁸⁸ In their book *T4T*, Smith and Kai show after using this type of system produced 1,738,143 baptisms

⁸⁵ 2 Timothy 2:2.

⁸⁶ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 94.

⁸⁷ Matthew 28:20.

⁸⁸ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 89 – 108, 125 – 141.

forming 158993 churches over nine years in Asia.⁸⁹ Similar results were found in Texas and North Carolina.⁹⁰

People like J. Stephan Parker write about the need for action-based discipleship and the principles for outreach connected with that concept. He describes principles for outreach that point to some of the same pathways that Smith and Kai do, but the difference seems that Smith and Kai believe that connecting with someone and talking about the gospel should be a straightforward process and without much delay. Parker sees it as a slower and gentler process.⁹¹ He also writes that to overcome the “systems” that unbelievers are raised in or how their current context shapes them. Know what fears and perspectives control unbelievers will help the Church in its mission of redemption.⁹² Sam Chan writes in his book “Evangelism in a Skeptical World” That, more often than not, “community” is the most influential factor in effective evangelism. The influence of the community in salvation supports Parker's observation that a person's context or culture can hold them back from becoming a Christian. Chan is suggesting that the most effective way to evangelize is to create a culture that Christian.⁹³ Creating a culture for evangelism is a fundamental concept to this researcher's project template and process that this writer uses in the Systematic, Evangelistic Discipleship thesis project.

Malphurs writes about the importance of a local church to put together a discipleship process that is best for them. He places discipleship on par with other critical primary ministries but not as the church's most crucial focus. Malphurs does not give many specifics about how a

⁸⁹ Ibid. 21.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 41.

⁹¹ J. Stephan Parker, *Strategic Evangelism: The Art and Practice of Personal Evangelism*, Location 1391.

⁹² Ibid. Location 731.

⁹³ Sam Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World*, 42.

discipleship process should look. He spends more time defining what the maturing disciple's characteristic should look like and less time writing about getting there.⁹⁴ Smith and Kai's approach focuses on bringing transformation to each person being disciplined with the expectation that their behavior will mirror that of the first-century church. Characteristics of evangelizing, discipling others in what they learned, focusing on the Gospel message of transformation, and planting groups and churches. This writer intends to lead a group of people through a process that will equip them to do the same.

David Garrison makes the case that "Abundant Evangelism" is a biblical foundation for healthy churches. It is a necessary step in the type of discipleship development that we read about in the first church.⁹⁵ How to empower and train the local church people in "Abundant Evangelism" focuses on this writer's thesis project. There are some primary concepts on an excellent discipleship process. Those concepts include an aggressive evangelistic strategy as part of discipleship. There are identifiable characteristics that, when measured, can shape the discipleship process making them more useful. Reproducible discipleship methods, procedures, and structures are the most effective way to train leaders quickly and empower growth in the Kingdom through discipleship.

McIntosh writes, "They did not have the right process-discipleship! Simply stated, life-giving churches make disciples by finding the lost, folding them into the body, and building them up in the faith. They balance their disciple-making process around the three elements of evangelism, assimilation, and maturation."⁹⁶ He goes on to write, "faithful churches select

⁹⁴ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planting: A 21st-Century Model For Church and Ministry Leaders*, 191.

⁹⁵ David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World*, 203.

⁹⁶ Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 62.

disciple-making methods that are culturally relevant. They hold on to their biblical values while carefully choosing techniques that are biblically sound..."⁹⁷ In writing about healthy churches, Stetzer says, "Their vision is to help start disciple-making churches that are a sign, foretaste, and instrument of God's kingdom" "⁹⁸ In healthy Churches, the discipleship process is attractive and life-changing to those who are a part of it, and for those who come in contact with these disciples.

Christopherson states, "If your vision as a church planter is merely to make disciples, the road will be long. But if God gives you a path to making disciple-making disciples, then the Kingdom impact possibilities dramatically multiply."⁹⁹ He reinforces this concept when he writes, "For emphasis, we like to say 'to make disciple-making disciples' you need to inspire a vision for multiplication."¹⁰⁰ Discipleship, for the sake of discipleship, is not the most biblical expression of God's desire for expansion and Christian development. Christopherson helps us understand that an essential aspect of healthy discipleship is to develop Christians to a place that they can multiply themselves in others. Individual multiplication leads to the proliferation of groups and, eventually, the multiplication of churches. These concepts are at the heart of the thesis project that this writer is conducting. The training that will be provided will help people develop the skills and understanding that they need to lead others to salvation and disciple them to lead the next generation to salvation and healthy life under Christ's direction.

One of the "Do's" that McIntosh writes about in his book, *Church that Works*, is "Do develop a renewed vision to reach people for Christ. The main purpose of relocating a church

⁹⁷ Ibid. 133.

⁹⁸ Stetzer & Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 86.

⁹⁹ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 218.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 207.

must be directly tied to Christ's command to make disciples of all the nations?' Relocate because you have the vision to reach people."¹⁰¹ In the context of disciple-making, McIntosh writes about "New believers" classes. "There will be some new people who need teaching in the basic doctrines of your church and the Christian faith. Thus a new believers class is another pathway some people need to follow. The purpose of this class is to teach about the basics of salvation and other beginning aspects of being a disciple of Jesus Christ."¹⁰² His focus is on intellectual training, and he does not write about the student acting on the knowledge in an evangelistic way. McIntosh focuses on the training as a primarily academic exercise, and the action orientation of this writer's thesis project is a distinction in approach. In this thesis project, there will be opportunities and expectations that the students will act on what they learn in class.

In Frank Viola's book, *From Eternity To Here*, he focused on the church as a group of people and not the individual. He writes, "It doesn't emphasize the duty of the individual disciple. It rather stresses that God's mission is bound up with the church-the community of the believers. Therefore, the divine mission is corporate instead of individualistic."¹⁰³ He comes to this conclusion, "We Christians are not simply disciples of Jesus. We are not simply believers in the Savior of the world and the Lord of creation. We are members of Christ, and the Body does not detach from Christ, the Head. The Head doesn't have one life and the body another. The body of Christ shares the same life of the risen Head."¹⁰⁴ Viola does not point to a specific training process, only that God and His body transform people to reflect who Christ is. He

¹⁰¹ Gary McIntosh, *Church that Works: Your one Step Resource For Effective Ministry*. (Grand Rapids, BakerBooks, 2004) 122.

¹⁰² Gary McIntosh, *Church that works*, 76.

¹⁰³ Frank Viola, *From Eternity To Here: Rediscovering The Ageless Purpose of God*. (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2009), 14—15.

¹⁰⁴ Viola, *From Eternity To Here*. 262—263.

writes, “Put another way, the church is the visible image of the invisible Lord. It is the corporate Christ. It is Christ in collective human expression. To Paul’s mind, the church in Corinth was none other than Jesus Christ in the city of Corinth.”¹⁰⁵ He does not give any exact steps that a church can take to help disciples bring new people into the body.

Writing about the change in England from a primarily Christian society to a mostly secular society, Keller says, “But the churches were making little adjustment. While many Christian leaders were bemoaning the cultural changes, Western churches continued to minister as before—creating an environment in which only traditional and conservative people would feel comfortable. They continued to disciple people by focusing on individual skills for their private lives (Bible study and prayer) but failed to train them to live distinctively Christian lives . . .”¹⁰⁶

Robertson writes, “No wonder the Kingdom suffers from a severe shortage of Plan A laborers, shallow spiritual depth, and far more consumers than contributors. Not enough people are imitating Jesus and passing the baton.”¹⁰⁷ Robertson’s focus is on the development process in discipleship, delineates an approach based on a relationship and information. Many of our churches continue to lose health and vitality and are declining in attendance. These churches keep doing what they always did. They do look at how they think and train about outreach or discipleship. They don’t look at how they are doing church to see if there needs to be any changes. This writer’s thesis project trains and sends disciplers out in ways that the Light House Free Methodist Church and others have not tried.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 267.

¹⁰⁶ Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced Gospel-Centered Ministry In Your City*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 253.

¹⁰⁷ Dwight Robertson, *You are God’s Plan A: And there is no plan b*. (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010), 202—203.

In His book, *Multiply Ministries*, Larry Walkemeyer distinguishes addition and multiplication as it relates to disciple-making. He uses the example of children and grandchildren to make his point. He writes that children are an addition, but grandchildren are multiplication because a person adds children. Still, when children begin to have the grandchildren of the first generation, multiple kids have kids.¹⁰⁸ Walkemeyer is referencing the same concept that Smith and Kai do in their writing in T4T. We add the first generation of disciples, but when they begin to disciple the people in their circle of influence, multiplication begins to happen, and the Kingdom grows as it did in the first century.

In his book, *The Relationship Principles of Jesus*, Tom Holladay informs his readers that Love is the primary motivator for the right behavior. He makes a distinction between loving everyone and loving someone. “Loving everyone means there is no one outside the limits of my love: someone means I can only practice love toward people I am with right now.”¹⁰⁹ Both of these concepts are motivations for reaching out and discipling people. The writer of this thesis contends that people cannot effectively evangelize and disciple people without loving them.

Gorge G. Hunter directs his readers to 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 in his book *Radical Outreach*. “Paul emphasizes in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 that Christians are called, and gifted, by the Holy Spirit, to be in *ministry* with Pre-Christian people; We are entrusted with both “the message of reconciliation” and “the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18—19).¹¹⁰ Hunter is another writer who points to the biblical mandate for all Christians to be involved in evangelism and discipleship.

Larry Walkemeyer, *Multiply Ministries: The Mustard Seed Tribe*. (Indianapolis: Free Methodist Church USA, 2016), 16.

¹⁰⁹ Tom Holladay, *The Relationship Principles of Jesus*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 67.

¹¹⁰ George G. Hunter III, *Radical Outreach: The Revcovery of Apostolic Ministry & Evanelism*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 32.

These writing samples demonstrate a need for a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The above writers have pointed to the need for a deep love for God and people and a need for relational outreach and discipleship. A successful strategy will include people who love God and others and know the command given to reach out. A systematic evangelistic discipleship process will result in people reaching out and discipling people with the right motives. They will pass intellectual understanding on to the next generation and the relational imperative of loving God and others.

Through this discipleship process, people will reflect the image, nature, and character of Christ. More importantly, developing Christians will encounter the individual and corporate aspects of Christian discipleship. The best reflection of a healthy church in the area of evangelism and discipleship is a process that reaches out, enfolds in, and sends out in a quick successive process that equips and informs new Christians of their God-given responsibilities. This process is the focus of this writer's thesis project. There seems to be a lack of research using a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process in a context similar to the Light House FMC church.

Summary of Literature Review

Thus far, the literature review has considered discipleship characteristics, discipleship methods, the Holy Spirit's impact on discipleship, and the mission of the Church.

There was general agreement on some of the characteristics of disciples and discipleship. Disciples are obedient, and they reflect Jesus. They make disciples as God intends and that there will be disciples from all nations, and fruitfulness, as the natural outcome of healthy discipleship.

Points of divergence include Christopher Payne understanding discipleship in terms of instruction, connection, and community services and not focusing on discipleship's evangelistic

nature like other sources. J.D. Payne was the only one who wrote that discipleship itself is a weapon of spiritual warfare.

There was general agreement among the sources that there should be reproduction in the discipleship process, no matter the method. Smith and Kai, J.D. Payne, and Coleman understand discipleship as a process that is fundamental to Kingdom growth, including church planting. They also agree that new believers need to witness and disciple others as soon as possible.

J.D. Payne gives principles for forming a discipling process, and Smith and Kai provide a detailed plan on how to do it. Christopherson approaches discipleship by creating a culture that will help individuals in their discipleship with self-assessments.

Every source included in this review indicated that discipleship could not be accomplished without the Holy Spirit's involvement and empowerment. The sources agreed that the Great Commission was the primary mission of the Church. Although they described it differently, the focus was on accomplishing the Great Commission. Wills and Clements' approach to the Great Commission was through leveraging hospitality and home as tools.

Where then is the gap and application? Much of what these sources drew on as evidence of their model's effectiveness when they provided evidence was from the overseas mission field or settings that differ in context and culture from the Lighthouse FMC. They were more principle, structure, model, and process-oriented. Most of the church planting movements that this writer is currently aware of are overseas or urban.

There is a gap in research and application of the models and sources that this thesis reviewed in areas similar to the Lighthouse FMC, located in mid-Michigan. Specifically, the use of a systematic discipleship program intended to increase the number of new believer disciples in

small rural churches like the Lighthouse FMC. The research will continue to confirm, deny, or adjust the literature review to this point.

There is also a gap in at least four areas related to information, as noted above. These information gaps impact the problem and will be a part of the research project. The project participants will connect the gospel and discipleship process with their Circle of Influence, including their families. The participants will help shape the training and approach to discipleship in the Barryton area through the Lighthouse FMC systematic evangelistic discipleship process. Participants will gain the skills to present the gospel through storytelling, and they will act as trainers. In accomplishing this training, participants will be using their homes or some informal space. Hospitality will play a significant role in the setting for discipleship and evangelism.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

This project will address the problem that the Lighthouse FMC in Barryton, Michigan, lacks a systematic discipleship program that produces disciple-makers. The purpose of this thesis is to integrate a systematic evangelistic discipleship program into the Lighthouse FMC. This process will engage with those who are open and willing to receive training and become trainers themselves. The thesis project will be an action-oriented process that will require participants to learn and intentionally seek out and train others to be trainers.

The purpose of the thesis project is to interject a systematic evangelistic discipleship process into the church. To train attendees of the church in biblical Truth, process, methods, techniques, and structures and then mentor them in an ongoing systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The first week of this process will involve the participants completing a survey, answering additional questions on video, and participating in a group interview. The second phase of the process will involve the participants engaging in training to practice in their daily lives. The project phase will be eight weeks of training, mentoring, and practicing the training concepts.

The thesis project aims to determine if a systematic evangelistic discipleship process will influence the number of salvations, disciple-makers, discipleship groups for new believers, and the Sunday morning worship attendance. The Lighthouse FMC is a church located in rural Michigan. It has not experienced significant, consistent growth in at least twenty-two years.

Intervention Design

The participants invited to participate in the thesis project will be attendees of the Lighthouse FMC approved by Pastor Darwin Mowat of the Lighthouse FMC. The following are criteria for inclusion in the study: 1) Professing Christians; 2) Willingness to sign participation (lasting eight weeks), a consent and confidentiality agreement; 3) Individuals have been a part of other discipleship groups; 4) They expressed an interest in being a part of the thesis process. These four qualifying characteristics support the thesis project's purpose by prequalifying and determining the level of willingness and interest, and commitment to ensure the project's resourcing with the needed participants to complete the project's thesis phase.

The Pre-intervention steps include the following: two weeks before the intervention thesis project begins, the researcher will work with the Lighthouse FMC lead pastor to choose up to fifteen people who might be willing to participate. These people should have expressed an interest in the project and been involved with other discipleship processes to qualify to be involved in this thesis project. The participants will sign a form agreeing to work with the researcher on this process for eight weeks. It is this researcher's goal to have five to ten people involved in the project.

The researcher will begin to collect the historical data needed for the project comparison the two weeks before the project starts. This data will include: Sunday morning worship attendance records, number of salvations, number of disciple-makers, number of systematic evangelistic discipleship groups, and how many new people began to attend the Lighthouse FMC the last three, six, and twelve months. The data is needed to give a baseline to compare against

the data collected in the first phase of the thesis project and the follow-up phases of six and twelve months.

One week before the intervention thesis project begins, the participants will complete a questionnaire and participate in an interview with the researcher. The information gained from the questionnaire and interview process will give a baseline about where the participants believe the church is at the start of the thesis project against where they understand the church to be after eight weeks, three months, six months, and twelve months after the project launch.

Understanding the participants will impact their willingness to reach out and have spiritual conversations that are not the norm. Information gathered through the questionnaire and interviews will be followed up in group meetings to process and ask clarifying questions. See appendices for questionnaires.

After eight weeks, three, six, and twelve months we will give the same questionnaires to mark any change. There also will be information gather specifically looking at Sunday morning attendance records, the number of salvations, the number of disciple-makers, the number of outreach-focused discipleship groups. The last category information will be gathering for is how many new people began to attend the Lighthouse FMC over the first eight weeks on the thesis project, again at the three, six-month mark and the end of twelve months.

One week before the launch of the thesis project, the researcher will interview each participant. See appendices for interview questions. The researcher will complete a review of historical information by the end of the week before the thesis project launch. We will record the interviews with a video camera. The researcher will activate the camera before the first question is read and turned off after the last answer.

The researcher will hold one or two group meetings, where the third set of questions will be asked of the group before the beginning of the project the following week. The study will limit the number of people for these group interviews to ten participants. If more than ten people participate in the thesis project, there will be two group interviews. The camera will be activated when the researcher begins an introduction to the group meeting. The researcher will turn the camera off after a statement thanking the participants for their participation. These meetings will help the research gain insight and buy-in from participants in the thesis project by listening, dialoguing, and incorporating the participants' thoughts and concerns.

The researcher will hold a group meeting with the participants to inform them of the process and answer any questions. At this meeting, the researcher will give each student the workbook they will use in the class. This meeting will about one hour.

The historical data will be gathered by looking at church records and interviewing the Lighthouse FMC pastor. Viewing church records, the researcher will collect information on the number of salvations and Sunday Morning attendance over the three, six, and twelve months. Through an interview with the Lighthouse FMC pastor, the researcher will gather information about the number of trainers/disciplers, outreach focuses groups, and how many new people have begun to attend the Lighthouse FMC over the last three, six, and twelve months. There will be a comparison of the information to the same categories after sixteen weeks of the thesis project; further comparisons of these categories will occur after completing the formal thesis project with information gathered at the six and twelve-month mark. A graph chart will convey the information. The researcher will archive the video and notes for twenty-four months. See Appendix L for IRB approval.

Intervention Plan

Project Location

The Lighthouse Free Methodist Church will be the location for the training sessions. The researcher will provide refreshments, alternate methods for worship, demonstrate what the trainers will do in their settings, and provide a copy of any material that the trainers need for the training they led. Week one is an example of what each of the eight weeks was to follow. The detailed program for each week's plan is in Appendix M.

Weekly Class Agenda

The researcher will meet with the students once a week for one and one-half hours to conduct training to inform students about Christ's command to make disciples. The objectives of this class time include giving the students a demonstration of what an in-home-study can look like. To make sure the students understand the material and are applying what they are learning in their daily lives. The goal is for the students to learn why and how to evangelize and disciple people.

The training will also give the students tools to engage people in spiritual conversations, pray with people, lead others in a discipleship process, tell their spiritual stories, and use bridge conversation. The students will be exposed to an inductive Bible study method, how to host individual or small groups in their homes for discipleship.

In part, the class sessions are intended to demonstrate what a student would do if they were going to host a discipleship group in their home. The classes always start with prayer as a home meeting would, and Spiritual Care Questions would follow. The class is using questions from Ortberg's book, *The Me I Want to Be*. The students can use other material in their home study if they choose.

The trainer will demonstrate ways that the students can lead worship each week. This will help the students plan ways that they can have worship in their home groups. Over the eight weeks of classes, the students will be introduced to vision casting and how this can help build their home discipleship group. This training will include helping them to understand that there must be a “Biblical Why” for us to do something. As an example, we teach people to disciple others because Matthew 28:18—20 instructs us to go make disciples. The “Biblical Why” case is not made with just one set of verses but is something that is supported throughout the New Testament. The students will be introduced to the concept of biblical values that guide our decisions, structures, and methodologies that will help the student accomplish the goal of multigenerational discipleship.

One of the primary purposes of in-person meetings is to hold the students accountable for the tasks that they were supposed to complete during the prior week. This is called “Loving Accountability.” Students are held accountable, but when they were not able to accomplish what they were assigned or committed to do, the group leader and other participants are there to help process through ways to overcome the obstacles to success. The detailed program is in Appendix M, and the following is the week one agenda as an example.

Agenda Week One:

Opening Prayer
Care Questions:
How is it with your soul?
Worship
Vision - Handout
 Biblical Why – Preferred Future Why
 Biblical Values that support discipleship
 Process, Methods, Structures that accomplish biblical directions
 & advance the preferred future.
 Address Spiritual health issues
Whom do we reach? “Oikos”
 Make your list.
How do we have spiritual conversations

Salvation
Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson Luke 10:1—18
Practice teaching the above lesson
Commit to lead behavior goals
Six requirements for growth
Six steps to success
Six two's in twelve
Pray for one another

Explanation of Weekly Process

Generally, during the class sessions, the researcher will teach the students about Christ's command to make disciples, reach out with the gospel message effectively, and use biblical principles to inform their decisions. The students will also learn how clearly understanding the preferred future can inform current actions or lead behaviors. Lead behaviors are the actions that the students will take to accomplish the short-term goals that they believe will end with effectively evangelizing and discipling people. This multiplication of the student includes mentoring others to multiply themselves.

Students will be introduced to processes, structures, and methods to help them succeed in Kingdom growth. They will be asked to make a list of people they influence to express God's Love. They will learn how to use an inductive Bible Study method. They will learn how to teach others using this study method.

The students will learn what "lead behaviors" are and use these actions to accomplish their goals. They will engage in the "six steps to success" process and use the "six two's in twelve" evangelistic tool to lead people towards a relationship with Christ.

The following sections will focus on the details for each week of the eight-week class giving rationale and objectives for each component.

Week One

In week one, the researcher will help the students understand what salvation is and how they can help people can enter into a relationship with Christ. This is essential for the students to grasp, and the inductive Bible Study passage Luke 10:1— 18 will expose the students to the outreach principles revealed in the scriptural passage. This section of scripture is a description of Christ's command in Matthew 28:18—20 “to go and make disciples.” The researcher is starting with this concept because it gives an active description of what the students are expected to do and an understanding of how they can accomplish this command. The student also discovers that God is enabling them to do their part. They also understand that God is preparing the hearts of people to receive the student and the gospel message.

In between the first and second class meetings that students will:

1. Pray about who in their circle of influence they should intentionally reach out to. The students will seek God to determine whom He would like them to invest in first. Their circle of influence includes family, friends, especially those who are open to learning from the student.
2. They will choose lead behaviors that they will practice throughout the week. The students will decide what lead behaviors or actions that they will focus on to advance toward their end goals. They may choose from the “6 Two’s in 12” or come up with their own action steps.
3. They will work through the inductive bible study lesson focusing on Matthew 28:18—20. Each week they will apply the questions provided in the booklet to process through a scripture. They will learn the process well enough to teach the next spiritual generation.

4. They will look for opportunities to pray for people when they make a need known. These may be people in the student's circle of influence or just someone they come across in daily life.
5. They will work through the soul, tending questions from John Ortberg's book, "The Me I Want to Be." Refer to the soul tending question in Appendix N.

During class time, the researcher will continue to build on the teaching and practice from the week before. Students will practice telling their spiritual stories with one another. Specifically, they will practice telling their salvation story. They will also practice telling other kinds of spiritual stories. These stories focus on the need of the person they are speaking with at the time. For instance, if a person expresses that their prayer need is related to needing physical healing, finances, or relationships. In that case, the student will identify when God met a similar condition in the student's life or someone they know and explain how God helped in that situation. These are essential bridge conversations that can lead to evangelistic and discipleship opportunities. The students will report to the class on how the week's practical assignments went. They will adjust their leadership behaviors as needed to accomplish their goals. The researcher will lead the group to discuss God's sovereignty and a biblical understanding of baptism. These teaching are intended to equip students to have conversations during the week with those in their circle of influence and others they have an opportunity to minister. Since this is a Free Methodist Church, the instructor will help the students understand what the church believes the Bible teaches about God's sovereignty and baptism.

This teaching includes but is not limited to defining what it means to dedicate a baby or child to the Lord, comparing this to Christening, and personally receiving the offer of salvation, and declaring this to the world by being baptized.

Each week the students will process through an inductive Bible study. For example, the week one Bible lesson will focus on Matthew 28:18—20. There are thirteen questions or directives that the students need to prepare for the inductive Bible class. The questions/directives (Instructor notes added in parentheses) are:

1. Read the verses in at least two versions. (The instructor wants the students to read at least two versions of the passage to be studied to gain a deeper understanding.)
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words. (It is important for the students to interact with the material well enough to be able to convey its meaning.)
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can. (Student exercise)
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject? (This helps the student understand how scriptural themes are supported throughout the Bible).
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written to? (When the student knows who the recipient is, they can gain a deeper understanding of what and why the communication might differ to other groups.)
6. What is the purpose or focus of the scriptural passage? (Establish the author's key themes and objectives)
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? When was it written? (This set of questions help the student understand the original intent of the writing, and that will help them understand how to apply it to their current context.)
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage? (Encourage discussion and deeper study)

9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions? (Encourage discussion and deeper study)
10. What is the most apparent meaning of this text? (Encourage discussion and deeper study)
11. Why was it written to the original audience? (This question will help the students understand the principles being communicated to the original audience and how to apply these principles to their own lives.)
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life? (Application is crucial for the learning process)
13. What insights did you gain from the passage? (Application is crucial for the learning process)

The instructor will focus the students on key concepts from Matthew 28:18—20. These included that Christ has been given all authority, and He is directing disciples to “Go.” To get out into their communities and “Make disciples.” Jesus gives the responsibility of baptizing and teaching people from all nations to His disciples.¹¹¹ Jesus is offering the same directive to the church today. It is the responsibility of Christians to go and make disciples.

Week Two

In week two, the researcher's expectation for the students is that they will intentionally engage the people of their Oikos in spiritual conversations to disciple them towards Christ. They will engage in behaviors that are measurable and will advance them towards their goals. These may include praying two times a day, seeking God to make them aware of people who are ready for them to speak. Other behaviors might be asking two people each week to a church event, intentionally looking for persons of peace, and looking for two people to disciple.

¹¹¹ Matthew 28:18—19, (ESV).

Students are expected to find at least one person during week two to tell one of their Spiritual stories. They will also look for and engage in opportunities to pray for expressed needs. It is important for them to practice these skills while in the class so that if they have any trouble, the instructor and other students can help them problem solve and get comfortable.

Students will report to the class each week their experiences related to their outreach and discipleship efforts. The researcher and other students will celebrate successes and help process through challenges faced.

Week Three

Week three class will include the soul care questions and training specific to the six requirements for growth. These requirements include 1. They must believe that the resources are in the harvest. In other words, the students must believe that going into the harvest field will result in people receiving Christ as their Savior and giving themselves to the work of the Kingdom. 2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to-do” list. Each meeting that the students attend will receive training and instructions about how it should be implemented. 3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete the “to-do” lists. When the students return to their next meeting, they will report how they implemented their instructions. The group members will hold one another accountable, problem solve, and celebrate with each other. 4. Teach reproducible actions. A part of the training the students will receive is action-based. Like Praying in the moment with someone in need, these actions are actions to train those they are discipling. 5. Believe your church can grow. The students must believe scriptures like Luke 10:2, “And He said to them, “The Harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”¹¹² 6. Develop a sense of

¹¹² Luke 10:2, (ESV)

peace and unity in your groups and church. Without peace and harmony in a group or church, any increase in participation will be lost over time.

The class will work through the Inductive Bible Study looking at Ephesians 2:1 – 10. The researcher will also teach a lesson related to Sanctification. The teaching includes the following from the 2019 Discipline of the Free Methodist Church:

“Sanctification is that saving work of God beginning with new life in Christ whereby the Holy Spirit renews His people after the likeness of God, changing them through crisis and process, from one degree of glory to another, and conforming them to the image of Christ. As believers surrender to God in faith and die to self through full consecration, the Holy Spirit fills them with love and purifies them from sin. This sanctifying relationship with God remedies the divided mind, redirects the heart to God, and empowers believers to please and serve God in their daily lives. Thus, God sets His people free to love Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love their neighbor as themselves.”¹¹³

The information will be shared so that the students can repeat the study to those they are discipling. As part of the multiplication process, the students are tasked with teaching what they learn to others and those they are discipling.

Students will continue to look for people to pray for, invite to church functions, and develop discipling relationships. Group participants will intentionally invite people from their circle of influence in a discipleship relationship. The discipleship process may be a formal or informal discipleship process.

¹¹³ Board of Editors, *2019 Book of Discipline Free Methodist Church, USA*. (Indianapolis: Light and Life Communications, 2020), 13.

Week Four

In week Four, The students will work together to apply 2 Timothy 2:1—13 through the Inductive Bible Study methodology during class time. The researcher will teach the New Testament concept of Grace and the Power of God that helps live the life we are called. Also, the researcher will introduce the group members to Spiritual Disciplines. These include prayer, giving, fasting, daily Bible reading, and worship. Finally, the researcher will help the students understand the salvation they can effectively share with those they are discipling using material from the 2019 Discipline of Free Methodist Church.

The FMC Discipline gives the following guidance:

Christ's Sacrifice:

Christ offered once and for all the one perfect sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. No other satisfaction for sin is necessary; none other can atone.

New Life in Christ:

A new life and a right relationship with God are made possible through the redemptive acts of God in Jesus Christ. God, by His Spirit, acts to impart new life and put people into a relationship with Himself as they repent and their faith responds to His grace. Justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, and restoration speak significantly to entrance into and continuance in the new life.

Justification:

Justification is a legal term that emphasizes that by a new relationship in Jesus Christ, people are accounted righteous, being freed from both the guilt and the penalty of their sins.

Regeneration:

Regeneration is a biological term that illustrates that by a new relationship in Christ, one does have a new life and a new spiritual nature capable of faith, love, and obedience to Christ Jesus as Lord. The believer is born again and is a new creation. The old life is past; a new life is begun.

Adoption

Adoption is a filial term full of warmth, love, and acceptance. It denotes that by a new relationship in Christ, believers have become His wanted children freed from

the mastery of sin and Satan. Believers have the witness of the Spirit that they are children of God.¹¹⁴

Appendix O gives the complete list of verses to support the biblical foundation for the terms above.

Then the researcher will lead the students through teaching about vision. They will learn that vision is built on biblical principles and is described as a preferred future. They will be introduced to the values, processes, methods, structures, strategies, and church health assessments to help students determine and effectively cast vision.

The students will practice telling their salvation story with at least one person in their circle of influence. They will use one of the lessons taught in class as a discipleship tool for someone they are discipling. The students will express a prayer need that they have, and other students will observe the researcher demonstrating what it looks like to articulate the need. The hope is that they will gain an understanding of “how,” and they will experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. The researcher wants the students to connect with the person they are praying with and the Holy Spirit. This approach is similar to what they will be sharing when they pray with someone else on their need.

Week Five

By week five, some of the trainers will have engaged in training relationships of their own. Students will answer the soul-tending questions during class time, and the class will minister to them appropriately. The researcher will lead the group members through the Inductive Bible Study lesson using Ephesians 6:10 – 20. The purpose of studying this passage was to introduce students to the spiritual warfare implications of evangelism and discipleship.

¹¹⁴ Board of Editors, *2019 Book of Discipline Free Methodist Church, USA*. (Indianapolis: Light and Life Communications, 2020),

The study on spiritual warfare will be connected to the previous weeks teaching on Spiritual Discipline. These Spiritual Disciplines will act as tools in helping the students overcome the spiritual battles they will face.

Students will report on their activities from the prior week, with a particular focus on praying with others in the moment, which is what the researcher is defining as “Authentic prayer.” Like in previous weeks the students will celebrate successes and help each other think through how to overcome challenges.

When students express their prayer needs during class time, other students will pray for those needs instead of the researcher. This practice will give the students experience praying for others in a safe place. A specific time will be allotted for the students to practice teaching the inductive Bible Study material.

The students will be expected to intentionally seek out at least two people to pray for during the week. For discipling, the students will connect with at least two other people.

Week Six

During week six class time, the students will use the Inductive Bible Study method tool in their booklet to work through Romans 5:1 – 21. The researcher will teach the students generational multiplication principles from 2 Timothy 2:1—2. Jesus told us in Matthew 28:18—20 to go and make disciples. Paul wrote to Timothy to give specific instructions and a system about how to approach multiplication. Jesus said to make disciples of all nations. He told His disciples to teach the things He had taught them and to baptize those who become disciples. Paul wrote, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others. The principles that the instructor will guide includes:

1. Paul was the first generation in this discipleship pyramid.

2. Paul was teaching the second generation of disciples, of which Timothy was a member.
3. Timothy was to teach the third generation of disciples the things that Paul taught him.
4. Timothy was to look for faithful men (people). Other translations substitute “reliable men.” For “faithful men.”
5. These reliable or faithful men (people) will teach the fourth generation of disciples.

Applying these aspects of multiplication will enhance the students' ability to disciple people in a relationship with Christ and guide others in this process. The instructor will give the students a handout that can be found in Appendix Letter “J.” This handout list thirty-seven scriptures that describe who the disciples of Christ are. It is not an exhaustive list. It represents an overview of what is written in the New Testament, which explains how God sees His disciples. There will be a lesson related to Spiritual Warfare in the context of evangelism and discipleship. These principles include using discipleship as a tool for spiritual warfare.

The researcher will teach the concepts of discipleship that J.D. Payne espouses, including the elements of conversion or evangelism, training, and expected outcomes for disciples. The expected results that Payne writes about include but are not limited to bearing the fruit of leading others in the process of evangelism and discipleship, the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22 – 23, “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” The teaching will help the students understand they are expected to become disciples who produce this type of fruit becomes a weapon for spiritual warfare.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys and Hows of Global Church Planting*. (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 4, 17, 75, 87.

Students will be introduced to the biblical teachings of who they are in Christ Jesus. These scriptures will inform the students how the Bible defines them, as in the desired characteristics and their position in Christ that grants them opportunities to grow the Kingdom.

Students will be expected to seek out at least two opportunities to pray with others. They will meet with those whom they are discipling. This week the students will add to their Lead Behaviors “finding two people within their church to encourage.”

Week Seven

During week seven class time, the students will explain to the other students how things went with their outreach and discipleship efforts. Once again, the students will celebrate one another's successes and help each other with their challenges. As in each of the prior weeks, the students will answer Ortberg's soul-tending questions. The students will use the Inductive Bible Study tool to understand John 6:30 – 59 and John 8:14.

This week the students will attempt to work through their relationships with their persons of peace to connect with the people they influence. One of the attributes of a person of peace is that they can affect other people. This influence is a critical element to effective outreach for the students. A part of the students' training in week six is the generational multiplication from 2 Timothy 2:2. The students are to engage in generational expansion through the persons of peace that they have been discipling. They will assist the person they are discipling in identifying their circle of influence. Once their circle of influence has been identified, the student will help the person of peace engage these folks in spiritual conversations and eventually form a discipling relationship. Building on these discipling relationships, the student will help the person of peace form discipleship groups.

Week Eight

The students will use the Inductive Bible Study tool to work through Hebrews 10:19 – 39, Hebrews 11:6, and Hebrews 12:2. This process will help the students connect biblical truths about faith.

The instructor will introduce the students to the “Embrace All” and “Vision Blueprint” documents and processes. See Appendix Letters “P” and “Q” to view these documents. The Embrace All document helps the students focus on the importance of the curb appeal and reasonable maintenance of their buildings and grounds to welcome new people. Other areas addressed by the Embrace All that impact the people of the church in their outreach focus include:

1. Ensuring that the church leadership, members, and attendees clearly understand and articulate its vision and goals.
2. Designing structures that will focus all our ministries on outreach, and these ministries will go through an evaluation process at least annually.
3. All ministries will have specific targets and goals focused on bringing in the unchurched.
4. Each ministry will have identified measurable behaviors designed to bring people a saving relationship with Christ and the church.

The instructor will use the Vision Blueprint document to give the students a way to understand the casting and implementing a vision for growth. The information includes:

1. Identifying the purpose, focus, and goals for one-time or yearly events.
2. How the church leadership will organize, train people for connecting, and set lead behavior goals or action steps for the event.

3. The church will implement a plan to engage with new people at the event, create a bridge from this event to the next event, and effectively follow-up.
4. Every event will go through an evaluation process.

A similar approach and evaluation will be utilized for small group ministries and Sunday School Classes, Youth Programs, and children's programs. The following process, structures, and training will be provided:

1. Students will be introduced to a training process for teachers.
2. How the layout of classrooms impacts participants.
3. Changing the class from discussion to a group with weekly assignments to complete is connected to what they are taught. This includes expectations for the students to complete the weekly assignments.
4. Setting outreach and incorporation goals for the class.
5. Providing training and tools to reach the goals.

Training for setting up worship services and first Impressions ministry will be introduced to the students as well. In between each class meeting, the students are expected to engage in various activities and assignments. They will work through the "Inductive Bible Study" assignment for each week. The students will answer each question and be ready to dialog with the group during class time each week. They will choose at least three outreach behaviors or actions to focus on to accomplish their end goals. The students may choose from the "6 Two's in 12" process or develop their own action steps. They can choose to implement any of the behaviors or actions steps from the manual (Appendix N). The concept of the 6 two's in twelve is if someone does these six things, which are all in two's over the next twelve months, the Kingdom will grow. For example, if you pray two times each day, asking God to make you aware of people

God is bringing across your life path to express His love to more people will be drawn into the Kingdom. Another example is if you seek out two people to create “Community” with over the next twelve months, you will grow the Kingdom because they will be drawn into a relationship with Christ. Each of the items below has the characteristics of being two tasks that a person does over twelve months, and there are six tasks in total.

1. Praying two times each day, asking God to make them aware of the people God is bringing across their life path to express the Love of God to each day.
2. Authentically invite two people to a church activity each week.
3. Seek out two people to create “community” with over the next 12 months. Find two people to develop a deep relationship with over the next 12 months. These people are not a part of the church community yet. They are people who, over the next 12 months, you will connect with to talk about their challenges, victories, family, or maybe the ball game this week.
4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior over the next 12 months.
5. Be prepared to tell your story: specifically leaning into the three parts of everyone's transformation story. A. what your life looked like before you meet Christ. B. What happened when you met Christ, and C. what has your experience been like since you accepted Christ. Closely connected with your story is knowing and telling Christ's story, at least the parts that connect with your life.
6. Seek and find two persons of peace over the next 12 months. A person of peace is someone who God has already prepared to hear the gospel message. God placed a desire to listen to the gospel and the message of your church ministry in their heart.

Persons of peace are ready to hear and accept what you have to offer. What's the vision for the church? These persons of peace are people who are open to you and your message, and they receive you into their lives. They want to give to your church vision and help you accomplish it. They show you hospitality and invite you into their lives. They have needs that you will pray for, and God will answer. People of peace influence many others and lead them to connect with you and the message you bring. They may be famous or infamous people. 6b. Once you have taken the class and you are applying the principles, add the task of finding two people in your church each week to encourage.

The students will also be looking for opportunities to pray with people who open their lives to them authentically. These are people who share a need in their life. They open their lives to the student when they tell the student about something that is going on in their lives, and the student takes the initiative to pray when the need is made known. Praying when the need is disclosed helps create a connection between the student and the person they pray for and allows God to revile Himself. Students will be looking for these opportunities and report back to the class what they did and what happened. The project members will celebrate any reported successes and help work through answers to any challenges that occurred.

Group members will practice staying connected with God. They will identify people in their Oikos to reach out to with the gospel. They will initiate or redirect conversations towards spiritual things. They will be prepared to answer spiritual questions from the people in their circle of influence. They will ask God, “Whom do you want me to express your love to today?”

Each student will practice looking for people whom they believe God is leading to them. When they engage them in conversation, they will practice asking God to direct their thoughts and words. As God shows the students new insights in their own lives, they will ask God with whom to share these insights.

In between each class, the members will be praying for and seeking new people to add to their circle of influence. Group participants will ask God to bring someone into their lives who has a challenge that they can speak God’s truth. When praying for the members of their circle of influence, the students will ask God what specifically in their lives does God wants to impact through the student's life. Group members will learn to look for people who are still living in brokenness and sin. They will ask God to bring someone into their lives who are outside their comfort zone. They will intentionally discipleship these people toward the truth of the gospel.

Students will practice daily obedience to God. They will be asked to seek God and do the one thing God asks them to do that day. They will practice seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance in all that they do. Students will be asked to listen to the Holy Spirit to determine whom the Holy Spirit is sending them to today. They are told not to let anything distract them from this task. They will go without a plan or resources except to rely on the Holy Spirit. They will practice this reliance on the Holy Spirit to guide their thoughts, words, actions, and things one might need to fulfill the task.

Group members will look for situations to bring the peace of God. They will be taught to be themselves, talk about God, bless someone when the opportunity presents itself, and offer to pray for someone. Students will ask God to help them identify a need in their community that they are designed to meet, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, they will try to meet that need. They will do this with the hope of reflecting the Love of Christ to their community.

Students are encouraged to identify other Christians who are not yet reaching out and nurtured them to live out Christ's directive in Matthew 28:19. One of the main goals the students are reaching for is to help those they are discipling to disciple someone else. In the seventh or eighth week, the students should be guiding one or more of the people they are discipling in the process of discipling someone in their circle of influence.

There will be a workbook provided detailing the instructions and daily assignments for each week. After the eighth week, six, and twelve months, the data initially gathered related to the number of salvations and Sunday Morning attendance will be compared to the three, six, and twelve-month data. The information about the number of trainers/disciplers, outreach-focused groups, and how many new people have begun to attend the Lighthouse FMC over sixteen weeks, six and twelve months will also be re-assessed.

Each initial participant will repeat the survey they took before the thesis project started. This researcher will compare the information gathered from these initial surveys and interviews to that collected from the post thesis surveys and interviews to determine if the participants are better prepared to reach out to people with the gospel message and lead a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The participants will be reinterviewed to determine if they can identify a change in the training provided by the Lighthouse FMC. There will be a statistical comparison in the following areas:

1. The number of people involved in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process before the intervention compared to the number of people after the eight-week intervention, with a follow-on comparison at three, Six, and twelve months. The percent of change from the pre-start number to the end of the eight-week intervention will be calculated.
2. The number of leaders discipling others in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process before the intervention compared to the number of leaders discipling others in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process after the eight-week intervention with a follow-on comparison at six and twelve months. The definition of a leader for this study is someone who is leading at least one other person in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The percent of change from the pre-start number to the end of the eight-week intervention will be calculated.
3. The number of people the participants (leaders/trainers) intentionally connect with who are not currently part of the Lighthouse FMC before the intervention begins compared to the number of people the participants are connecting with after the eight-week intervention follow-on comparison at six and twelve months. The percent of change from the pre-start number to the end of the sixteen-week intervention will be calculated.

4. The number of people who attend Sunday morning worship service in the three months before the intervention will be compared to the number of people who attend services after the eight-week intervention. A follow-on comparison at three, six, and twelve months will add to the data. The percent of change from the pre-start number to the end of the sixteen-week intervention will be calculated.
5. The number of people who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior in the three months before the intervention will be compared to the number of people who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior at the end of the eight-week intervention. There will be a follow-on comparison at three, six, and twelve months. The percent of change from the pre-start number to the end of the eight-week intervention will be calculated. The follow-on comparisons for three, six, and twelve months are outside the thesis work scope.

In addition to the above comparisons after the initial intervention, the follow-on comparison at six and twelve months will include:

1. The number of people who were baptized three months before the intervention begins compared to the number of people baptized after six and twelve months. The percent of change from the data from three months before starting the intervention will be compared to six and twelve months after the intervention will be calculated.
2. The number of new members the Lighthouse FMC took in the twelve months before the intervention begins compared to the number of new members of the Lighthouse FMC after six and twelve months of the intervention. The percent of change of the data from three months before starting the intervention will be compared to the date six and twelve months after the intervention.

3. The number of new people who have taken leadership positions in the twelve months before the intervention begins compared to the number of new people taking leadership positions after six and twelve months after the intervention. The percentage changes will be calculated..
4. The number of new groups will be counted. The groups will be categorized based on generation.

Chapter 4 Results

Introduction

This research project addressed the problem that the Lighthouse FMC did not have a systematic discipleship process in place. The researcher implemented a systematic evangelistic discipleship process that covered eight-weeks of training and practice. In this chapter, the researcher will present an overview of the information and the project results.

The Doctor of Ministry thesis project's objective was to determine if this systematic evangelistic discipleship process could impact the number of salvations, disciples, discipleship groups for new believers, and Sunday morning worship attendance. The researcher defines a disciple as one who multiplies themselves.

The overall assessment of the data collected indicated an increase in the number of salvations and new disciples, and the number of disciples increased by one person. In the eight weeks of the project, no groups for new believers were started, but plans for new groups were reported in discussions during the training meetings. The numbers for Sunday morning worship are reported in the data section. COVID-19 was an unforeseen factor that impacted all of the data points and directly affected the Sunday morning worship attendance numbers. The restrictions implemented by the Governor's office limited opportunities for the participants to connect with family and others in the community in person. The Free Methodist Church USA's Bishops ordered that all Free Methodist Churches stop in-building meetings. This order impacted every aspect of the project.

The researcher will outline the pre-project atmosphere of the church's discipleship process and activities, as reported by the participants. There was no defined and intentional, systematic evangelistic discipleship process at the Lighthouse FMC. The participants self-

reported their experience rating how well the Lighthouse FMC trained them in evangelism and discipleship and gave their observations about how effectively the Lighthouse FMC corporately implemented evangelism and discipleship processes. The information gathered from surveys, individual interviews, and group interviews will be reported in this thesis's "Data" section.

The project was initiated with eight participants of the Lighthouse FMC. The church is small and rural, which has been in decline for twenty-three years. The concept was to use biblical principles to help participants of the church engage in discipling others who will disciple others. The training provided through the project was intended to help the participants understand the Command of Jesus to make disciples and to help them develop skills, strategies, and processes to accomplish this mission.

Some adjustments to the project will be detailed throughout chapter four. They include adjustments needed because of the impact on our society from COVID-19, an adjustment in the training process and material used for the project, and the loss of two of the initial eight people who agreed to be a part of the project.

Initially, there were eight participants in the project, but two dropped out for health reasons three weeks into the project. The initial individual and group interviews were held in what is known as the East room of the Lighthouse FMC.

Information Summary

Data will be detailed in the result section of this thesis. In this section, the researcher focuses on the general summary of the information obtained through the thesis project. Specifically, did the Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship project at the Lighthouse FMC increase the average worship attendance, impact the number of salvations, disciples, and discipleship groups for new believers.

Eight people from the Lighthouse FMC began this training process. Six of these people stayed in the process for the whole eight weeks. Four of the participants fell in the 60 to 69 age range, and two of them were in the 70—79 age range. There were no younger people who were interested in being a part of the thesis project. The average length of time the people in this group have been Christians is 34 years and six months. The average length of time the participants have been at the Lighthouse FMC was four years and four months for five people, and one person has been at the church for 54 years. All the participants were in a leadership position at the church. All of the participants were about the same age because they were willing to participate in the project. It is a small church with an older congregation, and no younger people met the necessary criteria for participation. The participants must 1. Are professing Christians. 2. They are willing to sign a participation agreement stating that they will do their best to continue in the process for the first phase of the project, which will last eight weeks, and sign a consent and confidentiality agreement. 3. They will be people who have been a part of other discipleship groups. 4. And have expressed an interest in being a part of the thesis process.

The researcher believes that eight weeks in the best of situations is not a long enough duration to determine success or failure in all of these areas. In the Project Results section, the researcher will detail visible progress in each area of the study.

The thesis project aims to determine if a systematic evangelistic discipleship process impacts the number of salvations, people discipling others, discipleship groups for new believers, and the Sunday morning worship attendance. There was measurable progress made toward all four objectives on which the thesis focused. There cannot be a direct statistical comparison related to worship attendance because, in the building, worship services were suspended for six weeks before starting the project. The researcher would also note that worship attendance was

impacted because regular attendees before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown stopped attending. They dropped out because immune-compromised people were encouraged not to attend, or the requirement to wear masks caused some to refuse and not participate. Generally, there was a general fear of contracting COVID-19.

Two of the other three thesis objectives were achieved. One adult salvation indicated during the project by a group member, which equals the number of salvations in both 2017 and 2019. 2018 had zero adult salvations reported. One of the thesis project comparisons was the number of salvations reported the three months before the project with the number of salvations indicated through the project's duration. There were no salvations reported in the three months before the project, and one was recorded during the project. Four participants from the group expressed that they were discipling more people at the end of the project than they were initially.

Related subcategories include six more people are being disciplined, and eight additional beyond those being disciplined are intentionally being drawn toward Christ and the Church pre-project compared to post-project data. One person reports starting a discipleship relationship with an unbeliever. However, since only one other participant does not constitute starting a systematic Evangelistic Discipleship group, it is a step in that direction. Given time and more training, the researcher believes there will be groups for new believers.

Adjustment to Weekly Training Process

Two weeks into the project phase, the researcher concluded that the participants were not connecting with the information the way it was being shared. They were having trouble applying the concepts and principles. The detailed adjustments the researcher made can be found in Appendix R.

A summary of the changes follows. The students were given a workbook that followed the Head-Heart-Hands training concept that the Free Methodist Church uses when training their people toward ordination in the church. Every week the students read information from the Bible and other sources that was intended to inform them of Biblical principles and help them apply what they were learning. In between the weekly class meetings, they engaged in daily readings from the Bible that were intended to teach them Biblical perspectives related to the concepts and principles they were learning. Finally, each day they were given a hands-on assignment to accomplish that connected with the weekly head reading and the daily heart reading.

They were wrestling with these concepts every day and working at applying them every day. During the weekly classes, more time was allotted to practicing the behaviors taught in the application phase. These included telling their salvation and spiritual stories, praying for others as needs are presented, inviting people to some kind of spiritual connection, and declaring who God told them they were to focus their efforts.

Definition of Lead Behaviors

The researcher identified and taught about “lead behaviors.” Specific Lead Behaviors were selected during the class that the student determined to achieve the thesis objectives. Lead Behaviors are actions taken that are believed will bring about the accomplishment of goals or expected changes. In this project, the Lead Behaviors were supposed to increase Sunday morning worship attendance, salvations, new disciples, and new discipleship groups for new believers. For the class, they are called the “6 Two’s in 12” These behaviors include

1. Praying for God to open our eyes to see whom He brings across our path today to express the Love of God.

2. Invite two people to Christian gatherings every week.
3. Find two people to pray “at the moment” with each week.
4. To look for two people to build community with each year.
5. To look for two people of peace that they can invest themselves in this year.
6. To encourage two people from your church each week. The group participants chose at least three of these behaviors to engage in during the eight-week project.

The second set of behaviors was the six steps to success.

1. Identify the goal.
2. Determine appropriate lead behaviors.
3. Participate in cycles of loving accountability.
4. Measure how well you executed the lead behaviors.
5. Evaluate the lead behaviors' effectiveness.
6. Make adjustments and start again.

Third, six requirements for growth were taught to the group members as vital for success. They include

1. Believing that the resources are in the harvest.
2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to-do” list.
3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete the “to do” lists.
4. Teach reproducible actions.
5. Believe your church can grow.
6. Develop a sense of peace and unity in your groups and church.

The goals established for the group were the thesis objectives, which were to:

1. Increase worship attendance.

2. Impact the number of salvations.
3. Increase the number of disciples.
4. Develop additional discipleship groups for new believers.

The lead behaviors to accomplish these objectives were practicing the 6 two's in 12 in the field, reading and engaging with the daily and weekly assignments in the handbook for the class, and participate in the weekly class meetings.

COVID-19 Impact on the Project

The COVID-19 impact on this project cannot be overstated. The stay-at-home order and other Executive orders restricting people's movement in the state created circumstances that lead Denominational Bishops to end in-building church meetings temporarily. At the end of March, the researcher received permission from the Doctor of Ministry Department to move ahead with the project training meetings using the Zoom platform. Throughout April, the researcher met by appointment with the six participants individually and as a group to complete their questionnaires conducted their interviews and Group interview.

During the week of April 20, 2020, the Denominational Bishops approved a plan to resume in-building meetings for Free Methodist Churches in the U.S. The initial project plan was to have the training meetings in the researcher's home since it is within a ten-minute drive of the Lighthouse FMC in Sears, Michigan.

During the first six weeks of the class, the Governor's "Stay-at-home" executive order prohibited the class from meeting at the researcher's home. In Michigan, churches were not included in this order. Therefore, meetings could be held at the church, and the thesis project class meetings were moved to the church in Barryton.

The researcher would note that “Stay-at-home” orders and other restrictions were in place, impacting the typical ways the people in the group would connect with people outside the church. Therefore, the group had to learn new ways to interact with people, not violate the law. The research would also note that this had an impact on the potential effectiveness of the thesis project. Restaurants were closed, most public gatherings were shut down, and nonfamily visits in homes were restricted for six of the eight-week project. In addition to legal limitations, many people were fearful and worried about allowing connections with others.

The researcher used discipleship material called Every Church Grows 2.0, which is included in the appendix. Three weeks into the training, the researcher rewrote the material. The training was done at each of the weekly meetings during the first three weeks, beginning on May 24. Within that time frame, two things became clear; first, the participants could not incorporate the training into their daily lives with a once-a-week training format. Second, for the participants to integrate the biblical principles taught in the class into their daily lives, they needed daily instructions and hands-on assignments. Every Church Grows 2.0 material is included in the appendix, as well as the rewritten material call “Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-imagined.” This booklet is one-hundred-forty-one pages long in Appendix N.

Every Church grows 2.0 Re-imagined (ECG's 2.0 R) material used the learning process Known as “Head, Heart, and Hands.” The most significant difference between the two training methods is how many times they connected with the information and hands-on assignments each week. In ECG's 2.0 R material, there were weekly written sections labeled “Head” sections ranging in length from one to three pages. The participants read the information that included biblical and extra-biblical sources, and they learned general discipleship and evangelistic principles. In the “Heart” section, the participants read biblical-based content daily through a

devotional study and answered questions that probed their understanding of discipleship and evangelism. Daily the participants read a "Hands" assignment and acted on their assigned tasks in their practice of biblical outreach and discipleship principles.

The knowledge gained through weekly readings and practical assignments was reported to the group at the weekly class meetings. A portion of the weekly meeting time was dedicated to hearing what God said to the participants as they did their work throughout the week, and they reported on how the practical assignments went. There was an element of accountability, support, problem-solving, and celebration in this part of the group meeting.

The participants reported that the change in training method helped them understand the material better and to engage in the action steps outlined in the class more effectively. Moving much of the information intake to the weekly head reading, daily devotionals, and hands-action steps gave more time for specific training and practice during the class. In the exit group video interview, the group members asked for more practice time during the class meetings.

The third unexpected element of the class was that two of the eight people stopped attending three weeks because of health-related reasons.

Below is week one of the changes made to the process as an example.

Week One Bible Study (Revised)

Complete the inductive Bible below and be ready to discuss it at our weekly meeting.

Inductive Bible Study

Agenda Week One: 1 — 1.5 hours

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

During the week one class time, the students were introduced to the concepts of “Loving Accountability.” Each week the student was given assignments to carry out that week. When the students return the next week, they were expected to explain how they did with their tasks. If the student did not attempt or did not complete their tasks, the researcher and other students explored ways to overcome the obstacles that stopped their engagement with the assignments. When the student completed the tasks, the class processed through their report. They celebrated the successes and problem-solved through the challenges.

Each week the students were asked to understand what God said to them in that particular week. At the class meeting, each student reported what they thought God said to them during that week. During weeks three and four, the students practiced in class, telling their stories about their salvation and other significant spiritual encounters with Christ. They practiced turning everyday conversation into a spiritual discussion.

In week one, they began to make a list of their Oikos or their circle of influence. They asked God each week who, on their list, He wanted them to focus on. They intentionally developed spiritual relationships with these people. They added people to the list throughout the eight weeks of the project as God revealed new people they could influence.

Each week the students had a different scripture passage to read and apply the inductive Bible study questions provided in the workbook. They came to class ready to work through the

Inductive Bible study with the group. At the end of each class time, the students committed to three or more Lead Behaviors. These were the tools that the students used each week to accomplish the thesis project's goals. These goals include increasing the number of people discipling others, increasing the number of salvations and discipleship groups, and increasing the Sunday Morning worship attendance.

Summary of Intervention plan and design adjustments

The participants were introduced to biblical concepts related to discipleship in the first three weeks. One of the concepts given more time in instruction and discussion was understanding their "Oikos" or their circle of influence. The idea of bridge conversations was given more attention after the adjustment and recognizing and praying "at the moment" for people as they present needs. The researcher also emphasized the 6 Two's in 12 components and the Six Steps to Success process. A part of each week's meeting was for the participants to report about how they did the previous week. This process was known as "Loving accountability." Once the change to daily engagement with the material was made, the participants increase how successfully they were able to accomplish their tasks for the week. Therefore, they had accounts to give of what happened during the week. Before the change, the participants were coming to class with little or nothing to report because they did not engage in the practical tasks.

During the one and a half to two hour class times, the group participants were introduced to biblical truths, outreach techniques, and discipleship training and process. They were trained in inductive Bible study methods, telling their Christian stories and building conversational bridges, among other evangelistic technics.

After completing the second week at the group's third meeting on June 9, 2020, the researcher determined there was too much to accomplish during the class time-period. At the

third week's meeting, the research introduced a new training process that can be found in the appendix, “Every Church Grow’s 2.0 Re-Imagined.” The researcher wrote four weeks of the material and gave it to the participants in the third week. The material contained daily and weekly readings, as well as assignments. The tasks allowed more discussion during the week and to provide specific training at the weekly meetings. The weekly and daily lessons supported and reinforced the in-class training and kept outreach and discipleship concepts in the members' minds every day.

Project Results and Analysis

Survey Questions Set One

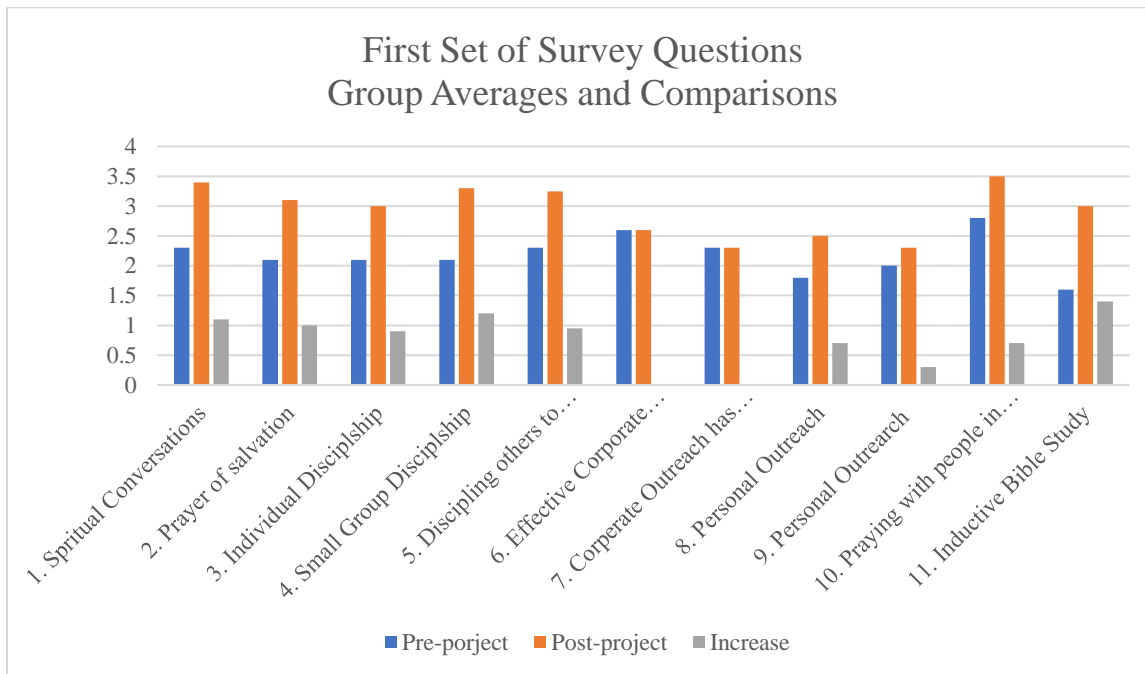


Figure 1. Pre- and Post-Survey Questions - Group Averages and Comparisons

The graph above gives a visual comparison of how the participants self-reported before and after the project. The researcher will make detailed comparisons and observations with each question below. The researcher offers two general observations related to the first set of questions. First, the participants reported more significant increases after the project to questions

about individuals' training in evangelism and discipleship methods, process, and approach, then to the corporate-related questions. They indicated no or smaller increase to questions that focused on the corporate church. The scope of this project did not engage with church boards to train or change ministries. In the post-project group interview, the participants expressed a desire for more class practice in the "how" of outreach/evangelism and discipleship elements.

Second, the pastoral staff who were a part of the project indicated the least benefit gained. The people who have attended the church for about three years and have been in leadership for one year reported the most gain from the project. While the pastoral leadership reported the least significant increase from the project, they desire to continue with the training, expand it, and participate in a track that will guide the church boards in incorporating the principles, methods, and process in every ministry area.

Survey questions were composed in the form of a statement that participants were supposed to indicate their level of agreement. Question number one is, "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to have spiritual conversations with people who don't currently attend church." The group ranked this question the second-highest and gave it the third-highest rate of pre to post-project increase. Significant time was spent in the class meetings every week detailing conversations that occurred the week before. The researcher and the participants provided examples of how they engaged people outside the church. This step was a part of the "cycle of loving accountability" that occurred each week. A related question from the individual video interviews showed that all the participants could express principles, methods, and examples of how to direct a conversation toward spiritual things. In the pre-project individual video interviews, the people were less confident about how to answer the question.

Question number two was to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as Lord and Savior." Four of the eleven questions had an increase of "1" or more, which is part of that group. On a five-point scale, a rise of "1" is a significant change. A similar question was asked in the individual interview question to gain more in-depth insight. Although two of the six people had never led someone in a prayer of salvation, all of them could give a credible example of how to do it. Like question one, the individual interviews showed that the participants were more confident about how they would lead someone in a prayer of salvation after participating in the thesis project. They demonstrated an understanding of the need for repentance, forgiveness, and receiving Jesus as their Savior and Lord. As indicated in the graph, there was one reported salvation in 2017, zero in 2018 and 2019, and one in 2020 during the thesis project. Based on the pre and post-survey, one of the participants lead someone in a prayer of salvation. The one reported adult salvation during the project equals the number of salvations reported at the Lighthouse FMC in 2017 and 2019; there were no salvations reported in 2018. This salvation was noted in the survey and was not spoken of in the group or individual video interviews.

Question #3 was to rate their level of agreement on the individual survey, "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead an individual in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process." The participants gave this area of training a 0.9 increase on the five-point scale. Each week in Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined booklet, there was an inductive bible study with questions and a specific scripture to apply to the process. In the video group interview, the group expressed a desire to spend more time practicing the inductive study. There were significant adjustments made during the class; the details are found in the "Intervention plan and design adjustments" section of this thesis.

During the weekly classes, four of the six people in the group reported using the Inductive Bible Study material found in ECG's 2.0 Re-imagined booklets with people they were discipling. Three of these were in-person contacts, and one was an online contact. They reported that having this tool gave them confidence in talking to someone about studying the Bible.

Question #4 that the participants answered in this section is, "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead a small group through a systematic evangelistic discipleship process." The participants only gave question #11 a higher increase between pre and post-project evaluation. In part, this may be the case because each week in our class, we demonstrated aspects of leading a small group.

There is an apparent disconnect to note between the participants reporting that they were trained well to lead a systematic evangelistic discipleship process and that none of them describe starting a group. There may be several possible factors contributing to this observation. The first thing to note is before participating in the project, most of the people in the group had not sought out anyone to disciple. To expect the people in the group to start groups in an eight-week project when they had little or no training in outreach, evangelism, or discipleship before the thesis project might have been too high of an expectation. Second, not everyone has the gifts to lead small groups. That is why the training initially focuses on connecting with and training individuals. Third, the participants needed first to understand that there was a biblical commandment for them to "Go and make disciples," and they needed time to develop the skills and techniques to build their confidence.

In Chapter 5 of this thesis, the writer will detail how the participants will engage in four additional eight-week long training sessions. In these sessions, there will be more opportunities for systematic evangelistic discipleship groups to be developed.

Question #5 in the first set is, "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well in how to help someone else disciple other people." This question was rated by the people in the group as the fourth highest, just 0.05 behind question number four. The participants gave it a 0.95 increase over the pre-project rating.

The very process of the class demonstrates how to train someone who is training someone else. The researcher led the group, in effect, teaching people to find someone to train. By week-three, every group member had someone whom they were discipling. The researcher defines discipling as the process of leading someone toward a commitment to Christ and helping them to mature in their faith. Question number one of the second set of questions reads, "How many people are you currently discipling?" through this survey question and the Individual Video Interviews; the research was able to determine that there was an increase of six people being disciplined by members of the group. After the first eight-weeks, none of the people being disciplined by group members has begun to disciple others. However, the necessary groundwork in making new spiritual connections with people is in place. The participants first had to have a discipling relationship with others before helping them disciple the next spiritual generation.

Question #6 is the first one related to the group members' understanding of the corporate church. The group gave the questions focusing on the corporate church the least amount of increase. Question six reads, "The Lighthouse FMC has an effective corporate outreach process." The group's response to this question revealed that they did not see any increase between pre and post-project evaluation. Based on group conversations during class times and at the group exit interview, group members said that what they were learning in the class needed to be implemented throughout the church structure. Others spoke to the need that the whole church

needed to be exposed to this training process. Respondents stated that corporate outreach was another area that the church must be aware of and become more intentional in their planning.

Question #7 reads, "Lighthouse FMC's corporate outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church." When describing the corporate outreach process, the group members said that it was unfocused and unintentional. There was concern that people of the church were unaware of their obligation to reach out, disciple, and invite others to church events. The priority of events and weekly ministries was about having the gathering. There was no intentional training to draw people into the church long-term, have spiritual conversations at the meetings, and follow-up plans after the events were not well defined or executed. The participants expressed that there needed to be more intentional training, process, and structure to help individuals be more effective. People identified as coming to the church in the last three years were mostly people who came on their own. They were not invited to the church through a planned effort, and there was no identified process to integrate them into the church. The respondents indicated that they saw no improvement in this area during the project.

Question #8 is another connected corporate question, but it is also more closely connected to the thesis project's training. "The Lighthouse FMC has effective systematic personal outreach training." Participants gave this question the highest increase of the inquiries related to the cooperate church. From group conversations, the thesis project training this researcher is reporting on was identified as the church's primary corporate effort to train attenders in systematic personal outreach.

In the context of the COVID-19 limitations, the responses to question #9 were interesting. The question reads, "The Lighthouse FMC's systematic personal outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church." The group gave a small increase in

the pre-post-project evaluation. There were no new people identified as attending the church during the thesis project. Since there was no increase in people attending the church, this researcher would have concluded that the process is not increasing the number of people who attend church so far. Therefore the rating would remain the same.

The researcher intentionally designed the exit survey to display their pre-project answers when filling out their post-project surveys. This method allowed the people in the group to be aware of their baseline responses to the survey questions. The researcher believed this method was the best way to have an informed post-project response from the participants.

Survey question #10 was rated the highest by the group participants, with a 3.5 average. "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to pray with people when in public." In the group discussion, a desire for more of the "How" to pray with people was expressed. When people gave their reports on their weekly events, praying "at the moment" was demonstrated in the class. When group members talked about their ministry or personal struggles during the class, we stopped and prayed for the needs they expressed. At first, the researcher prayed for these needs, but others were assigned to pray for the needs expressed as they were brought up by the third week.

In the first two weeks, the group participants indicated that they struggled with offering to pray "at the moment" when someone expressed a need. The third week began a turning point in the experiences of the group. They began to report a higher comfort level at offering to pray with others and praying with people.

During the exit-group interview, the main critique was that they would like more in-class practice time, including praying with people as they make their request known, telling their spiritual stories, and moving conversations toward spiritual things. Based on surveys, group, and

individual interviews, the researcher believes that the group participants' awareness, focus, skill level, and confidence were increased during the project training. In the future, to accommodate the groups' expressed desire for more in-class practice, the research will provide more time for preparation.

The participants gave the last question in this section, the highest pre-post-project increase in all the questions. "The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to lead an inductive Bible Study." In the booklets that the group members were given, there was an inductive Bible Study process provided in each week's material. Part of their weekly assignment was to apply the inductive Bible study process to each week's scripture. Four of the six group members used the Inductive Bible Study process and scriptures provided in the booklets as they disciplined people in their "Oikos," people in their circle of influence.

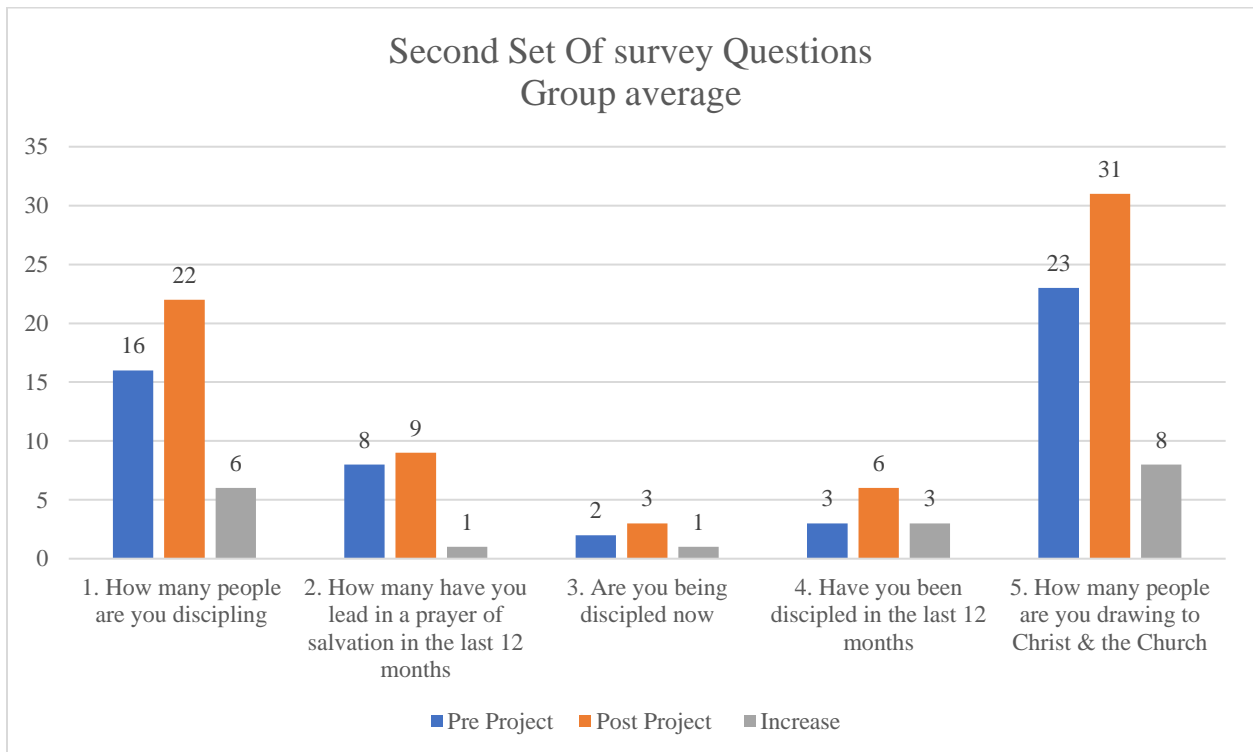


Figure 2. Survey Questions Set Two – Group Average

The Second set of self-reporting questions provided objective information. The researcher means that while the first eleven questions were somewhat subjective, in that they were ratings based on someone's perspective, the second set of questions all have objective criteria.

Questions one, two, and five have a definite numerical value that demonstrates that the thesis project affected the advancement towards some of the intended outcomes. Questions three and four are “yes or no” questions. In Questions three and four, the researcher counted the number of "Yes" responses. There were a total of six possible "Yes" responses for each of these questions.

Question #1 reads, "How many people are you currently discipling?" Based on the second set of survey answers, the individual interviews, and group responses, the participants reported an increase of six people being disciplined pre-project to post. In the pre-project surveys and interviews, the researcher determined that five of the six group members were discipling at least one other person. The post-project exit surveys and interviews revealed all six group members were disciplining at least one person. Four of the six people were disciplining at least one more person than before the project started.

Question #2 reads, "How many people have you led in a prayer of salvation in the last twelve months?" This question reflects one of the project's stated goals to increase the number of people who were led in a prayer of salvation. The Denominational end of year statistical reports from 2017 – 2019 reveal one adult salvation reported in 2017, none in 2018, and one in 2019. The local church statistically reported no salvations in 2020 until the project exit interviews reported one salvation. One person in the exit survey reported leading someone in a prayer of

salvation. Further training and research will be needed to discover if training people in Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-imagined process will result in higher salvations rates.

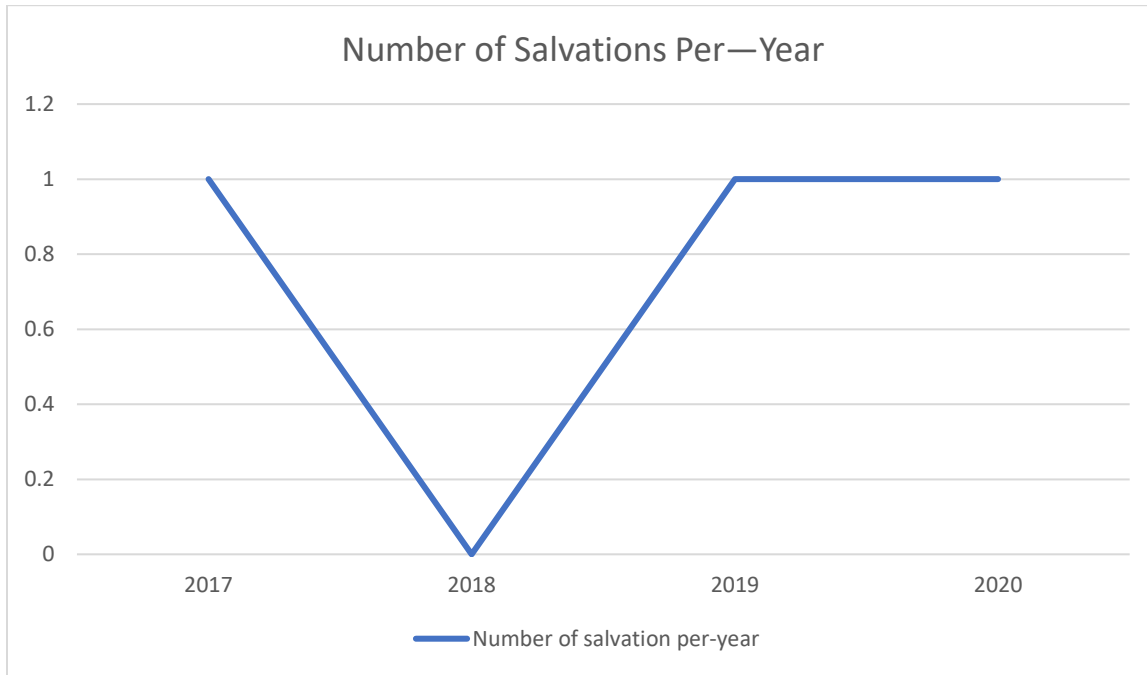


Figure 3. Number of Salvations Per-Year

Questions #3 and #4 asked the group members. "Is anyone currently discipling you?" and "Has anyone been leading you in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process in the last twelve months?" Only two of the six group members reported having someone discipling them pre-project. In the post-project survey, one more person reported being disciplined for a total of three.

On question #4, in the pre-project response, three of the individuals in the group reported having no one leading them in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process, and three indicated that they were part of such an approach. Post-project, all six people reported that they were a part of a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The information gained from the individual and group video exit interviews indicates group members said they were in a systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process because they participated in the thesis project.

Question #5 reflects the researcher's belief that this lead behavior will help the church accomplish the project's expected results. "How many people are you currently intentionally drawing toward Christ and the church?" The group members reported in the pre-project surveys that they were connecting with at least one person. The post-project surveys reported three of the six people were intentionally reaching out to more people than they indicated in the pre-project survey. The group reported an increase of eight people they were consciously connecting with to draw toward Christ and the church. The researcher believes that this is a necessary lead behavior that brings people to salvation, into discipleship, will develop disciples who make disciples, and increasing Sunday Morning worship.

Individual and Group Video Interviews Themes and Data

There are seven general observations that the researcher can make from the video interviews. 1. The interviewees reported the thesis project class (Every Church Grow's 2.0 Re-Imagined) made them more aware of God's call on their lives to make disciples. 2. Group members reported they became more aware of when there were opportunities to pray with people. 3. They invite people they were connecting with to Christian gatherings. 4. They were able to listen and move conversations towards Spiritual things as a result of information provided in the class. 5. They also reported being more intentional to step into those opportunities and feeling more confident to share Christ with others. 6. None of the participants stated that they had any formal training in evangelism or discipling from the Lighthouse FMC before the thesis project. They all identified Every Church Grows material as the only training in these areas given by the church. 7. Another general theme was that the participants understood the contacts they make are intended to be part of a process. The consensus was that they were supposed to follow-up with people they intentionally connected. They said things like, "I am more confident since

taking the class." "I am more aware and step into opportunities." "I can do this and be myself." "I just tell people what God is doing in my life." "It is easy to draw the conversation to spiritual things because God is everywhere." "The class was an excellent start, and we need it." "We are not born with this," "I listen a lot more and respond with Spiritual comments." "I am more apt to pray at the moment with someone."

We gain insights from the specific interview questions. Question #1, "How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you in outreach?" All the participants stated that they had received no training from the Lighthouse FMC in outreach before the thesis project class. They all identified the program as the only outreach training that they received from the church. All the participants reported feeling more confident in outreach activities post-project. They could all identify specific tasks they could do more effectively when reaching out to others with the gospel message.

Question #2 of the individual interview questions read, "How do you currently reach out to people who do not attend church?" In both the pre and post-project interviews, the group members reported that they invite people to church activities. Four of the six said that they asked people to the men's meeting and a men's coffee meeting at the restaurant. Two people reported that they intentionally connected with their neighbors.

Question #3 of the individual interview questions read, "What would you do if someone told you about a need that they have?" Per-project, everyone reported that they would try to meet the need or find help to meet the demand. Post-project, everyone responded that they would pray with the person about the need presented while still stating that they would try to help the person meet the need. This step is an important distinction because a lead behavior identified to

lead towards the project goals was praying with people “in the moment” when they presented a need.

Question #4 of the individual interview questions read, “Are you involved with a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process? If yes, describe the process, If no, why are you not involved. What do you think a systematic evangelistic discipleship process should include?” All of the group members reported that they were a part of a Systematic Evangelistic discipleship process. As they described what they were involved with, they missed the “Evangelistic” aspect of the question. They were systematic and had an element of discipleship, but there was not an intentional aspect of evangelism. Post-project, they all identified ECG’s 2.0 Re-Imagined class as another Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process that they are engaging. One person reported that they are starting a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship process with one other person the week the class ended.

Question #5 of the individual interview questions read, “How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you to lead a discipleship process?” There was no formal training reported pre-project. Post-project, the thesis project class, was identified by all the participants as the way the church trained them. Group members said, “the Inductive Bible Study was a helpful tool,” “The devotions helped me with ideas of how to train others,” “I didn’t receive any training, but I was given opportunities to lead groups,” and “I received training by the Conference,”

Question #6 of the individual interview questions read, “How would you lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as Lord and Savior?” All the participants were able to express elements of the prayer, although they all did it in different ways. They all talked about the need for the person to ask for forgiveness, express sorrow for their sins, and ask God to come into their lives as Lord and Savior.

Question #7 of the individual interview questions read, “Are you identifying people in your life who have not yet accepted Christ as their savior? If so, how are you identifying them? If so, how are you praying for them?” Responses include: “I ask questions about their lives to see if they say they are Christians and to see if their life looks like they are.” “It was more of a judgment thing, and now it is more sorrow for the person because they don’t know Jesus, and that helps me not give up on them.” “I used to pick them out, and now I listen to God for the ones He picks out.” “I am praying that God will open up their hearts to hear Him.”

Question #8 of the individual interview questions read, “How would you move a conversation toward spiritual things?” “I ask people how they are, and when they tell me, I point them to Christ.” “If they tell me about a problem, I tell how Jesus can help. If they tell me a positive, I praise God for His blessing in their lives.” “I listen to what people are saying and bring biblical principles into the conversation.” “I listen and work off what they say.” “It is not difficult; I just reflect them what God has done for them.” “I tell them where I attend church, and if they are not negative, I go from there.”

There were four comparative questions asked post-project. The group members were asked to give a rating from 0—5 for each item.

1. “Before the thesis project, how engaged in outreach and discipleship were you?”

The group members reported an average rating of 2.25, with a low of “0” and a high of “3.5”.

2. “After taking the class, how much more aware are you of God’s call on your life to make disciples?”

The participants reported an average of 3.91, with a low of “3.5” and a high of “4.5”.

3. “After taking the class, how much more engaged in outreach are you?”

The respondents reported an average of “3.6,” with a low of “3” and a high of “4.5”.

4. “After taking the class, how much more are you engaged in outreach and discipleship than before you took the class?”

The respondents reported an average increase of “1.4,” with a low of “0.5,” and a high of “2”.

General themes reported to the researcher during the group interviews include consensus thoughts like, “the handouts were helpful.” “The examples from other people's lives were helpful.” “Praying in the moment during class was a good illustration for us.” “We were made aware of God’s call on our lives,” and “the training helped us become aware of opportunities.” “The training helped us become more intentional in reaching out to people and praying for them.” “This class helped us be more confident in connecting people with spiritual things.” “We need people in the church to start groups and train people to start new groups with people they know who are not yet part of the church.” “It would be good to have more practice during class time.” “The change in how the material was presented during week three was very beneficial.”

The researcher has included a chart on the average worship attendance below. The impact COVID 19 had on church delegitimizes any statistical correlations related to worship attendance. Services in the church were suspended from March until June, and after in-building services started again, many regular worship attendees have not returned because of health concerns.

Worship Attendance

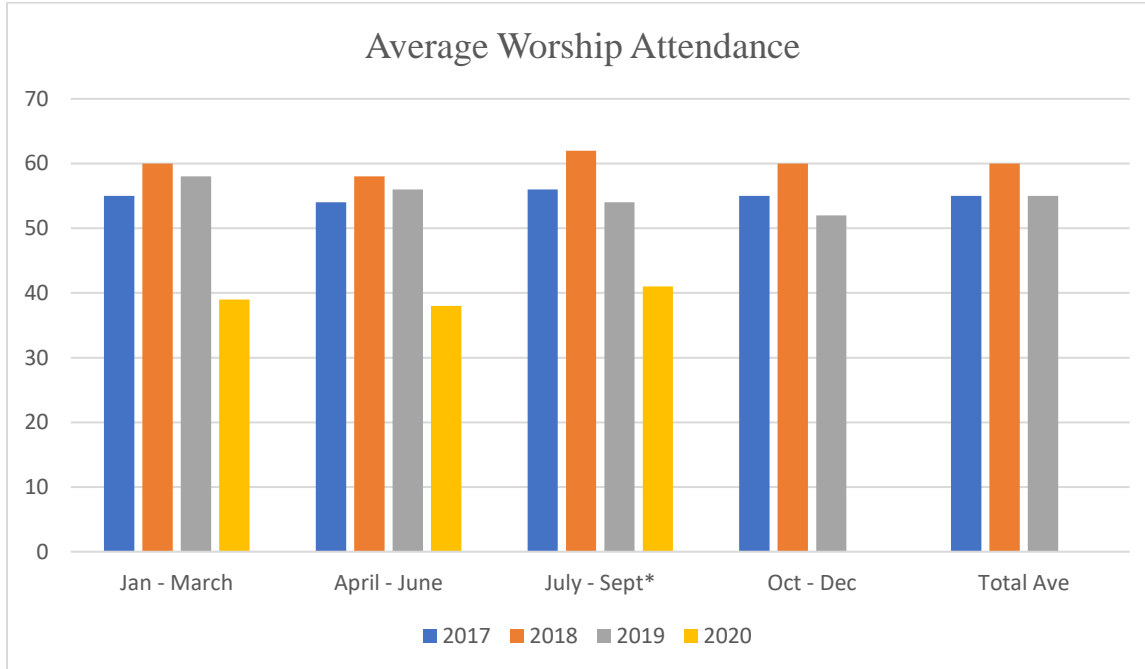


Figure 4. Average Worship Attendance 2017—2020

If we look at the quarterly attendance numbers from 2017 – 2020, we do not get a clear picture of the thesis project's possible impact. The 2020 attendance number record in the above graph reflects in-building attendance from January 1 through August 30. The researcher did not factor in the three weeks from March 22 through April 12 when there were no in-building services. Also, note that the July through September number reported in 2020 only reflects July through the end of August.

The graph and explanation below explain the impact on worship attendance and how the researcher determined that the project positively impacted the worship attendance numbers.

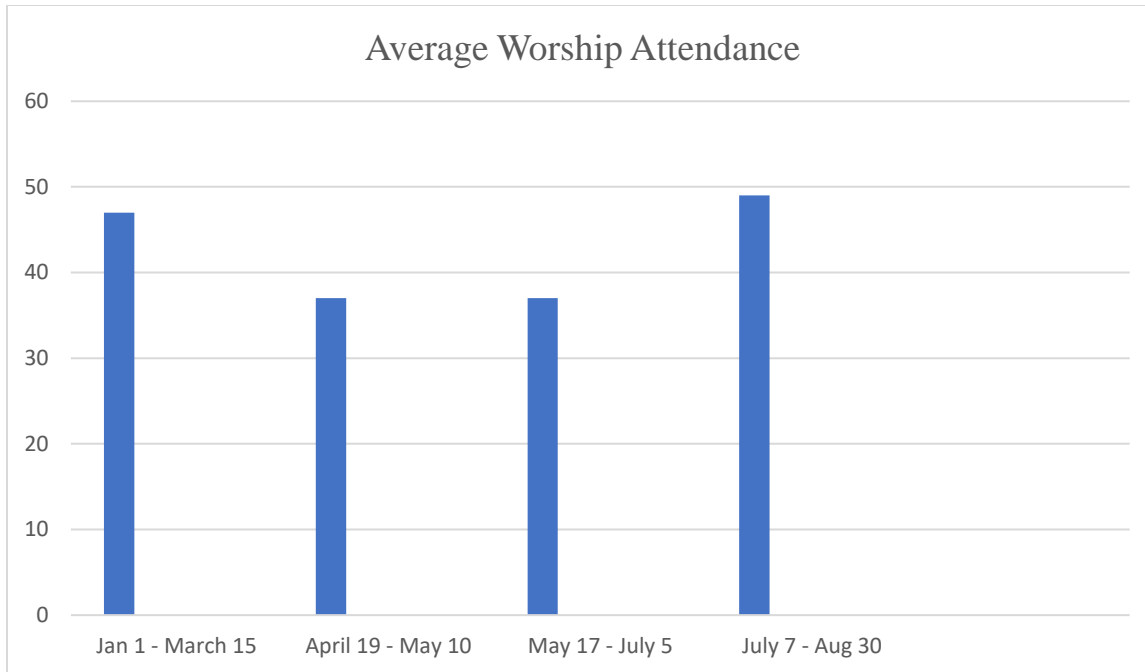


Figure 5. Average Worship Attendance January—August 2020

The researcher will compare the worship attendance numbers before the in-building services stopped to the worship attendance numbers after in-building services resumed and the worship attendance numbers after the project was completed.

The average worship attendance from January 1 through March 15 was forty-seven. There were no in-building services from March 22 through April 12. From April 19 through May 10, the pre-project average was thirty-seven. During the project from May 17 through July 5, the average worship attendance was thirty-seven. The Project ended on July 7, and the average attendance from July 12 through August 30 was forty-nine.

The post-project worship attendance is essentially the same as the pre-COVID-19 worship attendance. The pre-COVID-19 attendance was forty-seven, and the post-project average was forty-nine. The post-project standard is twelve people higher than both the pre-project and project average timeframes.

From the attendance records, the researcher determined that seventeen people stopped attending church from April 19 through July 7. Thirteen new people began attending the church between May 17 through August 30. From July 12 through August 30, eight regular attenders started to return to participate in the worship services. The average worship attendance for August was fifty-three.

The researcher believes the increased attendance number is due to new people attending and now feeling safe returning. The impact of COVID-19 on attendance averages does not allow for simple linear tracking of attendance numbers. The researcher needs to account for the absence of regular attendance, new attenders' attendance, and when some regular attenders returned to the worship services.

Considering these facts, the researcher concludes that the project training did positively impact worship attendance. The thirteen new people began to attend the church during the period from May 17 through August 30. These people were contacted by the students who were a part of the thesis project. This connection demonstrates a positive correlation between the project and the growth in worship attendance.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Future Research Studies

The researcher believes that this study should follow at least three pathways forward. The first pathway is the eight-week introductory class, as revised, which will be offered to other small churches and a church plant in the Northern Michigan area to determine its effectiveness. The first module will be provided to the second group of people from the Lighthouse FMC. The second pathway is that the researcher is developing four more, for a total of five eight-week-long modules with leadership guides. The Barryton church, two other small churches in the North Michigan Conference, and one church plant will participate in these eight-week class sessions. They will build on each other and help participants become increasingly influential in discipling individuals and starting and leading systematic evangelistic discipleship groups. The third pathway is that the researcher will create a guide for boards who seek to align their ministries, structures, and methods with the “Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined” material.

The foci of these additional studies included developing the first module to cultivate more competent outreach and discipleship skills. These skills involve praying “in the moment” when the participants become aware of a need, directing conversations towards spiritual things, leading someone in a prayer of salvation. Also, intentionally praying for and reaching out to the participants in their circle of influence, creating informal and formal discipleship relationships, and develop skills to lead someone in an inductive Bible study.

The first eight-week session helps the participants understand Christ's call to “Go and make disciples” and create a culture of outreach and discipleship within a church. Subsequent eight-week Modules will continue to develop these skills and assist the group members in

creating discipleship groups and fostering skills in those they are discipling to become disciple-makers of the next spiritual generation.

The guide for church boards will help them evaluate all their ministries and support structures in light of Christ's command to make disciples. This process includes training and building structure, methods, and procedures for greeting teams, event teams, and weekly ministries. The goal is to better reach out to people in the community, connect with them when they are a part of something the church is involved with, and follow up. In addition to creating a lens to look at current programming, the guidebook will help the church establish new programs, ministry, and outreach efforts that line up with ECG's 2.0 R material.

The other small churches include the Millbrook Free Methodist Church, the Caldwell free Methodist Church, and the Cadillac church plant. The Caldwell church has an average worship attendance of ten people, Millbrook, thirty-three people, and the Cadillac church start-up will begin in the Fall of 2020. Caldwell is a church between three small to midsize communities ranging in size from nine-hundred to eleven-thousand people. Millbrook is in a village of less than three hundred, within ten minutes of a community of twenty-eight hundred people and twenty minutes from a city of twenty-five thousand. The Cadillac church is in a community of eleven thousand people.

Millbrook and Caldwell have pastors that have been at the church for less than four months. The Cadillac church is new, and so there is a new pastor in this community. The researcher chose these churches because they are similar to the Barryton church in congregational demographics. This demography includes types of communities, age of people in the church, and congregation educational level. The first two churches have declined or stagnated in their growth pattern for more than five years. The researcher added the Cadillac

church plant to ascertain if the “Every Church Grows 2.0” Re-Imagined process will advance church planting. The most significant difference this researcher observed is that Barryton was unlike these three churches because The Lighthouse FMC did not just have a pastoral change.

Project Outcomes and Literature Reviewed

Smith and Kia ask, “Still lingering in your mind maybe this question: ‘But can this happen where I am? My situation is different.’ If T4T were only bearing fruit in a few similar contexts, we might be tempted to say ‘no.’ But all over the world (Church Planting Movements) CPMs are emerging, and T4T is playing a significant role in many of them. We can no longer use the uniqueness of our situation as an excuse that T4T (adapted to be culturally appropriate) cannot work where we are.”¹¹⁶

T4T is another process used to develop disciples who develop disciples. Their method has been used in many places in the world but mostly in Asia. They have a much longer track record, and their results included eighteen generations of disciples over five years of discipleship training. Smith and Kia observed, “Yet in one random sampling, the assessment team met representatives of 18 generations of believers who had come to Christ throughout the 4—5 year time-span.”¹¹⁷ And in Asia, Ying and Grace Ministry experienced twelve thousand baptized and nine-hundred-eight small Churches formed within two months.¹¹⁸

These are two examples of what has happened in other places when using a systematic evangelistic disciple-based outreach training method. Results in the Barryton project are not as robust as those reported by Smith and Kai, but there was at least a temporary positive change in

¹¹⁶ Steve Smith & Ying Kia, *T4T: A Discipleship Revolution*. (Mounument, CO: WIGTake Resources, 2011), 81.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 21

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

the growth direction like those results. Only through further study will the researcher determine if this model will produce long-term positive effects.

In their book, Ed Stetzer and Daniel Im write, “When true leader reproduction happens, it leads to multiplication in your church, not just simple addition. A church plant marked by leader reproduction starts with a church planter taking time to reproduce leaders.”¹¹⁹ This references church planting but in the context of discipleship. This researcher ascertained the most significant opportunity for growth in the Barryton project was through those who were developing as leaders. Those who stated that they did not see themselves as leaders had one or two people they were discipling, and those who were identified leaders were discipling more than five people. The difference is that the leaders were multiplying themselves, and the non-leaders were adding. The favorable inference to this is that everyone was at least adding by the end of the class.

As reported in the Review of Literature under the heading “Discipleship Characteristics,” Smith & Kai focused on disciples becoming like Christ. Group members who participated in ECG’s 2.0 R Head, Heart, and Hands process were on a journey to become more like Christ. In part, this process's focus was to help the group members become more Christ-like in character, nature, and actions. The participants had to engage with Head, Heart, Hands elements every day. In week seven and eight class discussions, they reported that the Head, Heart, and Hands method was critical in significantly adjusting their life focus to be more in line with Christ’s life when He was here on earth.

¹¹⁹ Ed Stetzer & Daniel Im, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide To Starting Churches That Multiply*. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 140.

One of the main thrusts of Coleman’s writing in his book, “The Master’s Plan of Evangelism,” was that disciples need to be obedient to God. In the thesis project, the group members were aware of the mission that Jesus gave the whole church in Matthew 28:18—19. They first had to know the command to “Go make disciples” before they could obey it. The daily and weekly material the participants worked through pointed them to scriptures that supported the mission. They not only learned about what and how Jesus wanted them to “Go and make disciples,” but they were asked to take part in activities every day that helped them obey by engaging in an outreach and discipling process.

As noted in Chapter 3, Christopher Payne looked at discipleship in terms of instruction, connection, and service.¹²⁰ In the weekly discussion, the group members expressed that the thesis project was not a class that could only learn about things. They had to implement what they learned each week. They knew there would be time set aside every week for “Loving Accountability.” Creating an atmosphere of accountability is critical to moving people from learning to applying what they know.

J.D. Payne wrote, “discipleship is a Spiritual weapon, and evangelism and discipleship are the fruit of being a disciple.” This understanding is in line with what Smith and Kia wrote. These authors believe that discipleship and evangelism are inseparable. In Matthew 28:19, we read that the church is to “Go make disciples,” inextricably tying discipleship and evangelism together. The thesis project participants connected between evangelism and discipleship, drawing people into a relationship with Christ, and teaching the next generation that it was their responsibility to reach others. Three of the six people came to this understanding during the

¹²⁰ Christopher R. Payne, “An Investigation of Adversity In Christian Living And Proposal for Discipleship response” Doctorate of Ministry Thesis, Liberty University Baptist Seminary, 2014, 99—102, assess July 24, 2019, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/980>.

training. The other three knew before the training that the scripture command to “Go make disciples” was for them, but they had not been intentionally following Christ's command. The increase in the number of people being contacted and disciplined by the participants through the thesis project demonstrates the type of fruit J.D. Payne wrote about in his book.

Jeff Christopherson understands discipleship is about creating a culture of discipleship rather than a process of personal discipleship.¹²¹ The thesis project revealed the advantage of creating a group culture. The participants were encouraged, and problem-solved together as they all reached out to disciple the next generation. The researcher observed an increase in the group members' engagement and effectiveness in outreach and discipleship based on the participants' self-reporting.

Smith and Kai wrote about the critical need for the Holy Spirit to be part of the discipleship process. They reference the Holy Spirit as the comforter, teacher, and even the attacker.¹²² McIntosh focuses his readers on John 15, specifically the Holy Spirit, as a guide and the one who will empower disciples to accomplish God's will.¹²³ Christopherson reminds his readers that the Holy Spirit influences people away from fleshly attitudes and behaviors. He continued to write that the Holy Spirit is partnering with discipleship-makers to move on a person's heart to hear and receive the Word of God.¹²⁴ The “Every Church Grows” material, 6 Two's in 12, asks the question, “Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?” Group members were asked each week, “What did the Holy Spirit say to you this week.” The class sessions and reading material encouraged the participants to seek God's leading in reaching

¹²¹ Jeff Christopherson and Mac Lake, *Kingdom First: Starting Churches That Shape Movements*. (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2015) 3.

¹²² Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 29, 73—78.

¹²³ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 57.

¹²⁴ Christopherson and Lake, *Kingdom First*, 199.

out and discipleship people in their circle of influence and those God brought across their lives. The people in the thesis study reported in our group sessions that they were seeking God's guidance when reaching out to people they were encountering.

The concept of "mission" was an important starting point in Every Church Grow's 2.0 Re-Imagined material. Smith and Kai point to the central mission of the Bible being the gospel of the Kingdom.¹²⁵ McIntosh writes, "the church is on a life-giving mission."¹²⁶ The group members learned that they were to live out the mission of "Going and Making Disciples," as found in Matthew 28. They clearly understood that Christ personally commanded them to fulfill this mission. Three of the people in the group reported before the project that they understood the command to make disciples. During the group sessions, all six people participants reported being more intentional in fulfilling this call on their lives.

Smith and Kai wrote about the concept of "Oikos." They indicated that a discipleship process should begin with regularly witnessing the people in someone's own Oikos or circle of influence. This training's principal element centered on training people to lead groups of people, who would disciple the next generation of disciples. The group development that Smith and Kai's reference focused on family and friends.¹²⁷ The Thesis project group primarily were asked to focus on their family and friends. Most of the reported contacts from the group were close relatives or friends. Six of these contacts developed into discipleship relationships.

Wills and Clement wrote that a person's home is an evangelic tool. The COVID-19 climate and the Governor's Executive orders made in-home group meetings more difficult. Two participants could continue to reach out effectively to their circle of influence through a weekly

¹²⁵ Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 64.

¹²⁶ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 34.

¹²⁷ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 228—229.

Bible study in their home, with their adult children, and their families. The fear that the COVID-19 caused in the general population made inviting people into homes more challenging. COVID-19 permitting, the researcher will ask the students in the next class to utilize their homes as an outreach tool.

Smith and Kai wrote about the oral tradition of gospel and biblical stories and their uses as an evangelistic tool. They point out that the stories themselves are not enough, nor do they reflect what Jesus did in His life on earth. Jesus connected the parables that He told with a “didactic application, or He gave a moral to the story in terms of propositional truth.”¹²⁸ The group members learned to recite their salvation story and the story of Christ's sacrifice. Also, they learned to relate some of their spiritual narratives and connect those with biblical stories.

Discoveries from Project Implementation

It is essential to select at least some of the people for each group who are extroverts. Much of what happens in the class sessions are driven by the members' willingness to talk about what occurred in between classes. The accounts of what transpired as each person lives out the training is critical to the in-session time's effectiveness.

Equally as important is selecting students that are interested in outreach and discipleship. The class provides informational and structural motivation for helping participants become effective in reaching out and discipling others. Success will be limited if the group members do not have much interest in implementing the training. A disengaged attitude can impact the group as a whole and will restrict the individual's success.

¹²⁸ Smith & Kai, *T4T*, 228—229.

Shifting from a church culture that is not involved in significant outreach and discipleship takes daily connection with information and practice. In the first two weeks of the class, the researcher used a weekly training session to teach the group members ECG's 2.0 information. Participant's feedback about what they were doing during the week provided insight into how well they were absorbing the training, which led to some changes in the training format as the training progressed. In their modified form, the student booklets included daily devotions focused on the subject matter, daily assignments in the field between classes, and weekly biblical and extra-biblical information. The new student booklet was written in real-time during the course one to two weeks ahead of when they read and applied the material. This process allowed for adjustments after weekly dialoguing with the students.

The students reported this single change to the process made a significant difference in improving their understanding and applying the material. The researcher observed a difference during class participation, beginning in the third week when the change in the process was made. The students began to report new contacts and additional people they were discipling.

While the change was a catalyst for the increase in the number of contacts and disciples, at least four other factors impacted the increase. First, it takes time for the members of the group to implement the training provided. Second, there may have been an increase, even if there had not been a change in the process. Third, once the group members started focusing on making connections and seeking people who were willing to be discipled, an increase was inevitable. Fourth, it was just coincidental that it happened right after the change in the process.

Once the students began to engage with the information, the researcher's role changed from primarily acting as an instructor to mentor and facilitator. Students made discoveries on

their own when reading the material or working on what they learned. This change allowed the class discussion to go in directions that were the most helpful to the students.

In this group of people, there was a significant change in class participation when the church pastor made the conscious choice to limit his input into the conversation. This conscious adjustment allowed for more dialogue from people who might not have the same training level and experience as the pastor. He stopped being the expert, as required by his role as pastor, and became a participant.

As requested in the participant's responses to the surveys and interviews, the research will include more practice time during the class sessions in future training. They asked for more in-class practices in telling their salvation story and other spiritual stories. They would like more time to go through the Inductive Bible Study method and learn how to pray with others at the moment.

There are natural ways to weave practicing these skills into the class. During class time, someone was in distress and made a prayer request. The class prayed at the moment for that request and experienced the sense of the Holy Spirit there. This incident was unplanned, but it was a great demonstration of what would happen when people expressed a prayer need to the students in the field. It was not planned to have a prayer request made in the middle of the class during the thesis project, but it will be part of the future Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined classes.

When one of the members made a need that they had known to the group in week 5. The researcher immediately asked one of the other group members to pray for the request. For the rest of that session, as we identified needs, the researcher asked different people to pray for the request. After the third petition, the researcher pointed out to the group they were praying “in the

moment” for one another. This opportunity allowed the researcher to talk about experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit as they prayed, reminding the group that the person they pray for in the field will experience the Holy Spirits' presence.

Structures to incorporate new people into places that connect with their gift mix with ministry opportunities will need to be put in place for the church to experience the best retention results. Church ministries and methods need to align with the work done in the thesis project for ECG's 2.0 Re-Imaged process to have its most significant impact.

In future studies, the researcher will adjust some of the survey questions and add more items designed to elicit empirical data to understand better the impact the systematic evangelistic discipleship process can have on worship attendance, salvations, the number of disciples who disciple others, and the number of new discipleship groups. In future projects, the researcher will ask questions that will clarify how much and what type of previous training the students had. Did the training focus on a process of systematic evangelistic discipleship? There will be questions to help the researcher better understand the student's current and past participation or role in leading evangelistic discipleship groups. These adjustments will give a more accurate baseline to compare to the results of the project.

Results that Apply in Other Settings

Several other small churches in the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church do not have any systematic evangelistic discipleship process. This was the same barrier to growth at the Lighthouse FMC, the lack of a strategy to reach new people coming into the church. Other churches in the North Michigan Conference are experiencing flatline or declining growth patterns because of this. If people from these other churches receive Every Church Grow's 2.0 Re-Imagined training, they can begin to reach out to and disciple the people in their

influence circles. The process of making them aware of Jesus' command to "Go make disciples," combined with strategies, support, methods, and structures, could result in Lead Behaviors that will grow their churches.

After eight weeks amid a COVID-19 lockdown, the Lighthouse FMC participants were able to connect with eight new people and begin to disciple six others. This is outside the eight-week timeline of the thesis project, but it is significant to this project that two new families attended the church's Sunday morning worship service two weeks after the project concluded. These couples were contacted and invited by people from the group during the thesis study. In future projects, the researcher will continue to collect follow-up data after the class is completed to determine the longer-term impact on contacts, discipleship, and worship attendance.

The researcher believes teaching people in other settings concerning Christ's desire for the church in outreach and discipleship will have a similar impact on them as it did on the Lighthouse FMC group. People from other churches who are willing to receive and apply Every Church Grows training material may have comparable results as the Lighthouse church. This process includes students applying the 6 two's in 12, praying in the moment, and Six Steps to Success. Other transferable training elements are: learning to tell their spiritual and salvations stories, seeking God every day for opportunities to reach out with the gospel message, being intentional in understanding whom God wants them to disciple, and following the Holy Spirit's leading.

Only further study can confirm the researcher's belief that similar results as the Lighthouse FMC recorded will apply to other small church settings that currently do not have a systematic evangelistic discipleship process in place.

Findings that Merit Future Research

The thesis project itself needs to continue at the Lighthouse FMC to determine if long-term exposure to these principles will produce a culture shift in the whole church. More people from the Lighthouse FMC need to be exposed to ECG's 2.0 R's material and process to enculturate the training and strategy in the church.

There were talks within the thesis project group that indicate their belief that there is a need for ECG's process to be implemented with the church's administration board. As noted earlier, to have the most significant effect on church growth, all of the church's ministries, structures, and processes need to realign to reflect an outreach and discipleship focus.

Additional research will occur at the Caldwell Free Methodist Church. Using the eight-week thesis project material, the researcher will choose five to ten people to repeat the Lighthouse FMC project at Caldwell. The participants will fill out surveys and determine the baseline for the church and post-project surveys to ascertain the training's effectiveness in a second location.

This researcher will study the effects of long-term training processes on multiple churches, defining "long-term" as twelve months. The researcher identified three churches to participate in a twelve-month systematic evangelistic discipleship study.

These churches will process through each of the five discipleship modules and ECG's 2.0 Re-Imagined Vision Blueprint. The Vision Blueprint is the process that the church leadership works through to align church structures and ministries with the principles taught in Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined process.

As noted in chapter four, two of the Lighthouse FMC participants were between seventy and seventy-nine, and four were between sixty and sixty-nine years old. The researcher will

attempt to include younger people in the studies at the three other settings. Part of the ongoing research will be to understand how well other age groups connect with this material and the method of teaching it.

Focus of Future Research

The project provided a starting point. There were some signs that a systematic evangelistic discipleship process in the form of ECG's 2.0 R information can increase contacts, disciples, and salvations. This study was conducted with one church for eight weeks, so more research is needed to determine if there is a long-term impact on churches in other settings. There is evidence of more people being connected with, disciplined, and receiving Christ in the project at Lighthouse FMC. These indications are reasons to continue the research at the Lighthouse FMC and other locations.

The researcher's next step is to determine if Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined process can positively affect growth in small to midsize churches, defined as ten to one hundred in Sunday morning worship attendance. The second step will be for the researcher to see Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined material can help larger churches grow. These churches are characterized as being one hundred to three hundred in worship attendance located within the North Michigan Conference.

The project's objective was to determine if a systematic evangelistic discipleship process could impact the number of salvations, the number of disciples who disciple others, the number of discipleship groups for new believers, and the Sunday morning worship attendance. The initial research indicates that this process does affect these areas in the church. The thesis project's impact includes creating a culture of outreach and discipleship in the church, explicitly with the group members. The participant's outreach and discipleship awareness, skills, and engagement

increased during the study. The researcher will implement projects at other churches in the North Michigan Conference to determine if this culture can be created in different settings and, if so, how. The researcher will seek to identify the challenges to successfully establishing a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship culture in other locations.

The thesis process also gave the group a vision for outreach that they did not have before the class. The vision gave the group a prevailing direction to pull in, helped support one another in their efforts, align them with Scripture, and increase their confidence to fulfill the mission. Future research will help the researcher understand if a vision for a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship can be created, and, if so, can it be a unifying element to focus the churches on growth.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

A Study of a Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship Process at the Lighthouse Free Methodist Church
Thomas M. Doherty
Liberty University
School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study for a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older, have been recommended by Pastor Darwin, lead pastor of the Lighthouse FMC, you are a professing Christian who is an attendee at the Lighthouse FMC, and you have attended other discipleship groups at Lighthouse FMC. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Thomas M. Doherty, a student/doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to develop an effective systematic evangelistic discipleship process for the Lighthouse FMC.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a pre-survey one week prior to the launch of the systematic evangelistic discipleship process detailing your understanding of the state of discipleship at the Lighthouse FMC. This should take no longer than thirty minutes.
2. Participate in an individual interview during the week prior to the launch of the systematic evangelistic discipleship process. This interview will take about thirty minutes and will be videotaped.
3. Participate in a focus group during the week prior to the launch of the systematic evangelistic discipleship process. The focus group will be about 1 to 1 ½ hours long and will be videotaped.
4. Participate in weekly training sessions once a week for eight weeks. Training sessions will last for 1 ½ to two hours each week.
5. Throughout the 8-week training, you will practice the skills of witnessing, inviting people to start new groups, leading people in the process that you have learned and teaching the lessons you have learned. The goal is for this to include starting a group of your own or leading at least one other person in the process you are taught.
6. Complete the post-survey at the conclusion of the eight-week training. This survey will take about 30 minutes to complete.
7. Participate in a second interview at the conclusion of the eight-week training. This interview will take about 30 minutes to complete and will be videotaped.
8. Participate in a second focus group at the conclusion of the eight-week training. The focus group will be approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours long and will be videotaped.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants may receive some direct benefits from taking part in this study:

1. You may gain a clearer understanding of the biblical understanding of a systematic evangelistic discipleship process.
2. You may develop skills that include witnessing more effectively, telling your spiritual story clearly, being able to lead an inductive Bible study, identify opportunities that will lead to spiritual conversations, and there may be a sustainable process of growth in the Lighthouse FMC.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and the researcher's faculty chair will have access to the records. I may share the data I collect from you for use in future research studies or with other researchers; if I share the data that I collect about you, I will remove any information that could identify you, if applicable, before I share the data.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential. The pre/post surveys you fill out will be deposited in a locked box located in the back of the Lighthouse FMC. The interviews will be conducted in a private location at the Lighthouse FMC. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym.
- The data will be stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home or on the researcher's password-protected computer. Three years after the completion of the project, all research data will be destroyed.
- Interviews and the focus group will be recorded on an SD card and stored in a locked box. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher and the researcher's faculty chair will have access to these recordings.
- I cannot assure participants that other members of the focus group will not share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Thomas M. Doherty. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at phone number [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Gus Suarez, at [REDACTED].

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the [REDACTED].

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to video-record my individual interview and focus group participation as part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix B

Pre-Training Individual Questionnaire

Lighthouse FMC

Baseline information

Participant information:

Male or Female

Age group 18—29, 30—39, 40—49, 50—59, 60—69, 70—79, 80—89, 90—100.

Length of time as a Christian

Length of time in the Lighthouse FMC

Leadership position if any

On a scale of one to five, one being you don't agree at all and five being you completely agree. Circle the number that best expresses your level of agreement with each of these statements.

1. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to have spiritual conversations with people who don't currently attend church. 1 2 3 4 5
2. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as Lord and Savior. 1 2 3 4 5
3. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead an individual in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. 1 2 3 4 5
4. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead a small group through a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. 1 2 3 4 5

5. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well in how to help someone else disciple other people? 1 2 3 4 5
6. The Lighthouse FMC has an effective corporate outreach process. 1 2 3 4 5
7. The Lighthouse FMC's corporate outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church. 1 2 3 4 5
8. The Lighthouse FMC has effective systematic personal outreach training. 1 2 3 4 5
9. The Lighthouse FMC's systematic personal outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church. 1 2 3 4 5
10. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to pray with people when in public. 1 2 3 4 5
11. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to lead an inductive Bible Study. 1 2 3 4 5

Answer each of these questions by circling the response that best reflects your understanding at this time.

1. How many people are you currently discipling? We are defining discipling as meeting at least once a month to guide someone in a systematic disciplining process.
0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9 or _____
2. How many people have you led in a prayer of salvation in the last twelve months?
0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9—10 or _____
3. Is anyone currently discipling you? Yes No

4. Has anyone been leading you in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process in the last twelve months? Yes No

5. How many people are you currently connecting with (intentionally drawing toward Christ and the Church)?
0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9—10, or ____

Appendix C

Pre-Training Interview Questions

Lighthouse FMC

Baseline information

Interview Questions will include:

1. How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you in outreach?
2. How do you currently reach out to people who do not attend the church?
3. What would you do if someone told you about a need that they have?
4. Are you involved with a Systematic Evangelistic discipleship process?
 - a. If yes, describe the process.
 - b. If no, why are you not involved.
 - c. What do you think a systematic evangelistic discipleship process should include?
5. How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you to lead a discipleship process?
6. How would you lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as their savior?
7. Are you identifying people in your life who have not yet accepted Christ as their savior?
 - a. If so, how are you identifying them?
 - b. If so, how are you praying for them?
8. How would you move a conversation toward spiritual things?

Appendix D

Post-Training Individual Questionnaire

Lighthouse FMC

The second set of questions for comparative analyses to the baseline questions

Participant information:

Male or Female

Age group 18—29, 30—39, 40—49, 50—59, 60—69, 70—79, 80—89, 90—100.

Length of time as a Christian

Length of time in the Lighthouse FMC

Leadership position if any

On a scale of one to five, one being you don't agree at all and five being you completely agree. Circle the number that best expresses your level of agreement with each of these statements.

1. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to have spiritual conversations with people who don't currently attend church. 1 2 3 4 5
2. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you in how to lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as Lord and Savior. 1 2 3 4 5
3. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead an individual in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. 1 2 3 4 5
4. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well to lead a small group through a systematic evangelistic discipleship process. 1 2 3 4 5

5. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you well in how to help someone else disciple other people? 1 2 3 4 5
6. The Lighthouse FMC has an effective corporate outreach process. 1 2 3 4 5
7. The Lighthouse FMC's corporate outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church. 1 2 3 4 5
8. The Lighthouse FMC has effective systematic personal outreach training. 1 2 3 4 5
9. The Lighthouse FMC's systematic personal outreach process has increased the number of people who attend the church. 1 2 3 4 5
10. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to pray with people when in public. 1 2 3 4 5
11. The Lighthouse FMC has trained you to lead an inductive Bible Study. 1 2 3 4 5

Answer each of these questions by circling the response that best reflects your understanding at this time.

1. How many people are you currently discipling? We are defining discipling as meeting at least once a month to guide someone in a systematic disciplining process.

0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9 or _____

2. How many people have you led in a prayer of salvation in the last twelve months?

0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9—10 or _____

3. Is anyone currently discipling you? Yes No

4. Has anyone been leading you in a systematic evangelistic discipleship process in the last twelve months? Yes No

5. How many people are you currently connecting with (intentionally drawing toward Christ and the Church)?
0, 1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8, 9—10, or ____

Appendix E

Post-Training Interview Questions

Lighthouse FMC

The second set of interview questions for comparative analyses to the baseline interview questions

Interview Questions will include:

1. How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you in outreach?
2. How do you currently reach out to people who do not attend the church?
3. What would you do if someone told you about a need that they have?
4. Are you involved with a Systematic Evangelistic discipleship process?
 - a. If yes, describe the process.
 - b. If no, why are you not involved.
 - c. What do you think a systematic evangelistic discipleship process should include?
5. How has the Lighthouse FMC trained you to lead a discipleship process?
6. How would you lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ as their savior?
7. Are you identifying people in your life who have not yet accepted Christ as their savior?
 - a. If so, how are you identifying them?
 - b. If so, how are you praying for them?
8. How would you move a conversation toward spiritual things?

Appendix F

Group process Questions

The second set of process questions for comparative analyses to the base-line process questions

1. Have you been trained in ways to pray with people when they present a prayer need? If so, how would you do it?
2. Have you been trained in ways to turn everyday conversations into spiritual conversations? If so, what are some of the principles you would employ?
3. What training would you like that would help you personally with your outreach efforts?
4. What training would you like that would help the church corporately with outreach efforts?
5. Where do the people who are in your circle of influence live?
6. Are there areas that would be good to start Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship groups based on where the people in your circles of influence live?
7. Are there areas that would be good to start Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship groups based on other factors?

Appendix G

Follow-up Questions - Video Interview

For Individual Video Interview

1. “Before the thesis project, how engaged in outreach and discipleship were you?”
2. “After taking the class, how much more aware are you of God’s call on your life to make disciples?”
3. “After taking the class, how much more engaged in outreach are you?”
4. “After taking the class, how much more are you engaged in outreach and discipleship then before you took the class?”

Appendix H
Six steps to success

Written by Thomas M. Doherty

1. Set Goals.
2. Identify action steps.
3. Engage in loving cycles of accountability.
4. Record level of success toward goals.
5. Evaluate progress.
6. Start Again.

Appendix I **6 two's in 12**

Written by Thomas M. Doherty

1. Pray two times a day.

Seek God two times each day asking Him to give you eyes to see the people He is bringing across your life path to express the love of Jesus too.

2. Ask two people each week to come to church.

Give an authentic invitation to two people each week. Ask them to come to some ministry of your church. It could be worship, bible study, family fun night, a special service or anything else that will help people connect with your church community and Jesus.

3. Seek out two people to create “community” with over the next 12 months.

Find two people to develop a deep relationship with over the next 12 months. These people are not a part of the church community yet. They are people who over the next 12 months you will connect with to talk about their challenges, victories, family or maybe the ball game this week.

4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior over the next 12 months.

Be ready to tell your story: Before Christ – when you met Christ – Life since you accepted Christ.

Be ready to tell some of Christ's Story, at least the part that connects with your life.

5. Seek and find two persons of peace over the next 12 months.

A person of peace is someone who God has already prepared to hear the gospel message. He has placed in their heart a desire to hear the gospel message, and the message of the ministry of your church. Persons of peace are ready to hear and accept what you have to offer. What's the vision for the church?

- A. They are people who are open to you and your message. They receive you into their lives.
- B. They want to give to the vision and help you, and they will show hospitality.
- C. They have needs that you will pray for and God will answer.
- D. They have influence over many others and will lead them to connect with you and the message you bring.
- E. They may be famous or infamous people.

6. Take these two practical steps in the next 12 months.
 - A. Engage in the Systematic evangelistic discipleship process known as “First Church Groups.”
 - B. Apply the principles.

You will learn:

1. How to tell your Christ story and How to tell His.
2. What God is calling and equipping us to do.
3. The power of generational multiplication.
4. A biblical plan for outreach.
5. A simple Bible study plan.
6. How to find persons of peace and why they are important and much more.
- 6b. Once you have taken the class and you are applying the principles, add the task of finding two people in your church each week to encourage.

Appendix J
Who you are in Christ

Compiled by Thomas M. Doherty

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Eph 1:4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. :5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, :8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight
Eph :9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.

Eph 1:11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

Eph 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, :18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, :19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might :20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, :21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. :22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, :23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

(Eph 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,)

Heb.3:14, I am a partaker of Christ... I share in His life.

I Pet. 2:5. I am one of God's living stones and am being built up in Christ as a spiritual house.

I Pet 2:9, 10. I am a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession to proclaim the excellencies of Him.

Ps. 23, I am a sheep of His pasture. Therefore I have everything I need.

Rom 6:22, I am enslaved to God.

Matt. 5:13, I am the salt of the earth

Matt. 5:14, I am the light of the world.

2 Cor. 5:17, I am a new creation (a new person)

2 Cor. 5:18–19, I am reconciled with God and a minister of reconciliation.

Rom. 8:14—15. I am a Son-Daughter of God

1 John 3:1—2, I am now a child of God. I will resemble Christ when He returns.

Col. 3:12, I am chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved

1 Thes.1:4, I am chosen and dearly loved by God.

1 Thess. 5:5, I am a Son-Daughter of light and not darkness.

Heb. 3:1, I am a holy brother-sister, partaker of a heavenly calling.

Eph 2:19, I am a fellow citizen with the rest of God's people in His family.

Gal. 3:26,28, I am a son-daughter of God and one in Christ

1 Cor. 6:17, I am joined to the Lord and one with His Spirit.

1 Cor. 12:27, I am a member of God's body.

Rom 8:17, I am a joint heir with Christ

Acts 1:8, I am a personal witness of Christ for Christ.

John 15:16, I am chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit.

John 15;1,5, I am part of the true vine a branch of Christ's life.

John 15:15, I am Christ's friend

Eph. 2:10, I am God's workmanship (His handy work), created in Christ to do His work.

Eph 3:1, I am a prisoner of Christ.

Eph 4:24, I am righteous and holy

Col. 3:3, I am hidden with Christ in God.

Col. 3:4, I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life.

Appendix K

Letter to Pastor Darwin Mowat

January 12, 2020

Pastor Darwin Mowat

Lead Pastor [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Pastor Darwin Mowat,

As a student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as a part of the requirements for a D. Min degree. The title of my research project is A Study of A Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship Process at the Lighthouse Free Methodist Church. The purpose of my research is to determine if a systematic evangelistic discipleship process can increase the number of people attending church and the number of people who have made a profession of faith.

I am writing to request your permission to recruit regular attenders and members of your church for my study. The participants will be 18 years old or older and are people recommended by you. The participants will fall into the following categories which I will verify with them verbally. The participants: A. Are professing Christians. B. Are willing to sign a participation agreement stating that they will do their best to continue in with the process for the first phase of the project which will last eight weeks and sign a consent and confidentiality agreement. C. They will be people who have been a part of other discipleship groups. D. And have expressed an interest in being a part of the thesis process.

Participants will be asked to fill out a questionnaire, participate in an individual interview and a group discussion related to discipleship before the study begins. They will be asked to be part of an eight-week practical training process and complete follow-up questionnaires, interviews and a group discussion.

The data will be used to determine the effectiveness of this training process in leading people to an expression of accepting Christ as Savior, increased church attendance and developing active disciplers in the Lighthouse FMC. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to [REDACTED] indicating that you have granted me permission to recruit people regular attenders and members.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Doherty
D. Min. Candidate

Appendix L

IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 18, 2020

Thomas M. Doherty
IRB Exemption 4157.021820: A Study of a Systematic Evangelical Discipleship Process at the
Lighthouse Free Methodist Church

Dear Thomas M. Doherty,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

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Appendix M

First Student Booklet ECG 2.0

Every Church Grow's 2.0



Every Church Grows 2.0

Written By Thomas M. Doherty

KINGDOM HARVEST PRINCIPLES

6 two's in 12

Six steps to Success

Six Requirements for Growth

Embrace all - How do we Enfold People into our Church

Vision Blue Print

Discipleship Driven Multiplication

Creating Gospel Conversations

Agenda Week One:

Opening Prayer

Care Questions:

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Vision - Handout

Biblical Why - Preferred Future Why

Biblical Values that support discipleship

Process, Methods, Structures that accomplish biblical directions

& advance the preferred future.

Address Spiritual health issues

Whom do we reach? “Oikos”

Make your list.

How do we have spiritual conversations

Salvation

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson Luke 10:1—18

Practice teaching the above lesson

Commit to lead behavior goals

Six requirements for growth

Six steps to success

Six two's in twelve

Pray for one another

Class Material Week One

Opening Prayer

Care Questions:

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹²⁹

“God is my life-giver, and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹³⁰

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad, and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹³¹

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I- the leaves-are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹³²

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹³³

“God has existed from eternity- but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹³⁴

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life.... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

¹²⁹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 41

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*, 42

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 48

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 49

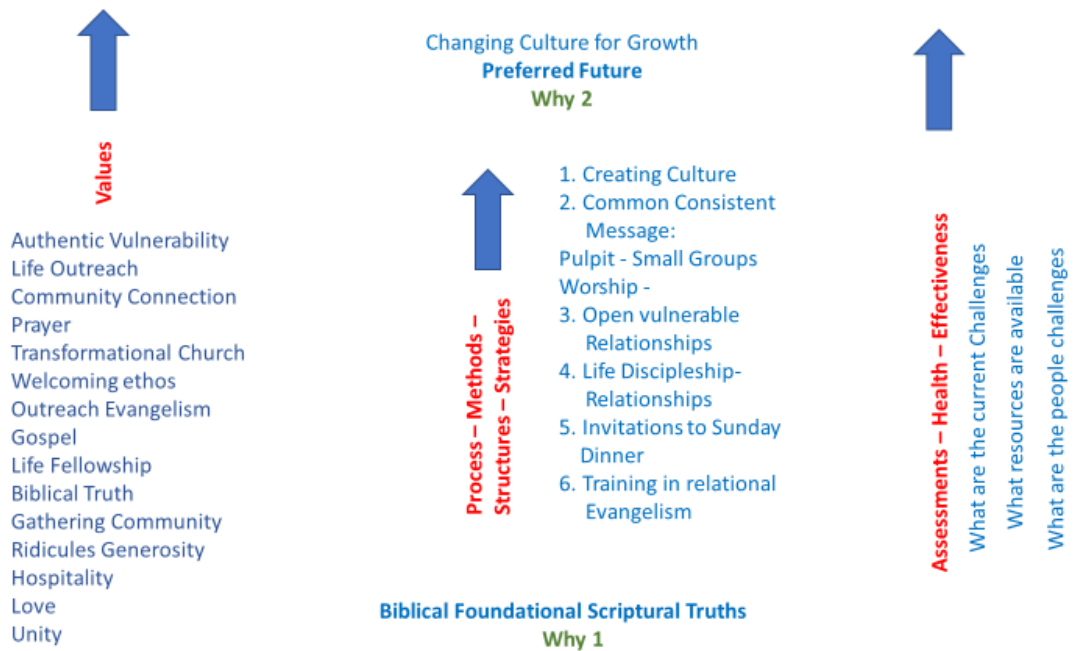
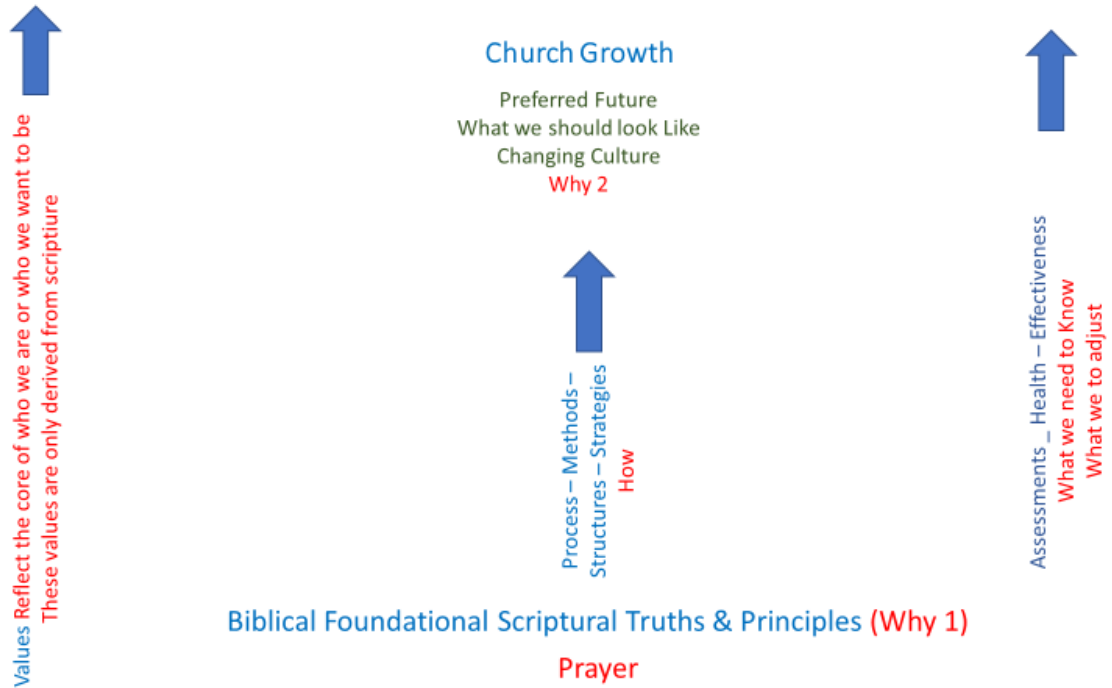
Spiritual Care Questions

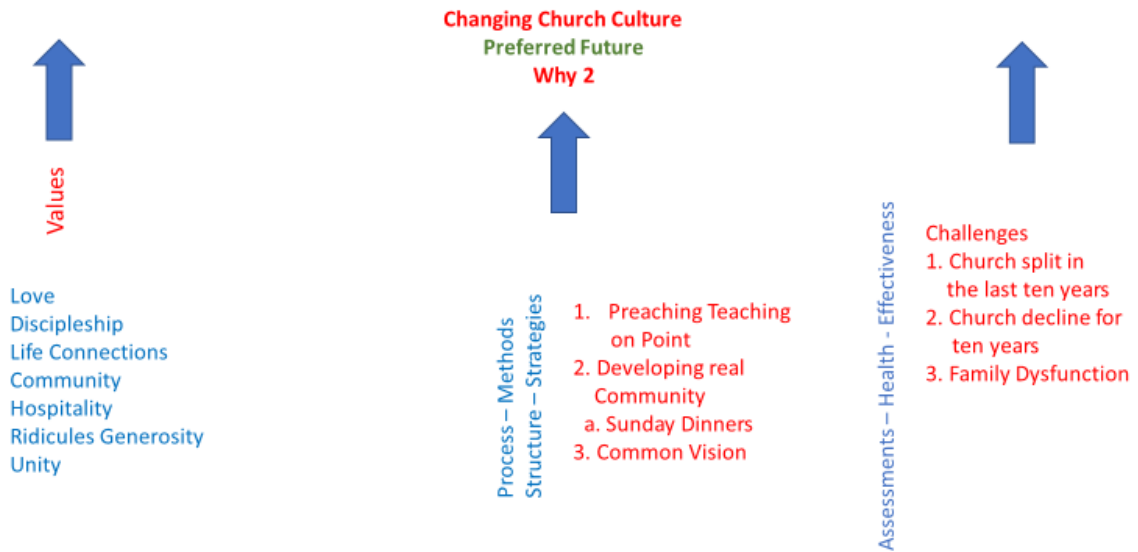
1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Vision - Handout

Biblical Why – Preferred Future Why





Biblical Foundational Scriptural Truths Why 1

Biblical Values that support discipleship

Process, Methods, Structures that accomplish Biblical directions

& advance the preferred future.

Address Spiritual health issues

Whom do we reach? “Oikos”

Making your list

What is your Oikos?



How do we have spiritual conversations?

1. Be upfront with your faith
2. Be ready to pray
3. Bridge conversations are critical
4. Know your story
5. Don't forget to invite
 - a. Coffee
 - b. Dinner
 - c. Your home
 - d. A Church Function
6. Culturealization Evangelism
7. Invest in others

Salvation – Pathway – Context

Inductive Bible Study

Passage: Luke 10:1—18

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Practice teaching the above lesson

6 two's in 12 Equals growth

1. Pray two times a day

Seek God two times each day asking Him to give you eyes to see the people He is bringing across your life path to express the love of Jesus too.

2. Ask two people each week to come to church

Give an authentic invitation to two people each week. Ask them to a ministry of your church. It could be worship, bible study, family fun night, special service, or anything else that will help people connect with your church community and Jesus.

3. Seek two people out to create “community” with over the next 12 months

Find two people to develop “relationship” with over the next 12 months. These people are not a part of the church community yet. They are people who, over the next 12 months, will connect with you regularly to talk about their challenges, victories, family, or maybe the ball game this week.

4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior over the next 12 months.

Be ready to tell your story: Before Christ – when you met Christ – Life since you accepted Christ. Be ready to tell some Christ's Story, at least the part that connects with your life.

5. Seek and find two persons of peace over the next 12 months.

A person of peace is someone whom God has already placed in their heart a desire to hear the gospel message and the message of the ministry of your church. They are ready to hear and accept what you have to offer. What's the vision for the church?

A. They are people who are open to you and your message. They receive you into their lives.

- B. They want to give to help you, and they will show hospitality.
 - C. They have needs that you will pray for, and God will answer.
 - D. They influence many others and will lead them to
connect with you and the message you bring.
 - E. They may be famous or infamous people.
6. Find two people in your church each week to encourage

Six Requirements for Growth

1. Believe that the resources are in the harvest.
2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to do” list
3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete “to do” lists
4. Reproducible actions: 2 Tim 2:2
5. Believe your church can grow
6. Develop a sense of peace and unity

Six Steps to Success

1. Set Goals
2. Identify Actions Steps
3. Engage in Loving Cycles of Accountability
4. Record Level of Success Toward Goals
5. Evaluate Progress
6. Start Again

Looking at these principles closer:

1. Set Goals (X to Y in when)

There are many things that we have to do to get ministry done. While that is true, we need to choose to focus on one or two Wildly Important Goal(s). These goals can be measured, and they can be accomplished by doing identified behaviors. It is also essential to include a timeline for completion.

2. Identify action steps

Once the goal(s) are established, choosing action steps that will move the goal in a positive direction. These action steps have to be things that people can do, and they have to be things that can be measured.

3. Engage in cycles of loving accountability

Accountability is critical to success because we are all more committed to fulfilling our commitments when we know we need to report to someone. It is vital because when we don't meet our commitments, we sometimes need help to understand how to get the job done.

4. Record level of success toward goals

The best accounting system is created when including the people who are acting out the action steps. You had seen this concept maybe when your church was raising money for something. Many churches have used a giant thermometer. It was easy to read because you could see within seconds how much money you were trying to raise and how much you actually had raised. The kind of accounting system we are talking about measures the actions steps that are supposed to cause us to get to the goal.

5. Evaluate progress

6. Start Again

What it looks like for a local Church:

Set Goals: Increase the number of disciplers who are making disciplers

A core principle for growth

Steps: (Lead Behavior)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Set Goals: Increase in Worship Attendance.

Everything depends on bringing in people.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Increase the number of Salvations.

The Kingdom Goal.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Increase the number of people making disciples

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

1

2

3

4

5

Increase the number new believer discipleship groups.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

1

2

3

4

5

Possible action steps that can accomplish the Goal:

1. Pray two times a day, asking God to help you see the people He wants you to express His love too.
2. Authentically ask two people each week to come to a church meeting.
3. Ask God to help you to create an authentic community with two pre-Christians each year.
4. Ask God to help you draw two persons of peace this year into a relationship.

5. Intentionally be ready to lead two people in a prayer of salvation.
6. We will have three Special Gathering to invite new people too. Every member will authentically invite at least one person to these events.
7. We are going to make our Easter Service an outreach service, and every member will authentically invite two people to this service.
8. We will develop disciplers who develop disciplers. Individual or Group

We record the level of success toward goals:

In this case, it may be more than one:

A scoreboard for those who are committed to the first six

A scoreboard for those who commit to the behaviors of number 7 & 8

Cycles of loving accountability:

Each week people report on the things that they have committed to do that week.

In these team type meetings, when people get their commitments done, there is a celebration.

When Lead Behaviors are not accomplished, there is help to overcome the obstacles.

Commit to lead behavior goals for the week

Finding the pathway for health and growth through systematic evangelistic Discipleship.



Pray for one another

Agenda Week Two

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

God's directives for outreach Matthew 28:18—20

Review and add

Sovereign of God

Who do we reach? "Oikos"

Baptism

Methods of outreach

Telling your story & Spiritual conversations

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Start Here

Material for Week Two Class

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹³⁵

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹³⁶

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹³⁷

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and --- the leaves ---are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹³⁸

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹³⁹

“God has existed from eternity --- but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁴⁰

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life....

What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² *Ibid.*, 41

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 42

⁵ *Ibid.*, 48

⁶ *Ibid.*, 49

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

What were your Lead Behavior Goals for last week?

How did it go?

Vision

Why are we doing this?

Biblical Command

Preferred Purpose

Biblical Values that support discipleship

Process, Methods, Structures that accomplish biblical directions

& advance the preferred future.

Address Spiritual health issues

Whom do we reach? “Oikos”

Making your list

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

God's directives for outreach Matthew 28:18—20

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
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7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
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9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Practice teaching the above lesson

Review and add

6 two's in 12 Equals growth

1. Pray two times a day

Seek God two times each day, asking Him to give you eyes to see the people He is bringing across your life path to express the love of Jesus too.

2. Ask two people each week to come to church

Give an authentic invitation to two people each week. Ask them to a ministry of your church. It could be worship, bible study, family fun night, special service, or anything else that will help people connect with your church community and Jesus.

3. Seek two people out to create “community” with over the next 12 months

Find two people to develop a “relationship” with over the next 12 months. These people are not a part of the church community yet. They are people who, over the next 12 months, will connect with you regularly to talk about their challenges, victories, family, or maybe the ball game this week.

4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior over the next 12 months. Be ready to tell your story: Before Christ – when you met Christ – Life since you accepted Christ. Be ready to tell some Christ’s Story, at least the part that connects with your life.

5. Seek and find two persons of peace over the next 12 months.

A person of peace is someone whom God has already placed in their heart a desire to hear the gospel message and the message of the ministry of your church. They are ready to hear and accept what you have to offer. What’s the vision for the church?

- A. They are people who are open to you and your message. They receive you into their lives.
- B. They want to give to help you, and they will show hospitality.
- C. They have needs that you will pray for, and God will answer.
- D. They influence many others and will lead them to
connect with you and the message you bring.
- E. They may be famous or infamous people.

6. Find two people in your church each week to encourage

Six Requirements for Growth

1. Believe that the resources are in the harvest.
2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to do” list
3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete “to do” lists
4. Reproducible actions: 2 Tim 2:2
5. Believe your church can grow
6. Develop a sense of peace and unity

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2. Identify Actions Steps
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5. Evaluate Progress
6. Start Again

Looking at these principles closer:

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There are many things that we have to do to get ministry done. While that is true, we need to choose one or two Wildly Important Goal(s) to focus on. These goals can be measured, and they can be accomplished by doing identified behaviors. It is also essential to include a timeline for completion.

2. Identify action steps

Once the goal(s) are established, choosing action steps that will move the goal in a positive direction, these action steps have to be things that people can do, and they have to be things that can be measured.

3. Engage in cycles of loving accountability

Accountability is critical to success because we are all more committed to fulfilling our commitments when we know we need to report to someone. It is vital because when we don't fulfill our commitments, we sometimes need help to understand how to get the job done.

4. Record the level of success toward goals.

The best accounting system is created when including the people who are acting out the action steps. Maybe you observed this concept when your church was raising money for something. Many churches have used a giant thermometer. It was easy to read because you could see within seconds how much money you were trying to raise and how much you have raised. The kind of accounting system we are talking about measures the actions steps that are supposed to cause us to get to the goal.

5. Evaluate progress

6. Start Again

What it looks like for a local Church:

Set Goals: Increase in Worship Attendance.

Everything depends on bring them in.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Increase the worship attendance.

Key components for growth.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Increase the number of Salvations.

The Kingdom Goal.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Increase the number of people discipline.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Increase the number of new believer discipleship groups.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Increase the number of salvations.

Steps: (Lead Behaviors)

Action steps that will accomplish the Goal:

1. Pray two times a day, asking God to help you see the people He wants you to express His love too.
2. Authentically ask two people each week to come to a church meeting.
3. Ask God to help you find and create a community with two pre-Christians each year.
4. Ask God to help you find two persons of peace this year to draw into a relationship.
5. Intentionally be ready to lead two people in a prayer of salvation.
6. Take ECG's training and apply the principles.
7. We will have three Special Gathering to invite new people too. Every member will authentically invite at least one person to these events.
8. We are going to make our Easter Service an outreach service, and every member will authentically invite two people to this service.

9. We will start three new disciple groups specifically to invite up to 75 people until a group has at least eight people attending. Each leader will authentically invite up to 25 people until their group has at least eight people attending.

Record the level of success toward goals:

In this case, it may be more than one:

A scoreboard for those who are committed to the first six

A scoreboard for those who commit to the behaviors of number 7 & 8

A scoreboard for number 9

Cycles of loving accountability:

Each week people report on the things that they have committed to do that week.

In these team type meetings, when people get their commitments done, there is a celebration.

When we do not accomplish the Lead Behaviors because of obstacles, there is help for each of us.

Understanding the Sovereignty of God

Sovereign of God

What does it mean that God is Sovereign?

Scriptures on the Sovereignty of God:

Isaiah 46:10 English Standard Version (ESV)

¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, 'My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish all my purpose,'

Psalms 135:6 English Standard Version (ESV)

⁶ Whatever the Lord pleases, he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps.

Rom 8:27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Proverbs 19:21 English Standard Version (ESV)

²¹ Many are the plans in the mind of a man,
but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.

1 Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, :2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. :3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, :4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. :5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, :6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Who do we reach? “Oikos”

Baptism (Discipline)

Who – How old – When – What is first

Methods of outreach

Telling your story & Spiritual conversations

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Three

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your Soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

Ephesians 2:1—10

Oikos –

Sanctification

Six requirements for growth

Six steps to success

Six two's in twelve

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Class Material for Week Three

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your Soul?

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁴¹

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁴²

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁴³

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁴⁴

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁴⁵

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁴⁶

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life.... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² Ibid. pg. 41

³ Ibid. pg. 41

⁴ Ibid. pg. 42

⁵ Ibid. pg. 48

⁶ Ibid. pg. 49

2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

What were your Lead Behavior Goals for last week?

How did it go?

Vision

Why are we doing this?

Biblical Command

Preferred Purpose

Biblical Values that support discipleship

Process, Methods, Structures that accomplish biblical directions

& advance the preferred future.

Address Spiritual health issues

Whom do we reach? “Oikos”

Making your list

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

God's directives for outreach Ephesians 2: 1 — 10

Inductive Bible Study

1. Read the verses in at least two versions.
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
6. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

Six Steps to Success

Six Requirements for Success

6 two's in 12

Oikos –

Teaching on Sanctification

Sanctification

Ephesians 5:25—27

Hebrews 13:12

I Peter 1:15 – 16

2 Corinthians 7:1

Hebrews 9:13 – 14

Hebrews 10:8 – 10

1 Thessalonians 5:23 – 24

Psalms 51:1 – 13

1 John 1:5 – 2:1

1 Thessalonians 4:7 – 8

2 Thessalonians 2:13

I Peter 1:2

John 3:5

Romans 8:9

Galatians 3:3

Acts 1:8

Romans 5:5

1 John 4:12 – 13

2 Corinthians 7:1

Galatians 2:20

Romans 8:14 – 17

Matthew 22:37 – 40

I Peter 3:2 – 3

1 Corinthians 3:16 – 17

Hebrews 6:1; 12:14

Matthew 5:43 – 48

1 John 4:12 — 13

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Four

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

2 Timothy 2:1—13

Salvation

Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Class Material for week Four

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁴⁷

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁴⁸

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁴⁹

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁵⁰

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁵¹

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁵²

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life.... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² *Ibid.* pg. 41

³ *Ibid.* pg. 41

⁴ *Ibid.* pg. 42

⁵ *Ibid.* pg. 48

⁶ *Ibid.* pg. 49

4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

What were your Lead Behavior Goals for last week?

How did it go?

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson - 2 Timothy 2:1—13

Inductive Bible Study

14. Read the verses in at least two versions.
15. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
16. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
17. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
18. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
19. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
20. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
21. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
22. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
23. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
24. Why was it written to the original audience?
25. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
26. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

6 two's in 12

Six steps to success

Six Requirements for Growth

Salvation

Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

Prayer

Bible Reading and Memorization

Fasting

Confession

Submission

Meditation

Stewardship

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Five

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

Ephesians 6:10 – 20

Authentic Prayer

Praying for God to meet your needs

Praying for what others need and whom God wants you to reach

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

By week five, some of the trainers will have engaged in training relationships of their own.

Pray for one another

Class Material for Week Five

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁵³

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁵⁴

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁵⁵

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁵⁶

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁵⁷

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁵⁸

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life.... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?

² Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 41

³ *Ibid.* pg. 41

⁴ *Ibid.* pg. 42

⁵ *Ibid.* pg. 48

⁶ *Ibid.* pg. 49

3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Opening Prayer

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson - Ephesians 6:10 – 20

Inductive Bible Study

1. Read the verses in at least two versions.
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
6. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

6 two's in 12

Six steps to success

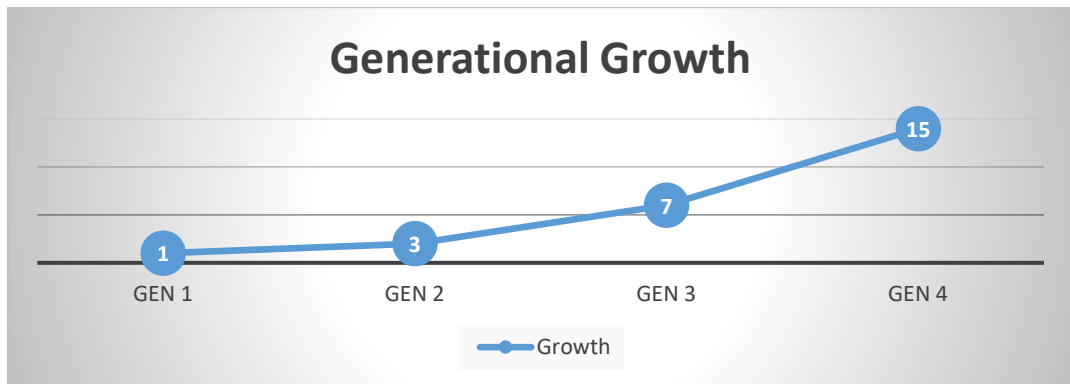
Six Requirements for Growth

Salvation

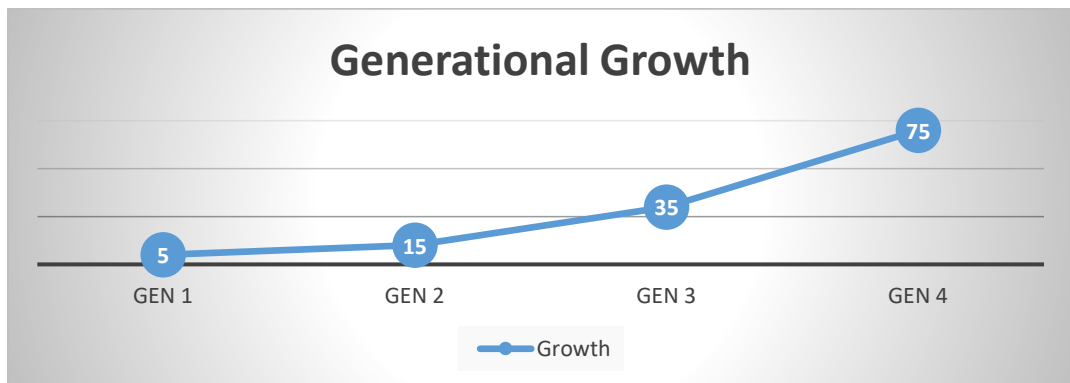
Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

- Prayer
- Bible Reading and Memorization
- Fasting
- Confession
- Submission
- Meditation
- Stewardship



Begin with one person who makes two disciples, and after four generations, we have fifteen people.



Begin with five people who make two disciples, and after four generations, we have fifteen people.

Vision grows & dominates

Vision is contagious, ignites & stirs

Vision drives & anticipates the future

Vision changes the present to fulfil the future

Visionaries persist

Authentic Prayer

Praying for God to meet your needs

Praying for what others need and whom God wants you to reach

Practice teaching the above concepts

Commit to lead behavior goals

By week five, some of the trainers will have engaged in training relationships of their own.

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Six

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

Romans 5:1—21

Spiritual warfare

Our identity in Christ

2 Timothy Generational multiplication (Minimum of four
generations)

Practice

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Class Material for Week Six

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁵⁹

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁶⁰

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁶¹

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁶²

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁶³

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁶⁴

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² Ibid. pg. 41

³ Ibid. pg. 41

⁴ Ibid. pg. 42

⁵ Ibid. pg. 48

⁶ Ibid. pg. 49

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life....
What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson - Romans 5:1—21

Inductive Bible Study

1. Read the verses in at least two versions.
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
6. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

6 two's in 12

Six steps to success

Six Requirements for Growth

Salvation

Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

Prayer

Bible Reading and Memorization

Fasting

Confession

Submission

Meditation

Stewardship

Vision grows & dominates

Vision is contagious, ignites & stirs

Vision drives & anticipates the future

Vision changes the present to fulfil the future

Visionaries persist

Authentic Prayer

Spiritual warfare

Our identity in Christ

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Eph 1:4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love.

Eph 1:5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, :8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

Eph 1:9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.

Eph 1:11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

Eph 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

Eph 1:18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Eph 1:19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

Eph 1:20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

Eph 1:21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

Eph 1:22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, :23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

(Eph 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,)

Hebrews.3:14, I am a partaker of Christ... I share in His life.

I Pet. 2:5. I am one of God's living stones and am being built up in Christ as a spiritual house.

I Pet 2:9, 10. I am a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession to proclaim the excellencies of Him.

Ps. 23, I am a sheep of His pasture. Therefore, I have everything I need.

Rom 6:22, I am enslaved to God.

Matt. 5:13, I am the salt of the earth

Matt. 5:14, I am the light of the world.

2 Cor. 5:17, I am a new creation (a new person)

2 Cor. 5:18–19, I am reconciled with God and a minister of reconciliation.

Rom. 8:14—15. I am a Son-Daughter of God

1 John 3:1—2, I am now a child of God. I will resemble Christ when He returns.

Col. 3:12, I am chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved

1 Thess.1:4, I am chosen and dearly loved by God.

1 Thess 5:5, I am a Son-Daughter of light and not darkness.

Heb 3:1, I am a holy brother-sister, partaker of a heavenly calling.

Eph 2:19, I am a fellow citizen with the rest of God's people in His family.

Gal. 3:26,28, I am a son-daughter of God and one in Christ

1 Cor. 6:17, I am joined to the Lord and one with His Spirit.

1 Cor. 12:27, I am a member of God's body.

Rom 8:17, I am a joint heir with Christ

Acts 1:8, I am a personal witness of Christ for Christ.

John 15:16, I am chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit.

John 15:1,5, I am part of the true vine a branch of Christ's life.

John 15:15, I am Christ's friend

Eph. 2:10, I am God's workmanship (His handy work), created in Christ to do His work.

Eph 3:1, I am a prisoner of Christ.

Eph 4:24, I am righteous and holy

Col. 3:3, I am hidden with Christ in God.

Col. 3:4, I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life.

2 Timothy Generational multiplication (Minimum of four
generations)

Practice

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Seven

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

John 6:30—59, John 8:14

Practice the above lesson and concepts from weeks one through six

Who are your persons of peace?

Forming groups

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Class Material for week Seven

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁶⁵

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁶⁶

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁶⁷

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁶⁸

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁶⁹

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁷⁰

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life.... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² *Ibid.* pg. 41

³ *Ibid.* pg. 41

⁴ *Ibid.* pg. 42

⁵ *Ibid.* pg. 48

⁶ *Ibid.* pg. 49

4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson - John 6:30—59, John 8:14

Inductive Bible Study

1. Read the verses in at least two versions.
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
6. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

6 two's in 12

Six steps to success

Six Requirements for Growth

Salvation

Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

Prayer

Bible Reading and Memorization

Fasting

Confession

Submission

Meditation

Stewardship

Vision grows & dominates

Vision is contagious, ignites & stirs

Vision drives & anticipates the future

Vision changes the present to fulfil the future

Visionaries persist

Authentic Prayer

Practice the above lesson and concepts from weeks one through six

Who are your persons of peace?

Forming groups

Commit to lead behavior goals

Pray for one another

Agenda Week Eight

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson

Review and add

Hebrews 10:19 – 39, Hebrews 11:6, 12:2

The Power of Vision

Embrace All evaluation

Practice the above lesson and concepts from weeks one through six

Commit to lead behavior goals

What is next?

Pray for one another

Class Material for Week Eight

Opening Prayer

Care questions

How is it with your soul?

Care Questions:

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *The Me I Want To Be*.

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁷¹

“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”¹⁷²

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good. When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁷³

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations... The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁷⁴

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁷⁵

“God has existed from eternity——but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁷⁶

¹. Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² Ibid. pg. 41

³ Ibid. pg. 41

⁴ Ibid. pg. 42

⁵ Ibid. pg. 48

⁶ Ibid. pg. 49

The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life....
What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.

Spiritual Care Questions

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Worship

Loving Accountability & working through challenges

Vision – Looking Forward

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson - Hebrews 10:19 – 39, Hebrews 11:6, 12:2

Inductive Bible Study

1. Read the verses in at least two versions.
2. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
3. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
4. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
5. Who is the audience that this passage is written too?
6. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
7. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Review and add

6 two's in 12

Six steps to success

Six Requirements for Growth

Salvation

Grace-Power

Spiritual Disciplines

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Vision changes the present to fulfil the future

Visionaries persist

Authentic Prayer

Spiritual warfare

Our identity in Christ

The Power of Vision

Embrace All evaluation

Practice the above lesson and concepts from weeks one through six

Commit to lead behavior goals

What is next?

Pray for one another

Six Requirements for Growth

1. Believe that the resources are in the harvest.
2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to do” list
3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete “to do” lists
4. Reproducible actions: 2 Tim 2:2
5. Believe your church can grow
6. Develop a sense of peace and unity

Six Steps to Success

1. Set Goals
2. Identify Actions Steps
3. Engage in Loving Cycles of Accountability
4. Record Level of Success Toward Goals
5. Evaluate Progress
6. Start Again

Looking at these principles closer:

1. Set Goals (X to Y in when)

There are many things that we have to do to get ministry done. While that is true, we need to choose and focus on one or two Wildly Important Goal(s). These goals can be measured, and they can be accomplished by doing identified behaviors. It is also essential to include a timeline for completion.

2. Identify action steps

Once the goal(s) are established, choosing action steps that will move the goal in a positive direction. These action steps have to be things that the people can do, and they have to be things that can be measured.

3. Engage in cycles of loving accountability

Accountability is critical to success because we are all more committed to fulfilling our commitments when we know we need to report to someone. It is vital because when we don't fulfill our commitments, we sometimes need help to understand how to get the job done.

4. Record the level of success toward goals

The best accounting system is created when including the people who are acting out the action steps. Maybe you observed this when your church was raising money for something. Many churches have used a giant thermometer. It was easy to read because you could see within seconds how much money you were trying to raise and how much you have raised. The kind of accounting system we are talking about measures the actions steps that are supposed to cause us to get to the goal.

5. Evaluate progress

6. Start Again

6 two's in 12 Equals growth

1. Pray two times a day

Seek God two times each day, asking Him to give you eyes to see the people He is bringing across your life path to express the love of Jesus too.

2. Ask two people each week to come to church

Give an authentic invitation to two people each week. Ask them to some ministry of your church. It could be worship, bible study, family fun night, special service, or anything else that will help people connect with your church community and Jesus.

3. Seek two people out to create “community” with over the next 12 months

Find two people to develop a “relationship” with over the next 12 months. These people are not a part of the church community yet. They are people who, over the next 12 months, will connect with you regularly to talk about their challenges, victories, family, or maybe the ball game this week.

4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior over the next 12 months.

Be ready to tell your story: Before Christ – when you met Christ – Life since you accepted Christ. Be ready to tell some Christ’s Story, at least the part that connects with your life.

5. Seek and find two persons of peace over the next 12 months.

A. A person of peace is someone whom God has already placed in their heart a desire to hear the gospel message and the message of the ministry of your church. They are ready to hear and accept what you have to offer. What’s the vision for the church?

B. They are people who are open to you and your message. They receive you into their lives.

C. They want to give to help you, and they will show hospitality.

D. They have needs that you will pray for, and God will answer.

E. They influence many others and will lead them to connect with you and the message you bring.

F. They may be famous or infamous people.

6. Encourage two people in your church every week.

Appendix N

Replacement Student Booklet ECG 2.0 R

Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined

Only God Knows How Many Apple Trees Are Here



Every Church Grow's

Written by Thomas M. Doherty

6 Steps to Success

Church Growth Principles & Practical Steps For Evangelism

Systematic Evangelistic Discipleship Process

Individual and Small Group Discipleship

Guided Head-Heart-Hands Process for Spiritual Health



Every Church Grows 2.0 Re-Imagined

Introduction

I have taught this material to church attenders all over West and North Michigan for the last seven years and re—worked it for presentation at least six times. As we were teaching it in the eighth year, we came to several conclusions that helped us reimagine better ways to teach and live out these truths of Scripture.

Thinking about the Head-Heart-Hands formula used by our denomination in training pastors, it struck me we had slipped into a format which was not enough heart and hands and too much head. We were giving lots of information and talking in class about some heart stuff, as well as giving some “hands” assignments during the week. Knowledge is excellent, but for a Christian to live out the Mission that Christ gave us in Matthew 28:18—20, the Christian must have a heart empowered and lead by Christ’s Grace-Power, and since the mission requires “doing,” believers must live-out these truths.

Thinking about Every Church Grows 2.0 material (ECG’s 2.0) in this way changes what information is shared in which track, the weight of each of the three components (Head-Heart-Hands), and the expectations in-between class for the participants. The discipleship track is designed to help our participants actively engage in Christian life practices that best represent being and making disciples of Christ.

My wife and I started watching a TV series named “Sons of Thunder.” The premise of the show is that a man named Simon, who has been in a motorcycle gang, finds a Bible and begins to read it. Over time he changes the way he thinks, what he does, and explores what it means to “Know Jesus.” He decided he can’t continue to be a part of the gang and comes to the understanding that God wants him to find the owner of the Bible he has been reading. The rest of the episodes, at least so far, have been the adventures he finds himself in as he looks for the owner of the Bible and seeks to implement the truth he is learning from it. Living this truth is not easy, as you well know. There seems to be a simple truth that guides all other truths in his life, “If it is right and you are able, do it.”

In discussions with two of my co-laborers and family in Christ after the second lesson of ECG’s 2.0 material in May of 2020, two concepts rushed into my mind. First, the class was becoming too intellectual. You could attend the class and have intellectual conversations without deeply engage your heart or your hands. The second concept was the focus of the show “Sons of Thunder” show. “If it is right and you are able, do it.”

The people of the church have been acculturated to think that government and community corporate entities are responsible for taking care of people and their problems. It is the Federal, state, or local government, a food pantry, or a church that should take care of XYZ. We rarely think past the most comfortable efforts of helping others. If we can give some words of comfort, a few dollars, point to a group or organization that can help, we feel like we have done what a Christian should. We don’t even think about letting someone live with us or to give/lend our stuff to others to meet a need. Many people are like me, and we think about security, safety, and lawsuits. These are important but can’t be our fundamental motivating force.

Two of my friends live the concept, “If it is right and you are able, do it.” They have taken homeless people who they are disciplining into their home for meals and incorporated them into family life. If they see someone who needs a place to stay, they have made room. They do pray, hug, and invest in all kinds of ways that express the love of Jesus and follow the example of Jesus with His disciples. It struck me that this is what I have been envisioning for those who go through ECG’s 2.0 training. Therefore, I am re-imagining the class, so get ready for what I believe will be a life-changing experience for you, your church, and the Kingdom.

May God use you to build His Kingdom... today!!

Blessings

Thomas M. Doherty

Book One/Week One

Head

Welcome to what we hope will be the beginning of a life-shift that will change our hearts and the patterns in which we live out our lives. Through this material, we will endeavor to follow the Head-Heart-Hands concept. Each day you will have reading to do that is intended to help you align your head, heart, and hands to the Spirit and Word of God.

When Thinking about Disciples who make disciples who make disciples, our best examples come from the life of Christ and the early disciples of the church. Therefore when we think about discipleship, we are thinking of a lifestyle, not a class. There are times in the process of lifestyle discipleship that a more formal approach can and should be used to convey information. Jesus did this in parables and through sermons. He also walked through life with the disciples who followed him. There were twelve who received the most significant training, but many others over His three-plus years of ministry were a part of His preparation for ministry. He sent out the twelve as described in Luke 9, and in Luke 10, He sent out the Seventy-two. Both of these groups were sent out with virtually the same mission.

Jesus invested in all of these folks to various degrees and then sent them out. He demonstrated how to interact with people (including healing the brokenness in each of these disciples). He showed another way of forgiveness, Grace-Power, and hope. Let's stop here and make it personal. In whom are we investing? In whom are we intentionally spending time? In whom are we expressing the love of Christ? If we can't identify at least two people who we are life-discipling, let us start now.

To help you do engage in discipling, "Every Church Grows" (ECG's) points you to the

“6 two’s in 12” process.

1. Pray two times a day, asking God to show you the people he is bringing across your life pathway in whom to express the Love of Christ.
2. Ask two people each week to come to an event with other Christians. It could be a formal church service, bible study, cookout, sporting event, or anything that will expose these folks to Christian culture.
3. Look for two people who Christ opens a pathway into their lives for you to create community. Real and ever-deepening relationships. You are the primary tool that God has *recreated* for the purpose of reaching the world with the Gospel message. We might just point a person to a resource to help in their life, but likely God intends us to be that resource.
4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer of salvation over the next twelve months. Be looking for opportunities for people as the needs arise and specifically be looking for people who are showing openness to the gospel. Remember, our purpose is found in Matthew 28:18—20. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
5. Look for Persons of Peace. A Person of Peace is someone open to the message of the gospel, wants to invest themselves in Kingdom through your discipleship, has influence over others, and has needs that you can ask God to meet through prayer. Read Luke 10:8—9.

6. Identify two people each week in your church to encourage. Encouraging people in your church helps each person experience their God-given version of who they can be.

This head information is useful, but it needs to seep into the heart and hand aspect of our lives to fulfill God's transforming work in and through our lives.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

Heart

Holding onto the above information, let us examine our hearts as we focus on God's call in our lives found in Matthew 28:18—20. Please read through each day's quote and process with the Holy Spirit related to what He is saying to you. Please share with one of the other participants what God is telling you each day. Also, please take a look at the six questions and answer them each day.

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Thoughts from John Ortberg from his book *"The Me I Want To Be."*

Hands

Read from the "Hands" section for the week and each daily "Hands" assignment.

Heart – Week One – Day One

“My main job is to remain connected to God.”¹⁷⁷

If this is true, how do I remain connected to God? What do I need to do? What do I need to be? Lord, who do you say I am? Lord, what are your thoughts towards me? Lord, who do you want to be for me in this moment/situation? Lord, what are you doing, and how do I partner with you?

Hands for Today

If your main job is to stay connected with God, what is He saying to you today? Specifically, what is He saying to you through His Spirit and Word about how to prepare yourself to express His love to other people? Thinking about your Oikos or your circle of influence, who does He want you to Love for Him today? How does He want you to express His Love?

Heart – Week One – Day Two

Ortberg goes on to write, **“God is my life-giver and therefore my desire for life cannot be satisfied apart from Him.”**¹⁷⁸

To the degree we are invested in this truth each day, our desires will be changed toward God, and we will have a greater sense of satisfaction. If you are a long term Christian, the temptation is just to say, “Yes, God is my life-giver, and He is where I get satisfied.” Resist that temptation. Take time; this is not a task to accomplish. Where does God give me life each day? How do I receive His life daily? Am I settling and not receiving all that God has for me?

¹ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 35.

² *Ibid.*, 41

Hands for Today

What truth about how God is giving you life today can you share with someone? With whom will you share this truth? When? Who will you tell about how sharing with someone went? When?

Heart – Week One –Day Three

“When I am flowing in the Spirit, sin looks bad and God looks good.

What are the ways you can flow in the Spirit? What do you do that draws you closer to God? What is going on in your life when sin looks good to you? Are you aware when sin looks good, or are you surprised when the consequences show up in your life? How do you course correct when you find yourself outside of God’s heart for you? Jesus said, “My sheep know my voice.” John 10:3

Hands for Today

Once you have identified ways that draw you closer to God, to whom will you share this information? When? Who will you report how sharing this information went? Answer the question, “What is going on in your life when sin looks good to you?” and if you don’t have someone you think you can tell this truth, journal about what God showed you.

Heart – Week One –Day Four

When I experience gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in my soul, there is a good chance it is the Spirit flowing within.”¹⁷⁹

³ Ortberg, The Me I Want to Be, 41

When do you experience contentment and satisfaction? What is happening in your life? In what kinds of things are you engaged? When do you feel the Spirit flowing within yourself? What is happening in your life? Are you investing in someone? Are you seeking hard after God? It is well with me because of who Jesus is in me and through me. Since it is well with me, I can ask, “What do you need?” (I’m encountering God so that I can offer you an encounter with Him.)

Hands for Today

Once you have identified specific aspects of your life that are present when you are feeling gratitude, contentment, and satisfaction deep in your soul, share what you learned with someone outside your family. Who and when will you share what you learned? To whom will you report what happened?

Heart – Week One –Day Five

Revelation 22:2. Ortberg writes, “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of nations... You and I—— the leaves——are to flourish for the healing of the nations...The Spirit never just flows in us: he always flows *through* us so that others might flourish as well.”¹⁸⁰

Since we are the leaves of the tree, how can we become more aware of those God brings to us for healing? Since we are the instrument of God’s healing, how can we understand what He desires us to do? Or be? Who do we know that needs God’s healing? Who is He directing us to bring healing too? What does that healing look like? Jesus healed all that came to Him... because power was coming from him and healing all of them. (Luke 6:30). Good exercise: find all Jesus’ healing Scriptures.

⁴ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 42

Hands for Today

Make a list of people whom God is asking you to express His Love. These probably will be those you would identify as in your circle of influence, your Oikos. These people will be a central part of who you will be reaching out to throughout ECG's 2.0 Re-imagined process for the next year. You will be intentionally trying to build a relationship, draw closer to Christ and the church.

Heart – Week One – Day Six

“The Bible does not say you are God’s appliance; it says you are his masterpiece.”¹⁸¹

Do you agree with God’s assessment of you? If not, what do you need to do to adjust your way of thinking to His? I can’t afford to have a thought about me that Jesus doesn’t have about me. If so, Im telling Jesus that His finished work on the cross isn't enough for me.

Hands for Today

As you identify how you need to adjust your thinking about yourself, think about who God wants you to share your discoveries with. How can what you learned about who God says you are, can help someone else understand who God says they are? To whom and when will you share this with someone?

Heart – Week One – Day Seven

“God has existed from eternity————but he has never had a relationship with you before.”¹⁸²

⁵ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 48

⁶ *Ibid.*, 49

What does that mean to you today? What do you want from this relationship? What do you think that God wants from His relationship with you?

“The main measure of your devotion to God is not your devotional life, it is your life... What do you do that makes you feel fully alive? A spiritual discipline is simply an activity you engage in to be made more fully alive by the Spirit of Life.”¹⁸³

Ask yourself these questions every day. How are you doing today with God? Is the Spirit of God flowing through you? Do you sense that you are walking in the cool of the evening with God? Are you hiding in the bushes as God calls your name? What’s my red line?? “I’ll follow Jesus until he asks me to... give up something or asks me to do... Jesus wants intimacy with you and requires complete surrender of your heart.

Hands for Today

As you discover the Spiritual disciplines that make you feel fully alive, share what you learn with someone. Always think specifically about who and when you will share the truths you discover. Remember, information for information's sake does not grow the Kingdom. We must “Go” to make disciples. We must share to make disciples. Whom does God want you to start this journey?

Complete the inductive Bible below and be ready to discuss it at our weekly meeting.

⁷ Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 51

Inductive Bible Study

Passage: **Luke 10:1—9**

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12. (Found in the Appendix)
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One/Week two

Head

Welcome to week two of this adventure in following Christ's example of how to disciple others. Jesus ordered his life to accomplish the goal of growing the Kingdom of God. His life was ordered around this end goal. When we decide why we do things as individuals or as a corporate group, we should make those decisions based on “Biblical Why’s.” This should be the first consideration for all that we do. Is there a biblical reason or Why to do what we think we should? Second, is there a preferred future “why” that supports the actions we propose?

Jesus was laser-focused on two main groups of people. The twelve and the larger groups like the seventy-two. He spent most of his time with the twelve, living into their lives. This life-style discipleship is much more demanding than just asking people to come to a bible study. It is more demanding on the disciples and the discipler. It is not teacher-student oriented and much more relational. There are times and places where Jesus did teach, and he was known as a person who taught with great authority. Most of the hours that Jesus spent with his disciples were in the daily connections of tasks and taking care of the needs of everyday life.

How can we readjust our lives to reflect this kind of discipleship? How can we be intentional in reshaping our relationships in this direction? Who does God have in mind for our inner circle, and who does he have in mind for the larger group that we will influence? The method that Jesus used was to win the world through a smaller group of people who will win others who will win others. We see this in the lives of the twelve and the seventy-two. He spent time with them, and as their lives were transformed, they influenced others.

Paul proclaimed this same truth in 2 Timothy 2:2. “*And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*” We can see an outline of how Jesus lived His life in these words and perhaps an overview of how He intends us to live our lives. If Paul were writing to us now, he might say, “Mary, Mark, Matthew, and Madeline The things that I have taught you in the presence of many others, take that knowledge and experience and entrust it to faithful people who will teach others. We can see the intent is to invest in an individual or smaller group with the expectation that these people will invest in faithful or trustworthy people who will invest in still others. This process is the overarching story of the book of Acts and the early church.

It takes change, sacrifices, and a willingness to get involved in other people's lives in real ways. One of those ways is to transform our homes from retreats and fortresses into places of hospitality. We understand our residences to be places we can retreat to get away from all of the troubles of the world. I do it too. I get home and close my door to all the problems of life or walk the trails around my house. We do need times to get away with Christ and become refreshed, but our homes can be one of our greatest evangelic and discipleship tools. It is a safe place for people to come and meet your Jesus during natural life events.

Let us look at the life of Jesus as we consider why we do what we do individually and corporately. What behaviors of Jesus (His actions are biblically based) can we engage in that will move us toward our preferred future (To grow the Kingdom of God)? In the TV show, *Sons of Thunder*, the main Character asked people where ever he goes, “Do you know Jesus?” This question is his tool to connect people with the Jesus he met. What are your tools to connect people to Jesus? He expresses what the Bible says for specific situations,

and at other times he simply tries to learn about Christ with the people God brings into his life. We need to take a look at our lives and adjust them to come in line with Christ's discipleship model.

Review the 6 two's in 12 as you consider how you can adjust to reflect better how Christ connected to his disciples.

Heart

Think about how you can adjust your life process through the daily readings. Also, remember to process through the six questions from Ortberg below.

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?
5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Heart – Day one – Week Two

Read John 1:43—51:

John 1:43, "Jesus decided to go"... we must be "going" to reach others. He "found," Philip, Jesus spoke, "follow Me." Philip "found" Nathanael and said to him, we have found Him...

Jesus told Philip to follow Him after he found Him, and what did Philip do? He found Nathanael and told him about Jesus. *Is this what it means, at least in part, to follow Jesus?*

To do what He did. *Are you looking for people who need to be found?* Philip was looking for a specific person. *Who are you looking for?* In verse :45, Philip says, “We have found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote.” All through this passage, there is finding going on. *Are we looking for people who are looking for Jesus?* Even if they might not know they are looking for Him.

Hands for Today

Ask God whom He would like you to add to your Oikos. Begin to be on the lookout for people God is bringing into your life. Pray for these people and look for opportunities to connect with them.

Heart – Day two – week two

Read Mark 2:13—17

Jesus is making a stir among the folks, and even the religious leaders have taken notice. After healing the paraplegic, Jesus walks by a tax booth and calls to Levi (also known as Matthew) and says, “follow me.” Jesus calls one of the most despised men in the city to follow him. Even though Levi is despised, he does know about God. According to verse :15, Levi had a party. Jesus, His disciples, and other tax collectors and sinners were all at the party.

The Pharisees came and asked the disciples of Christ, “why does He eat with tax collectors and sinners?” Note that we have no evidence that they answered. They may have wondered the same thing. Or they may have felt more comfortable around tax collectors and sinners than they did around religious leaders. In verse :17, Jesus gives us the answer, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” *Who are we most attracted too? Sinners, righteous, people who are good citizens, but not spiritually alive? With who are we the most comfortable interacting?*

Jesus said His mission was to come to the sick as a physician would. *Are we looking for the sick? What will we do when we see the sick? Have our hearts been empowered to reach out to the sick?*

Note that Levi was a person of peace, as described in Luke 10. Levi's heart was ready to respond when Jesus called. He did not respond until Jesus called. *Is that an important distinction?* When he responded to Christ, he invested in Him by spending money on a party, opening his home up to Jesus, and inviting his friends. Levi was a person of influence in the lives of many sinners (sick). *Who do we know like Levi?* Remember, we can only give the Jesus we have. Point people to the Jesus of the Bible, don't make Him another religious leader.

Hands for Today

Ask God for your Levi today. Take advantage of the opportunities God gives you. Connect with this person. Let them see "The Jesus" within you.

Heart – day three – week Two

Read John 6:57—59, 6:66 *This is hard. Will you turn back?*

We can see Jesus living out the principle of focusing on a few in John 6:66, where He asked the twelve if they too would leave. In John 17, Jesus prays for the twelve. In Mark 9 he shows Peter, James, and John His transfiguration, and in other places, He is teaching the meaning of parables to the twelve when He didn't do that for the rest of the people.

What life secrets has Jesus taught you? What insights to life has the Holy Spirit revealed to you? We have all faced challenging times in our lives. *What did Christ give you to hang your hat on at those times?* These truths change who we are. They change how we understand ourselves and the world around us. The woman at the well had a life-changing conversation with

Jesus. This conversation didn't just change her life, but it changed the lives of a whole village. What changed her wasn't that Jesus could tell her all about her past. What changed her was Jesus cared enough to connect with her, fill her with hope, and give a future without judgment. *Have you experienced this conversation with Christ? If so, what village have you told about the beautiful gift of Christ?*

Hands for Today

Ask God to reveal a truth or insight or information and share that with someone in ECG's group.

Heart - Day four – Week two

Read John 21:15—23, explicitly noting verse 23. Early Believers thought that Jesus would return before John would die.

As we look at Jesus' time with His twelve disciples, we see a relationship that showed before it told. Jesus took His disciples, and along the way, they saw Jesus healing people, interacting with religious leaders, providing people with food, raising the dead, helping people understand everything in renewed ways. This renewing went on for the rest of their lives. Jesus told them that The Christ must be crucified, but they did not understand very well until after His resurrection. Even after His ascension into heaven, they were still adjusting to the new reality that Jesus brought to earth. Some thought the Christ would come back very soon, even before the disciples died, and yet this was not taught by Jesus.

What has Jesus taught you directly? What have other disciplers of Christ taught you that you need to pass on to others? How can you show-teach people these truths? Who can you

intentionally connect with today? What have you believed of which you need to let go? What needs to be reconsidered and tested biblically?

Hands for Today

Follow the example of Jesus to show the Love, Nature, and Character of Christ today. Be specific, ask God who, show-specific traits and actions that honor God.

Heart - Day five – Week two

Read John 5:1-7

In Luke 10:9, we are told to heal the sick that we find in the house of a person of peace. I understand this to mean we are to pray for the answers to the needs of the people we connect with in the world. Jesus met a man in John 5:1—7 who was paralyzed for thirty-eight years, waiting for God to heal him. *Was this healing an act of discipleship? Did it teach the man anything? Did it teach the disciples following Christ anything?* Jesus asked the man who was sitting in a place that there was healing, who needed healing, do you want to be healed? It sounds a little insensitive, but nothing could be further from the truth. This man only knew one way to be healed. This way had not produced any results for thirty-eight years, but he didn't know of any other approach. *Do you know people in your life who are stuck in one way of meeting a need in their life and can't see any other way? Would it seem insensitive for you to point out that their way of thinking or doing was not effective and that there might be another way?* When Jesus asked this question, the man pointed to the one way (the only way) and told Jesus why it wasn't working-implying that it wasn't his fault. Jesus spoke with authority and told him to take up his bed and walk. Later in John 5:19, Jesus said He could only do what the Father showed Him to do. In John 14:12, Jesus said that His disciples (Those who believe in Him)

would do greater works than even He did because He goes to the Father. *How long has it been since God has shown you to do something?* Seek God the Father, and ask Him for His assignment.

Hands for Today

Ask God to bring someone into your life who has a challenge that you can speak God's truth into today.

Heart – Day six – Week two

Read John 4:1—42

Jesus called Sinners and Tax collectors to follow him, and he called the woman at the well to follow Him. She did not leave her village to follow Jesus, but she heard His teaching and followed what He said. Just like Levi and Philip, she went into her village and found others to tell about Jesus.

As you consider John, chapter 4, think about these questions. Jesus went through Samaria even though Jewish people avoid any contact with the people who lived there. *Who are the Samaritans in your life? Who do you or the people you hang with avoid? Who sees you as not accepting of them?* Jesus told His disciples that, “His food was to do the will of Him who sent Me.” Then He pointed them toward the Samaritans and talked about the harvest being white or ready. What followed was the amazing harvest of the people in a Samaritan village. It is fine to focus on people we know and love when we think about discipling people to faith, but let us not forget the outcast, broken, even hated.

Are there people you know that you just don't believe are worth the time? Is God calling you to share the treasure, “Jesus,” with them? Will you be ready if they open the door of their

lives to you? Will you be there, or will you continue to walk around them, so you don't need to have contact with them? Can you rejoice in such a harvest?

Hands for Today

Many Christians and Churches look for cleaned up sinners to bring to church. People who are not too bad. Children who have parents, people who are clean, and not too messed up emotionally, psychologically, mentally, or physically. Ask God to show you someone who is outside your comfort level and show them, Jesus today.

Heart – Day Seven – Week two

Read John 15:26—27, Acts 1:8

One of the expectations that Jesus had of His disciples is that they would be witnesses to Jesus and His life. When you read the passages above, you will see at least two things. First, both references being filled or connecting with the Spirit/Comforter. John tells us that the Spirit will bear witness about Jesus, and because of that, the disciples will bear witness of Jesus because they were with Him from the beginning. In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells the disciples to wait until the Holy Spirit comes upon them, and then they will be His witnesses throughout the world. You, too, have a relationship with Jesus. You, also, are called to be a witness of who He is. I think this is one place that we can disconnect. It is easier to learn intellectually about Jesus and try to pass that knowledge on to others than it is to experience Christ, witness to that, and help others do the same. *Can you witness to your salvation experience with Christ? Do you speak and listen to Him every day? What is He saying to you? What fresh new truth is He teaching you about Himself, or maybe about you? Who do you think He wants you to reveal to those around you? Remember, Jesus said he could only do what the Father showed Him to do. What is the Father showing you to do? How can you help someone else identify what God is saying to them?*

Hands for Today

Ask God to show you who He wants you to witness to today and do it.

God's directives for outreach Matthew 28:18—20

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical “Whys”

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One/Week Three

Head

Welcome to week three of what we hope is becoming a new way of understanding and living out your Christian life. We are designed to reproduce ourselves biologically. We know that this reproduction is not just to create a child but to lead the child to understand how best to thrive. We expose our children to academic pursuits, challenge them to develop physically, Spiritually, and emotionally. We help to develop their personalities in the most positive ways. We try to help them identify their interest, skills, and abilities. We love them, help them through hard times, and celebrate with them during good days. We show them how to be successful in life by living life with them. They are then able to show/teach others.

There is no significant difference in how we are to relate to those God brings to us to disciple. We begin with the Love of God filling our heart for these people just like your heart was full of love when we first felt or saw our child move in the womb, or heard its heartbeat, or the moment when you saw your child enter into this world. Those who have adopted children are an excellent example-whether the adoption is official or just a reflection of the reality of their family. When you take a child into your heart and home, you are guided by love. This child becomes a part of your clan, and you help them develop into healthy, productive adults. We have been re-created to help those who Christ brings into our lives to become healthy, reproducing Christians. We are to help them find the Image of Christ that is being revealed in them. Let us go and fulfill our destiny.

In ECG's, we teach six steps to success. It is a process to help you do at least two things. First, to identify Godly goals, and second to develop a method to reach those goals. The first step is to determine or understand what end-goal God wants you to accomplish. In this case, we know

that God wants you to lead people into a relationship with Christ and disciple them to maturity. We could identify how many people we are discipling now and measure that number against the number of people we are discipling in two months. In time we might count the number of people who we are discipling that are discipling others. To accomplish these long term goals, we must engage in specific behaviors. The second step is to identify these behaviors, also known as action steps, needed to achieve the goal. These steps are actionable behaviors that you think will help you achieve the goal of leading people into a relationship with Christ and discipling them into maturity. These behaviors may include the 6 two's in 12 we referred to throughout this material. Step three is accountability. When we commit to doing certain practices, there is a loving cycle of accountability that is there to help keep us on track. Our weekly group meetings provide this accountability for ECGs. The fourth step is about counting the behaviors that we have committed to engage in every week. If we have committed to praying two times a day, did we do that? If we committed to inviting two people to activities with Christians, did we do that? We count these behaviors because we have determined that these behaviors are the key to getting to our goal.

Heart

Think about how you can adjust your life process through the daily readings. Also, remember to process through the six questions from Orberg below.

1. Do you feel closer or further apart from God this week?
2. Are you feeling more or less depressed this week?
3. Do you find yourself getting angry more or less often this week?
4. Are you thinking more about challenges or God this week?

5. Are you feeling more or less stressed this week?
6. Are you spending more or less time with God this week?

Heart – Day One – Week Three

Read John 14:1—14

The first several verses in this passage are typically heard at funerals. They do give meaningful context to verses 10—14. Verses :10 & :11 ask us to believe in The Son and The Father. To Believe that they are One. At that time, this was a big ask because for someone to say that they are equal with God was a heresy... much like it would be today. They were being asked to disregard what they had believed all their lives. *Are we ready to change what we think if the scriptures challenge those beliefs?* Verse :12 might be that challenge. It could challenge what we have always believed or at least our understanding of life. Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do because I am going to the Father. *Is this true? How can this be true? How can the works that we do be greater than the works Christ did? Is this just for the Apostles?* Jesus went on to say, “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” *Are we missing anything from this scripture? Does obedience have anything to do with how this works? Are we doing things that please us? How does the phrase, “that the Father may be glorified in the Son” impact the meaning of this passage? What is God asking you to do? Can you point to any great works that God has done in your life?*

Hands for Today

When you think about your circle of influence, who does God bring to your mind? What in their life does God want to impact? How does He want to use you? When will you obey God's call on your life to reach out to this person? Do they need prayer? Pray with them and see what God will do. Do they need understanding? Give them something from the Word of God, the Bible, or His Spirit and see what God does in them.

Heart – Day two – Week Three

Read John 14:15—21

Jesus is focusing those listening to Him on the foundation of obedience. He says, “If you love Me you will keep My Commandments.” There is not a lot of wiggle room in this statement. Jesus makes the direct connection between obedience and love. He goes on to say, “If this premise of love and obedience is true, He will ask the Father to send the Helper (The Holy Spirit). Jesus commits to not leaving the disciples as orphans. He concludes this section by saying, “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” Keeping commandments equals loving Jesus, which is followed by the Father loving the disciples and Jesus revealing Himself to the disciples. *Does your love reflect obedience to the commands of Jesus? Do you sense the presence of the Helper in your life? How is Jesus revealing Himself to you in your life day by day? Do you feel the love of the Father? How do you experience the love of the Father?*

Hands for Today

What one thing is Jesus asking you to do today? What one thing has Jesus been asking you to do for a while? Obey today. Do what He is asking of you. Practice simple obedience.

Heart Day Three – Week Three

Read John 15:1—17

In this passage, Jesus uses the imagery of Vine and branches. He was saying that we, the branches, can do nothing without the Vine. He said that He could do nothing except what the Father shows Him to do. There is a connection between God and us and getting things done, like bearing fruit, miracles, accomplishing anything. There is a connection between abiding in Christ and His Words abiding in us and getting what we ask. *What significance can we draw from this? How are we changed when we abide in Christ, and His Words abide in us?* Once again, Jesus says when disciples ask, and the Father grants request, the Father is glorified. *In our lives, what kind of request will glorify God?* There is a connection to this and bearing much fruit. We should spend some time right here if we are looking for an understanding of how to bear much fruit. *Are we bearing much fruit? What kind of fruit?* Some people have said, this means we will bear the fruit of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It cannot mean only these attributes. The mission is to “Go and make disciples” to reproduce ourselves. *Are we bearing fruit? How can these verses help us bear fruit?*

Jesus connects the above with Keeping His commandments again. Keep His commandments, and you will abide in His Love, and your joy will be made full. This is my commandment that you love one another, and greater love has no one than he who is willing to lay down his life for another. *Jesus is talking to us about dying once again. Are we ready to die*

to our securities, comforts, and routines? He ends this section of scripture by telling us that His command is that we love one another. *How can we express love today to those in Christ and those who are yet to be in Christ?*

Hands for Today

Today ask God who He wants to Love through you. Pray for that person, asking God to bless them and to help you understand how He would like you to impact their life. It may be a small thing but act on it and let God grow you in this area of your life.

Heart – Day Four – Week Three

Read John 15:18—27

There is a wonderful progression in these verses. We have been chosen. We are not above our Master, *Jesus*. If they persecuted Me (Jesus says), they will persecute us. If they listen to Jesus, they will listen to us. We will be persecuted because of Jesus. If they hate Jesus, they hate God the Father. “But when the Helper comes, whom I (Jesus) will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

Do you sense the deep connection between you and the Lord? Is the persecution that you are under coming to you because of Him? Or you? He sent the Helper, The Spirit of Truth. What is He saying to you? What is He saying through you? The Spirit is bearing witness of Christ. Are we bearing witness of Christ? If so, How are we bearing witness of Christ and to whom?

Hands for Today

Based on what the Holy Spirit-Helper is saying to you, do what He is asking you to do. Step into what the Holy Spirit is asking of you with the sense that He is with you because He is with you! Let Him be your confidence and strength.

Heart – Day five – Week Three

Read John 17:

Are you ready for the Kingdom to be expressed through your life? This is what Jesus is praying for in this passage. He expressly says that He is not asking God the Father to take His disciples out of the world, so sorry, you are in it for the longterm. Jesus is asking for all those who will believe because of their (The first disciples) words, that is us. He refocuses us on the concept that Jesus is in the Father, and we are in Christ. In that place, we become perfect. Jesus ends this section with this thought, “I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” There is transforming power for those who are in Christ. *Christ is praying for us so that we can express the Glory of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How will we do that today? What does that look like? How do we express His Glory? How did Christ express His Fathers Glory?*

Hands for Today

The foundation of expressing God’s glory is listening and obeying Him. God is speaking to you today. Is He asking you to pray, or send a message, or call, or go see someone? Is He asking you to go somewhere and just see what He has for you there? Much of our outreach

focus is on our Oikos, but God does have plans for us to draw people we have yet to meet into a relationship with the church and Christ. How is He asking you to express His Glory today?

Heart – Day Six – Week Three

Read Romans 6:16—23

Paul makes the striking contrast between being slaves to God or sin. One thing that is settled is that we are slaves. *How do you feel about being a slave? What does it mean to be a slave to God? How does this understanding impact the way you live each day? How is being a slave to God bring about your sanctification? How is it separating you from sin? How is it making you holy? What is the fruit of your slavery to God?*

Hands for Today

Who does God want you to share the insights you gained from study and prayer on this subject? When will you share it with them? To whom are you reporting what happened when you shared your insights? This is important for accountability, support, and giving you a place to process.

Heart – Day Seven – Week Three

Read 2 Corinthians 10:1—5

If you are walking in the flesh but not waring according to the flesh, *what does that look like? What are your weapons? How does the divine power work in you and through to destroy strongholds?* It is good that we are slaves because, as slaves, we are empowered to take every thought into captivity. *Are you able to discern whether your thoughts are coming into captivity? What thoughts have come into captivity? What thoughts are not yet in captivity to God? How do you have to adjust so that those thoughts can be held in captivity to Christ?*

Hands for Today

Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, decide to share this freeing truth with someone today.

Ephesians 2: 1 — 10

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head

information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One– Week Four

Head

Looking at Jesus as our example or model of discipleship, we see in the gospels that He showed them how to live. He taught the disciples to serve one another and others. One pointed example of this was the demonstration of washing the feet of the disciples and then telling them, “If then I being your Lord and teacher wash your feet, you should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example that you should do as I do.” Foot washing was one example, but the life of Jesus was one example after another. He taught them how to pray. He showed the power of God to heal, raise people from the dead, forgive sin, and provide miracles like the feeding of the five thousand and turning the water into wine. He calmed the seas and filled their nets with fish. He engaged Tax collectors, sinners of all kind, forgave the woman caught in adultery, and healed the leper. He brought salvation to the Samaritan woman and her village and even drew ritualistic righteous people like Nicodemus into spiritual conversations while directly challenging the religious and political leadership. He taught them in action and parable. In all of this, He impacted how they viewed the world. This impact caused change over time. In all of this, there was a central focus, winning souls and bringing people into a right relationship with Christ. He showed the disciples that the mission was forgiveness of sins and a transformed life. His example to the disciples is His example to us. If we are going to follow Christ's example, we must engage people and walk through life with them day in and day out.

Jesus taught and showed his disciples, and then he assigned them work. Our job is always to help those we are discipling to live the example of Christ. One of the criticisms of this model of evangelistic discipleship is that each discipler can only disciple a few people well. Indeed, one discipler can only disciple a few people, but that isn't a bad thing when we disciple people who

will disciple people. Jesus had the three, the twelve, and the seventy-two that we can see in the gospels. However, the plan is not one generational. Jesus' intention was and is that each of us who is being disciplined will disciple others who will disciple others. He intended that the church would be like the Red Sea and not like the Dead Sea.

As many of you know, the Red Sea is a place of life. The water comes into the sea, and there are many fish and other types of life in and around the sea. The water comes in and then flows south into the Gulf of Aden. The Dead Sea, on the other hand, has water that flows into the sea, but there is no outlet. Its name well defines the sea; it is dead. It is dead because the water does not flow out of it, and the salt content is too high to allow for life. A Disciple who just receives and never gives what she has received to others is dead. If she finds others to disciple as she had been disciplined, then not only is what is in her passed on, but new and more vigorous life is created in her.

When Jesus assigned work for his disciples to do, he gave them instructions, as is recorded in Luke 9 & 10. He gave clear instructions and set them out after they had experienced life with Him. Jesus showed them His method of evangelism and discipleship, and this gave them a pattern to follow. He didn't soft-peddle what they could expect to experience. They knew it would be hard, and so should we. The gospel message has always been divisive. It challenges the state of sin in people's life. He challenges the father of sin, satan. It challenges the fallenness that people have come to expect.

One of the up-sides is that people who follow Christ (obey Christ) are one with Christ, His Father, and the Holy Spirit. As we have discussed in prior weeks, there is power in being One with the Trinity. Jesus sends us out with His strength when we obey, and His method is to

send us out two by two. With all of our frailties, Jesus entrusted this critical ministry to us, let us follow His example.

Heart – Week Four – Day One

Read Luke 10:1—3

In Chapter 10 of the book of Luke, Christ sends out the seventy-two disciples to do what He has been demonstrating to them. He gives clear instructions and asked them to do what He has been modeling to them.

Verses 1 – 3, “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Jesus has appointed us to follow in His example and to complete His mission. Maybe we have not yet been well trained, but as we read about how He lived out the gospel mission and how He instructed His disciples, we can step into our role as disciplers.

Note these disciples, like all disciples, are “appointed” to this task, which means we have been assigned to a position, office, or duty. Authority is given to us when we are appointed. In this case, the authority comes from Jesus. When we read these words, we cannot help but think of Matthew 28:19—20. Jesus tells us there to ‘Go and make disciples’ to teach them to observe all that Jesus taught them,” and “I am always with you.” Jesus didn’t send them out alone but two by two. *Why do you think they were sent out two by two?* Jesus sent them out to every town and city. This directive correlates with what Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, “Making disciples of all nations.” We are to reach out to all people, even those who we don’t personally connect with easily. Jesus told them to go to places that “He, Himself was about to go.” Today we have an

advantage in that the Holy Spirit has been “poured out on all flesh,” Acts Chapter 2. The Spirit is everywhere. He is there before we get to there, no matter where there is. We are not alone. *Are we seeking where God wants us to go? Are we just deciding where we should go and then asking God to bless? Is there confidence when we know God is sending us?*

In verse three, Jesus tells us that “the harvest is plentiful.” *Do we believe that the harvest is plentiful?* If we don’t think it is, we will not go out to harvest souls for Christ. Jesus tells us that the laborers are few, even though the harvest is plentiful. *Is the problem with the harvest, or is it with the laborers?* If Jesus says there is a great harvest, we must believe and act as if Jesus is telling the truth. The church gets frustrated because there is no or low growth, and there is a reaction to blame the harvest. We say the church is right here (Speaking of the building) why doesn’t the harvest come?

Jesus sent the twelve out in Luke Chapter 9, and He sent the seventy-two out in Luke Chapter 10. He ended His earthly ministry by telling the church to “Go out and make disciples.” *What is the Holy Spirit speaking to you right now? Where are you supposed to go and engage in the harvest?* The harvest is plentiful, and laborers are few, so pray earnestly. Our response should be to pray earnestly. Don’t think you are off the hook with only praying. We must start with prayer because prayer will change us and show us where the Holy Spirit is working. Prayer leads us to those who the Holy Spirit has already prepared their hearts to receive the gospel message. We are not off the “action” hook. The first words of verse three tell us to get moving. The phrase, “Go your way,” is set in the context of these words, “believe the harvest is plentiful, the laborers are few, and that we are to pray earnestly.” Within that context, Jesus says, “Go your way; behold I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.” *Are we ready to go to places that will be very uncomfortable? Are we willing? How can we become willing? What*

excuses are we tempted to offer for why we can't "Go"? If you were going to go today, where would that be?

Hands for Today

Life as a Christian is not always comfortable, and yet it can be if you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Was Steven comfortable when he was stoned to death? No. What Paul comfortable when he was stoned and left for dead? No. Not in the sense that it was easy, but both of these men and countless other Christian women and men have been full of the Spirit of Comfort when they face hard things. There are things that you think are going to be hard to do. Choose one and asked the God of Comfort to help you be an overcomer in that area.

Heart – Day two – Week Four

Read Luke 10:4

Why did Jesus tell them to carry no Money bag, knapsack, or sandals with you? Let me suggest that there at least two possibilities. First, it could be that Jesus wanted them to rely on God. Second, Jesus might have wanted them to be open to receiving help from those to whom they were going to minister. Maybe, both of these reasons are true. Jesus showed His dependence on God and even said, “The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.” John 5:19 ESV

If Jesus was that dependent upon God the Father, can we be any less dependent? We have learned that we can do anything, and the Father will answer all our prayers if we are in Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit. (John 14:12—21) In that place, we are *directed* by God and *express* His will. As we go out to make disciples, we can only be successful when we are in the Trinity, guided by the Trinity, filled with the empowering of the Holy Spirit. When we are dependent upon God, we have all the resources that we need. When we are dependent upon God,

He may use those to whom we are ministering to meet our physical needs. We are pretty independent. *Can you learn to depend on God for your everything? How do we begin to develop a dependence upon God for everything?*

The last part of verse 4 says, “greet no one on the road.” That doesn’t sound very friendly or Christian. *Why would Jesus tell us not to greet people on the road?* There are several factors to the why of this. First, Jesus just gave the disciples an assignment to go to every town and village that He, Himself, was about to go to. The assignment is specific, and so they needed to stay focused. This is a good lesson for us today. If The Holy Spirit of Christ is directing us to something specific at a particular time, we need to stay on task. There are other times that we are just out and about that we should be looking for the opportunity to have gospel conversations because that is our assignment. “Go and make disciples of all nations.” Stay focused on the task. Use the methods that Jesus demonstrated in His life. *How can you stay on track with the mission in Matthew 28? What tools have been offered in ECG’s material that can help you with this focus? Who is the Holy Spirit sending you to today?*

Hands for Today

Listening to the Holy Spirit determine who the Holy Spirit is sending you to today. Don’t let anything distract you from this task. Go without a plan or resources, except the Holy Spirit. Practice relying on Him for your thoughts, words, actions, and things you might need to fulfill the task.

Heart – Day Three – Week Four

Read Luke 10:5—6

“Whatever house you enter, *first* speak, “Peace be to this house!” Some assumptions are acting as a foundation for this verse. The first assumption is that we have gone somewhere. We

are listening to God and have accepted His directive to “Go.” Second, that God has led us to a place or person. In this context, the disciples are going to people's homes. The principle is that disciples connect with people's lives. It may be that God directs you to the home of someone you know or don't know. It also may be that God connects you with someone who opens their life to you at the gas station or grocery store. They tell you something about themselves that God wants to speak into. It could be through you praying for them or explaining how God helps you or someone you know with a similar situation. It could be that God wants you to comfort them with a scripture or speak the truth directly to them. Third, we are intentionally staying on mission. We are either going someplace that God has directed us to go, or we are aware enough to see the people God has brought across our pathway to express His Love.

All the time, people say, “I am nervous about sharing the gospel with people. They might get upset. They might reject the message or me. They might turn away from God because I did it the wrong way or at the wrong time.” Not everyone we speak to will be receptive. That is what speaking peace to the house or the person is all about. If there is a person who God has prepared their heart to hear the gospel message is there, they will receive what you have to offer. If they are not a person of peace, then they are not ready to receive, they will not accept what you have to offer. There is no dire warning about speaking to people who are not prepared to hear. There are directions for what to do if they are ready to listen. Later in this chapter, we can read what can happen to a whole community that rejects the gospel, but these are instructions for individual contacts.

What fears stand in the way of you engaging in this process? List them. As you read your list, what scriptures come to your mind that addresses these fears? If none comes to your mind,

search for answers. God is asking us, directing us, has commissioned us to “Go” make disciples. He has sent His Holy Spirit to empower us, and He gave us His example. We can do this.

Hands for Today

Practice speaking peace to at least two situations today. Be yourself, talk about God, bless someone, offer to pray for someone, and see if there is a way to offer more of God’s peace.

Heart-Day Four-Week Four

Verse seven is packed with instructions to us. Jesus is telling disciple-makers this is what you do when you find persons of peace. These are people who have been prepared to receive the gospel message. I should note here that this is not just what Jesus, through the Holy Spirit does. There is an individual component. When the Holy Spirit was poured out to the whole world, His Grace was everywhere. His Grace was and is working on every person in the world. Jesus is preparing their hearts to hear the gospel. He is calling each person to Himself. Jesus is preparing the soil of their hearts. Unlike soil, however, God has given the people of this world free-will. So the soil can decide to receive, resist, or reject the Holy Spirit. Jesus is giving disciples directions that we are to follow when a person is ready to hear and receive the gospel. Jesus tells the disciples to remain in the “same house,” where they find a person of peace. *Why would they stay? Shouldn’t they try to get to every home?* Part of the reason they are instructed to remain is the nature of a person of peace. A person of peace does receive the message of the gospel, but that is not all. They are people who have influence over others. They want to invest in expressing the principles that you are teaching to those they know. They want to help the disciple-maker.

Why are disciples instructed to remain in the house connected to the life of the person of peace? What is the point of allowing the person of peace to give drink and food to the disciple-maker? Why would Jesus tell the disciples, "Do not go from house to house?"

How did Jesus do ministry? He called out the three Peter, John, and James, who made up the inner circle of the twelve disciples. He lived with the twelve disciples and was involved with the seventy-two enough to train and send them out on missions work. Jesus modeled what He is asking His disciples to do. This way of discipleship is work. *What stands in the way of you making this change to your life? Who does God want you to do life with now? Is there an inner group in whom you are investing? Is this the inner group in whom God is asking you to invest? Jesus allowed Peter, John, and James to see some of the more profound things like His transfiguration as recorded in Matthew 17, and He asked these three men to go with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Who is your inner circle of disciples? What Does God want you to show them?*

Why remain in the same home or connected to the same life? That is how Jesus did it many times. He went to the Tax collectors home and ate with tax collectors and other sinners who were connected with Matthew and Zacchaeus. We enter the life of someone ready, and we connect them with the gospel. We stick with those people; we invest in those people and help them invest in the next generations. It may sound like this is a slow way to grow the Kingdom, but if we invest in one person of peace who influences ten people who influence one hundred people, you can see not only that the Kingdom can grow quickly, it can become secure with proper supports in place.

In Whom's house/life, does God want you to reside?

Hands for Today

You have been praying and connecting with people for three weeks. Identify people in your circle of influence who may be persons of peace. They are open to the gospel like others in your circle, but they also have influence over people and want to invest in growing the Kingdom. Remember, Jesus invested most heavily in the twelve because He the primary leadership for growing His Kingdom was through the Apostles. He gave time, but less time, with the seventy disciples, and they impacted Kingdom growth. You want to help everyone in your Okios, but you need to seek God's leading in who is ready now and ask Him who should receive most of your time. Make a list and ask God in whom you should invest yourself first and most.

Heart-Day five-Week Four

Verse eight is an easy one to overlook but has critical implications. Yesterday we were discussing what Jesus wanted disciple-makers to do when they found a person of peace, someone who is ready to hear and receive the Gospel message. Verse eight begins, "Whenever you enter a town, and they receive you." This seems to be the next step. A person of peace has invited the disciple-maker into their lives and connected them to the people they have influence over, and the impact is spreading throughout the city. It reminds us of the woman at the well in John 4:4-26. We don't even know this woman's name. We know that she is a Samaritan woman who has led a hard life. She is well connected to the community she is from, but maybe doesn't have a good connection. She is coming to the well when she knows others will not be there. She has an encounter with Jesus; she is changed and goes back to her village and tells them about Jesus, The Messiah. The villagers come out to the well to speak with Jesus and are further convinced that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus stays with them a few days to teach them. The woman at the well was the person of peace that Jesus used to reach the village. He went through Samaria intentionally at a time when Jewish people avoided the area. He went to the well and sent His disciples to town

to get food and waited for the woman to come to the well. Jesus says that He does only what the Father shows Him to do. He was there, and the woman's heart had been prepared to receive the message of Jesus. She was open and seeking God. Jesus followed God's directives to go to the well in Samaria, the woman was prepared and seeking God, and a whole community was transformed.

We may never have our names written down in history. We may never be known by anything except our actions. This woman was willing to be an instrument for God. She overcame her fear, prejudice, disappointments and found the Messiah.

The question comes back to, "Do we believe God will use us to expand His Kingdom." Do we believe that the methods that Jesus used in the first century will work with us today? Is the world too far gone, or can God still make a difference using us?

Hands for Today

Thinking about who God wants you to disciple, what does He want you to speak to them today? How can you empower them to do what God is asking them to do today?

Heart-Day Six-Week Four

Verse nine is one of those places that Jesus says something that can produce fear in us. He says to His disciple-makers, "Heal the sick in it and say to them the Kingdom of God as come near to you." "Heal the sick *in it...*" I see the principle here to be, "Ask God to meet the need that is before you." If there are sick people, ask God to heal them. If there are people with relationship issues, ask God to intervene for them. If there is a resource issue, ask God to meet that need. In *Every Church Grows, Re-imagined*, we teach that authentic prayer is praying with someone when a need is made known to you. Pray in that moment with the person. We do that

for several reasons. First, there is a connective power in praying with someone when the need is made known. Their hearts are open to help. When you pray, they can experience the presence of the Holy Spirit and His connection with you. If you pray when the need is made known to you, there is an opportunity to ask what God has done to meet the need later. God acting in their life situation connects you with them and provide an opportunity for you to disciple them. They experience your genuine care and God's Love.

What roadblocks in your heart and mind might stop you from offering prayer when someone makes a need know to you? What scriptures come to your mind that addresses those roadblocks? If none do, search the scriptures for the answers. We will only do what we believe is possible. What happened in the past when you have prayed for someone in the moment? Did you follow up? What happened? If you didn't follow up, why not? How can you prepare your heart and mind for the mission of praying for people when a need is presented?

Hands for Today

Today ask for the Holy Spirits leading and pray with the person He shows you.

Heart-Day Seven-Week Four

Verses :10—12 give a dire warning for cities that reject the disciples and the gospel message entirely. It instructs the disciple-makers to declare to the city, “The Kingdom of God has come near to them,” even though the town didn't receive them. Jesus brings to mind the imagery of Sodom. Remember that although God destroyed Sodom, there was a dialog between Abraham and God. Abraham negotiated with God if there are fifty righteous people, all the way down to, if there are ten righteous people, will you spare the city? If a whole city rejects the disciples in their task of spreading the gospel, the city will be treated like Sodom. If, however,

there is one person of peace who can influence ten people, perhaps there is hope for the city. So far, I have asked you questions about which individuals God is calling you to disciple, and that is critical. I think also, this scripture indicates that God calls us to places, towns, villages, cities. The book of Acts tells the story of Paul, and one focus is that he is always moving. There are indications that some are called to places-the woman at the well. Paul went to towns and taught people who stayed and became leaders in that place. Peter and other Apostles felt directed to remain in or near Jerusalem. Has God placed a specific location on your heart? What is He saying to you about the people of that place? Oh, how He must Love these people to invest you His child in them to bring transformation.

Hands for Today

Ask God to reveal or to impart to you a desire for the community for which He has designed you to minister. How does He want you to minister in that community today? Just do it. Remember Simon in the TV show, “The Son’s of Thunder,” used the mantra, “If it is right and you are able, do it.” God shapes communities through people like you.

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson – 2 Timothy 2:1—13

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
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3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

Book One – Week Five

Head

It may seem odd in the fifth week of a study to write about obedience. When we first start to get new information, it can be stimulating, and we might not be ready to use it yet, so there is no pressure. Each week we engage in the cycles of loving accountability because we are trying to help you think about how to implement what you are learning. We give you daily devotional readings to keep the mission of the church in focus. This week we will be looking at the expectation that the church will obey Christ's directives. This includes His instructions on what the mission of the church is and how to engage it. Many times we think about obedience as a restriction, and our reaction can be to resist. The scripture teaches us we are slaves to what or

who we present or give ourselves too (Romans 6:16). We can never be completely independent. We are slaves to God or the evil one. People try to fool themselves into thinking that they are doing their own thing, but they are always reflecting God or Satan's purposes, character, and desires.

There are many benefits for those who obey God, beginning with *being one with God, The Father, The Son, and Holy Spirit (John 14 & 15)*. God has a mission for each of us to walk in, and we experience fulfillment as we allow God to work through us to its completion. The scriptures teach us that our obedience is an expression of love to God. Even Christ learned obedience through His suffering on the cross (Hebrews 5:8). Obedience, therefore, is a learned behavior that comes automatically. This is important to note. We must practice obedience trusting God with the ever more critical issues of our hearts.

Finally, I Peter 1:22 teaches us that in part, we purify our souls through obedience. We understand that We are saved and are made holy through the death and resurrection of Christ. There is an activation element that only comes from our obedience and receiving what Christ did for us on the cross. Our continued obedience to Christ brings a lifetime of purification. Let me encourage us to hear and obey Christ's directions to the fulfillment of our mission (Matthew 28:18—20).

Heart-Day One-Week Five

John 3:36, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

Scriptures like this one can challenge us because they seem so hard and final. We need to accept these words as truth because they express the importance of our mission. Notice the

connection made between “believes and obey.” The action word in the first phrase is “believes.” If someone believes in the Son, they have eternal life. The action words in the second phrase are “not obey.” If a person does not obey, they will not experience *life* but will suffer the wrath of God.

When I think about the people in my Oikos, I am more motivated to risk a spiritual conversation with them. I want to see the effects of God’s “Life” on their spirits, souls, and bodies. God has placed people in your life who He is asking you to connect with the gospel. *How would they be different if they receive the life of God? Who could God impact through these people?* Visualize the layers of people who can be affected because you obeyed God and risked praying with someone. Or you took a chance and told them one of your God stories. Maybe they told you about a problem they are having, and you gave a scriptural principle to help.

The risk we take can impact generations of people in unpredictable ways. What if we take the risk, and they reject what we offer? What if they get angry? What if they pull back from us? All these are possibilities, but our responsibility is to obey just as they must obey to receive God’s life.

Listening to God and doing what He says or doing what we read in the scriptures is not a new concept. Jesus told Peter to step out of the boat and walk on the sea toward Him. Does that make sense in any way that Peter understood his world? Jesus commanded the paraplegic to stand up and walk. How many times had this man wanted to walk? How many times had he thought, “legs work?” How many times had he prayed to God for help? Jesus ordered Lazarus to rise from the dead. What a wonder. The Messiah, Jesus, had not yet been crucified and resurrected. I, therefore, assume that Lazarus was resting in Abraham’s bosom. Remember,

before the death and resurrection of Christ, people who believed in the Hebrew God Jehovah went to a place of rest call *Sheol*.

Take notice that all of these people were empowered to do what Jesus asked them to do. That is the way it always works. The power of God enables us to do what Jesus asks of us, but we still must exercise our will to see His Will done in our lives. Jesus often asked us to obey what He asked us to do even when it seems impossible or at least improbable. *What is God asking you to do today? Does it seem impossible or at least unlikely? How does that make you feel? If you are concerned or have fear, to whom can you take these thoughts and emotions? What scriptures can ease your anxiety? Where are you focusing when you feel fear? Remember the mission. Think about who God is when He asked you to do difficult things. Consider that you are not responsible for results, only for your acts of obedience.*

Hands for Today

What is God asking you to step out of the boat of comfort to do that will make your Joy full? Is He asking you to invite someone into a discipleship relationship with you? If that were the case, to whom is He directing you? By now, you have been engaging in soft discipleship with people. With whom does God want you to begin a formal process? Several books can be helpful, but your approach should include teaching them to disciple others. If you need help, talk with other group members or your class trainer.

Heart-Day Two-Week Five

Acts 5:29—32, “But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

When we are in a hard spot, it can be easy to submit, apologize, or walk away. The examples we see in the New Testament show another way. The power of God in His people doesn't ask them to give in to evil, but to confidently do the right thing. These people knew that in doing the right thing, they may be punished and that fits into their understanding of God's Authority. There are many authorities in our world. We understand that God has established these authorities. He raises them up and throws them down. The apostles knew that the Sanhedrin had authority over them, but they also knew God, their ultimate authority, told them to preach the message of the gospel. There will be times when we are asked to do something that God placed authorities have told us not to do. We can both come-under their authority and obey

God. In the case of Peter in Acts 5, he came under the Sanhedrin's jurisdiction because he was willing to face the consequences while still obeying God.

We may have to disobey earthly authorities to obey God someday. At times if we follow God and go into the world to make disciples, we will come against personal power. I read a post online yesterday where someone who was tired of all the fighting was telling groups of people, including Christians, to keep their opinions to themselves. We might be able to keep our personal opinions to ourselves, but we can not keep the gospel to ourselves and obey God.

Do you sometimes feel like you are burdening people when you tell them about Jesus and the gift of salvation that He has for them? Do you think that there will be more time later to have conversations about Jesus? How would it change your relationship with this person if they experienced the salvation of Jesus?

Hands for Today

Who is God asking you to pray for today? Who is God asking you to act for today? By this, I mean, is God asking you to send a card, make a phone call, go to someone's home, do a kindness? "If it is right and you are able, do it." Who will you report this encounter too?

Heart-Day Three-Week Five

John 14:11-14 "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father." "Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."

Obedience has power and amazing consequences. We must believe and have faith to act. People sometimes believe in the mystical, or a specific outcome that they would like, or maybe

what they believe they can make it happen, whatever it is. The above scripture teaches us that what we need to believe in is not a thing or an outcome or even ourselves, but the person of Jesus Christ.

Can you believe the promise that Jesus gives us here? Oh wait, you have to believe in Jesus and that he is a teller of the truth. One truth Jesus speaks to us is, if we believe in Him, we will do the works that He does. I don't want to make too big a deal of the word selection here, but Jesus uses the *present tense*. In John 5:30, Jesus says, "I can do nothing of myself, but only what I see the Father doing." What Jesus saw the Father doing in His present tense, He did. Maybe this was not intentional, but in John 14:12, Jesus said, "He who believes in me the works I do he will do and greater works than these he will do because I am going to the Father." The connection is that we need to seek the Spirit of God and see what He is doing, and then we will do that, what a wonderful gift.

What should we ask Jesus to do? What is He doing right now? Yes, that is it! We must know what Jesus/God is doing so that we can ask Him to do that in the here and now. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it. "In my name." can be translated as My Character. How can you know the character of Jesus? How can we know the Will of Jesus? We must listen to hear. We must look to see it. Look and see what the Lord has done... and do it.

Hands for Today

Once you hear the Lord today, do what He is showing you to do. Report your experience to someone.

Heart-Day Four-Week Five

John 14:15-17a “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth,

John 15:7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

Jesus sent another helper, the Spirit of Truth. He came at Pentecost, and later, He filled the Gentiles in the home of Cornelius in Acts Chapter Ten. This same Helper-The Holy Spirit is with us today. The Holy Spirit is not just with us, but in those who received the salvation of Jesus. The Spirit of God is the one who leads us in all we are to do. He is the one who will show us what Jesus is doing and what we are supposed to do. He will empower us to accomplish the tasks we have been created to complete.

Have you received the Holy Spirit? Is He guiding your daily decisions? Is He transforming your character into the reflection of Jesus Christ? Are the Words of Jesus abiding in you? If so, ask the Spirit to bring to your remembrance what you need to know to accomplish what He wants you to do right now? Have you taken the time to meditate on the Word today? What is God saying to you? Is He bring someone to your mind? Is there a scripture or song that keeps coming to the surface of your mind? How is that directing your thoughts?

Hands for Today

What is the Holy Spirit showing you that you needed to know? How should you apply that understanding to your life? Begin to employ this nugget of transformational truth in your life. Who else needs to know what the Holy Spirit showed you? Share.

Heart-Day Five-Week Five

John 14:21 “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

Here is another beautiful promise Jesus makes to us. Jesus says that an expression of our love to Him is to have and keep His Commandments. Parents know this is true instinctively, don't we? Parents feel loved when their children listen to them and follow their directions. Jesus makes it so very clear; the way I receive love is through your obedience. Maybe you have read a book entitled, “The Five Love Languages.” According to the Author, we each have a primary way we receive love from others. Two of these love languages are “Words of Affirmation and Acts of Service.” If your primary love language is acts of service and another person is only ever telling you they love you, you don't feel loved. In fact, you think the other person is a phony. If they really loved you, they would do acts of service for you.

The benefits to our obedience in this area are that God the Father will love us, and Jesus will manifest Himself to us. If we express our love through obedience to His commandments, Jesus will show Himself to us. Wait, like He will show us what He is doing? YES!!

When we think of commandments many times, we think of the Ten commandments. We think about what we have to do or can't do in the broader context of life. Jesus gave so many

instructive directives that are too easily overlooked. We get to pray with people, express the Love of God to them, be the hands and feet of God to others, be the temple of God who takes His power and presence to the world around us. How do you see yourself? How do you view your significance? Do you believe God chose to work through you? Do you think that you are God's Master Piece (Ephesians 2:10)? When you hear the voice of God, do you hear an angry voice or one who is calling you to Himself? Let me suggest, there will be a time for God's anger, but now His is a loving voice. There will be a time for anger, but if you are His, you don't have to face it. He wants to shape you into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Hands for Today

This is a beautiful truth to share with someone in your circle of influence. Who needs to hear that they are a Master Piece of God's? Everyone, you say. You are right. Who will you tell first?

Heart-Day Six-Week Five

John 15:1—5 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”

John 15:4 “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Some people have a default towards feeling condemned. They read a scripture like this and think, “I think I am abiding in Christ the Vine, and Jesus is abiding in me, but I am not

bearing any fruit. I am supposed to bear *much fruit*; I am a failure. I will be cast out.” Others think, “I am in the Vine called Christ, and He is in me. Since this is the case bearing fruit must mean that my life is looking more like Jesus. It can’t mean that I am supposed to lead people toward Jesus and salvation, because I don’t have that kind of fruit.”

There is a third group that sees the promise, not a condemnation or a place to reshape the gospel. They know that they are in Christ and He is in them. They expect that people in that condition will produce fruit. It makes sense, doesn’t it? Dogs produce dogs, cats produce cats, people produce people, and Christians should produce Christians.

The best understanding of this passage of scripture is that it contains a promise of fruit-producing. The fruit is another generation of Christians. Don’t feel condemned if you don’t have fruit to point to, and don’t excuse yourself from Christ’s desire for you to produce fruit.

Does God ask us to do things in our strength or His? That is one of the great things about Jesus, He does give us directions, but His Spirit, who lives in us, gives us all we need to accomplish everything He wants us to do. Isn’t it great! We learned that Jesus shows us what He is doing so that we can do it with Him. He gives us all that is needed to accomplish His desires, and He created us for this purpose.

Why do so many people think all they need to do is come to church? Why isn’t the church reaching out with the message of what Jesus has done for them? Why do people think it is the pastors and super-Christians job to win people to Christ? What kind of difference would it make in our outreach efforts if everyone or almost everyone in our churches stepped into their role of producing the fruit of the next generation of Christians? How different would the walk of a new Christian be if they were told to produce fruit in the first hours and days of their new

Christian life? How different would their lives be if they saw us modeling a fruit-producing Christian life? Where does this change start?

Hands for Today

Ask God to show you a fellow Christian who is not yet reaching out to the world with the Love of God and tell that person how God is blessing you in this mission. See if you can get a spark going in them. Who knows, maybe you can disciple them in their responsibility to disciple others. If you need help, contact others in your group or the class instructor.

Heart-Day Seven-Week five

John 15:10—13 “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

When you read this, perhaps the imagery of the cross comes to your mind. Jesus was not a man of words only. He was a man of action. Jesus didn’t just say these words to create an image or as a platitude. He meant them literally and lived out their meaning. Praise God!

We might think of others who gave the ultimate sacrifices, like members of the military, police, rescue squads. Their acts can be an expression of love for another individual or people in general. These are great acts of sacrifice for a purpose.

As Christians, we are asked to die to ourselves. The metaphor of immersion baptism is a person is laid on their backs into the water, representing being placed in the grave. When they are lifted back out of the water, they are resurrected, made new, given a new life, become a new creation. The baptism itself is an outward expression of the inward work of Christ’s Holy Spirit.

When we died to ourselves, we are dying to our desires, wants, and plans. We are also dying to fears, other emotions, and thoughts that stand in the way of us doing what God wants us to do. We must understand the truth of God and give up our false truths. Romans 12:2 tells us that we will be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Our minds must be made new, and then we will be right thinking. We will have our thoughts in line with Jesus' Will. We will be literally in the Mind of Christ, which 1 Corinthians 2:16 tells us. "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him? But we have the Mind of Christ." In part, at least, Christ's mind was focused on what was best for others and not Himself. He died to His desires in the garden, and He gave up every day of His life on earth to the Will of God the Father.

I think we are challenged at this point of truth. It goes back to the idea that I am a slave to God or the evil one. There is a natural resistance to giving up every day of my life to the Will of God. Not in the general sense but in the specific. Jesus went through Samaria because God the Father wanted Him to meet the woman at the well. This kind of dedication to walking in the Will of God takes discipline, focus, and right thinking. We might think, "If I am that controlled by God, I will be miserable" because we value freedom. We believe we can be free from all other influences and be completely independent. Free from everything! Wrong!! The Bible teaches us that we are slaves to either the Will of God or the will of the evil one.

God designed us, and He says that He wants to make our Joy Full (John 15:11). This is true, so it follows that if we walk in God's Will, we will be happy.

What stands in the way of you following God's best will for you today? When you think about submitting to God's will every day, what emotions rise to the forefront of your thoughts? What does God want you to do with these thoughts? What scripture can you apply to shape these thoughts and renew your thinking? What is your greatest fear about laying your life,

choices, hopes, and desires down to pick up the yearnings of Jesus? What would be the worst that could happen? What would be the best that could happen? Seek God today and ask Him to give you a more in-depth love for the fruit of the next generation.

Hands for Today

Contact someone from the group and tell them what one of the fears that hinders you from experiencing God's best life for you. Seek their support in overcoming this bearer.

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson – Ephesians 6:10—20

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One-Week Six

Head

God has a great week planned for you. Keep your heart and eyes open for the Highlighted people that come across your pathway. This is week six in our life change process. You are learning the missions Christ has for the church and your part in fulfilling that mission. There have been challenges personally and corporately as you have tried to integrate these new concepts into your daily life. Keep up the effort. Change can come hard, but we are trying to get in better alignment with God's desires and plans. We see the division and struggles in our society. This is the result of Adam and Eve's sin in the garden and the sin of all who followed. God has a redemption plan, and we, the church, are commissioned to work with the Holy Spirit to tell the world. We have the answer the world needs, but how do we give it to them? You have been doing that through this process.

This week we will focus on lifestyle discipleship. The overall concept is that we need to shift our thinking. In life, when we discover that we are good at something, we engage enthusiastically. If we have an innate skill for construction, drawing or painting, singing, a sport, shooting, teaching, or anything else, we want to pursue that thing. We feel good about participating in activities where we excel. There are other things that are harder for us to do that we are drawn to, and we work at developing those skills. Our friends like to swim, and we aren't very good at it, but we work at it so we can do what they are doing. We see someone lead in worship, and a spark to do that is struck in us.

Discipleship and evangelism is a combination of all of these elements. We are called, equipped, and empowered to evangelize and disciple people as a lifestyle. This is an essential part of being "Christian." There are those in churches who will point to single scriptures, such

as, “Heb 10:25 “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” There are whole theologies built around this scripture. Many are infused with cultural concepts that define how, when, and where “gather” is defined.

In contrast, the whole of the new testament teaches and demonstrates through describing the lives of the early disciples that Christians are to evangelize and disciple. A foundational message of the new testament is that Jesus, Son of God, equal with God The Father, came to earth, died on a cross to pay the penalty for our sins, and was resurrected to rule all creation forever. Jesus commissioned the church, and the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church, to teach the world a third way. The way of Christ.

Folks, the evidence is so strong we dare not ignore it. We must teach other Christians and those we are leading toward Christ that the church is the instrument God has chosen to deliver this good news. The good news can change our communities, our leaders, even our churches. Friends, we have experienced these kinds of cultural shifts in history; they are called great awakenings.

That is the big picture we have been working on for five weeks. We shared tools for you to begin this process and have tried to continue to renew our minds through His word. The Six Steps to Success is another way for us to look at outreach. This process focuses on the steps that we can control and leaves the results up to God.

Here is how it works. We set long-term goals within a time frame, identify action steps we believe will positively impact meeting our long-term goals, engage in loving cycles of accountability, record success, evaluate, and start again.

An example is my long-term goal to lose twenty pounds in eight weeks. I identify action steps that will help me accomplish the goal. Action steps are controllable by me. My action steps are 1. I will not eat candy, 2. I will stop eating each day by 4 PM and 3. I will exercise twenty-minutes a day. These are all things that I can control and document my success at doing or not. For my weight loss efforts, I will be meeting with someone every week who will act as my accountability partner. They will check with me to evaluate my success at not eating any candy, stopped eating by 4 PM, and if I exercised twenty minutes every day. I will bring a chart that shows how well I did in these areas. If I didn't succeed one day or maybe all week with one of the action steps, my accountability partner will problem-solve with me and help find ways to be successful. Over time we will keep track of how well I am doing my actions steps and how I am progressing toward the goal. At given time frames, we evaluate, make any needed adjustments, and start again.

For our purpose, we will set long term goals that might be, "I will be discipling three people in the next six months." Then we must identify the action steps that we will take to accomplish this goal. Remember, these are steps that you can control that you believe will impact your progress towards your goal. You may commit to praying for God to show you who these three people are and commit to an accountability group or to pray with people when there seems to be a "Person of Peace moment." You may commit to one or more of the *6 Twos in 12* or prayer walking your neighborhood. You and maybe your accountability partner or the person who is discipling you will decide to what action steps you will commit.

Once you have decided on your action steps, you begin to do what you have committed to do. If I listed the action steps that I was going to use to lose weight but never engaged in them, I would not see the number on the scales move toward my goal weight even though I wish this to

be so. The same is true for us as we look for people to disciple, we have to act. We are called and empowered to act.

Our long-range goal is to be discipling three people in the next *six months*. We have determined our action steps, and now we need to set up a cycle of loving accountability. I suggest that you meet with your accountability partner once a week. Please note that your accountability partner might well be a group like we have with ECG's 2.0 Re-imagined. You will meet with your accountability partner, and celebrate the wins, work through the setbacks and strategies for the next week. You may have determined to re-evaluate the actions steps every one or two months to decide if you have to make any changes to the action steps. You might learn that an action step you are engaged in is not effective, or that you need to adjust it, or that you need to add another action step. It is essential to listen to God and let Him help us make adjustments. Here is the tricky part to describe. We focus on the action steps because we can control our participation in them. We have the general scriptural principle that we are to "Go make disciples," and we have our Holy Spirit led personal goal of having three people we are discipling in the next six months. We have to have action steps to achieve the scriptural principle of making disciples.

We are responsible for what we do or don't do related to these action steps. What about the results? Are we responsible for the results? Are we responsible for the Kingdom growing? Yes and no. We are responsible in that if we follow the commands of Jesus, we will see results. We are accountable for fulfilling our action step commitments. We don't choose "who" or even "when." We do have a responsibility to stay in the process of identifying and engaging with people to disciple them. Here are the promises from John 15:7—8 & John 15:16. John 15:7—8,

“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that *you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*”

John 15:16, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should *go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide*, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

Yes and no, we are responsible for engaging in the mission to make disciples, to determine and fulfill our actions steps, and making adjustments as needed. God is responsible for particular people and times. He is responsible for the results, but the promise is that there will be results!! Have a fruitful week.

Heart-Day One-Week Six

Jesus is our first and best example of lifestyle evangelism. He lived with the twelve disciples for most of his ministry, and many others had stretches of a day to a few weeks to connect with Him. The apostle Paul is another example of lifestyle evangelism. He lived with and was closely connected to people throughout his ministry.

The call that Jesus gave during his ministry was to come and *follow* Him. In Matthew 4:19—20, He called Peter and Andrew, and they immediately followed Jesus. He didn't sugarcoat the nature of the journey in following Him. As recorded in Luke 9:23, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” At the foundation of His call is the understanding that we will deny our desires, thoughts, and goals to engage in His.

In John Chapter 6, Jesus challenged the many disciples who were following Him with strong teaching. Many left Jesus because they could not accept this teaching or at least accept

that they trusted Jesus even though they didn't understand His teaching. He asked the twelve if they would leave Him as well.

We may think about how wonderful it would have been to walk and live with Jesus. Without exception, Jesus challenged everyone who knew Him as He walked this earth. It is no different today. None of us has the 1 Corinthians 13:12, "face to face" sight yet, so we get challenged by what the Word of God and His Holy Spirit says to us. "Come follow Me! Deny yourself (be willing to give up your perspective and understanding to adopt Mine), will you follow me all the way even if it is confusing and uncomfortable?"

Try to identify a time that you pulled back from what God said to do in His Word or by His Spirit. What was He asking you to do? Forgive, believe some new concept, or was He challenging something you thought you knew?

Why did you pull back? Was it social pressure, resistance in your heart, or were you distracted by other desires? How did you get back in line with God's directives, truths, and desires for your life? Did you realign with God? If not, what can you do to realign with God now? What scripture can you identify and believe that will change your perspective, free your heart, give you a new direction? Is there something that you are wrestling with now that you need to address with truth from God's Word and Spirit? When you get free from the bondage of the past, tell someone. Celebrate this good turn in your life.

Hands for Today

Think back to a time that God asked you to do something, but you didn't obey. What was God trying to teach you? What was He moving you toward? What is He trying to teach you now? Chose today to hear what the Holy Spirit is teaching you and act on what you know to do.

Heart-Day Two- Week Six

Lifestyle evangelism and discipleship are foundational to the launching of the New Testament Church and its expansion throughout the world. In 3 John 1:4, an older apostle John, writes, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." He puts the concept of walking in the truth in the context of Family. He refers to "my children" as those who walk in the truth.

There are many scriptural references to house churches. We understand that John sees the conveyance of truth in the context of family, and Paul points to Nympha as having a church at her house in Colossians 4:15.

There were meetings in Synagogues, but there are many other references to meeting in homes and along rivers. Meeting in a home setting with smaller groups was a critical avenue used by the early church used in their growth, as well as Martin Luther in the 1500s and Wesley in the 1700s.

Are there people who you are reaching out to that you think about like family? John called them children and connected them to the truth of the scriptures. How do you relate to these folks? Do you see your home as strickly a place of retreat? How would it look if you used it as a lifestyle evangelism and discipleship tool? What would have to change in how you have your home set up? What would have to change in your thinking about the use of your home? Does it have to be just so, or can some things be out of order, some times? What about your life

schedule? How would you have to adjust that so that when people did come to your home, you did not resent them? How would you have to change the way you think about “Your Time?” How would you become more intentional about using your home? What will you need to do to for your home to become a tool for Kingdom growth?

Hands for Today

Ask God how you can use your home to build the Kingdom and act on what He says.

Heart-Day Three-Week six

Acts 2:42—47, “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

Right after the Holy Spirit was poured out in Acts Chapter two, the church is described as a group of people expressing the gospel message through their social networks. Those three thousand people who were saved at Pentecost devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, and they acted. They took action steps that incorporated the teaching they received. They fellowshiped with one another and invited others. This enculturation evangelism and discipleship is an essential tool for the church to engage. When we bring several Christians together in a home setting and invite people we are intentionally reaching out to, the culture we are creating can help them be open to the message of the gospel.

Christians ate and prayed with one another, and together with the Holy Spirit, an atmosphere of Awe was created. In part, signs and wonders were done because of the actions of these folks and their unity with the Holy Spirit and each other. These folks received teaching, ate, and praised God together daily. Within this atmosphere, they had the favor of God, and people were added to the church daily. It isn't even possible to add to the church daily if the only entry point is church services. They don't happen every day, and most of them that occur are focused on the people who already attend. More home Christian events allow for more entry points.

There are a variety of activities described in Acts chapter two that the people of the church engaged in that produced Kingdom growth. *Inviting people to activities at your home with other Christians is one way to enculturate people from your Oikos into Christianity. What other ideas come to your mind? Where else can you connect people to the experience of God's presence? What entry points are you intentionally cultivating to invite people through to encounter Christ?*

Hands for Today

Who is God bringing to your mind that you could invite to an enculturation encounter with Christ? How would that encounter look? When can you pray about it? When can you intentionally ask that person? Remember, this is not high-pressure sales. It is lifestyle evangelism and discipleship. Live out your Christianity in attractive ways. They see God's work in you and other Christian's lives and want to know more.

Heart-Day Four –Week Six

1 Thessalonians 2:7—8, “But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with

you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”

In this scripture, Paul tells the reader that he was “gentle” when he was among them. Paul and the people with him shared not just the gospel but themselves because they were so dear to them. Please note that they shared themselves because of love. It is critical to have the love of God living within us so that we are properly motivated. Only when we are motivated by love will we share ourselves. We will give items and money to help others, but Christ requires more. He asked us to give ourselves. We start by denying our self-desires. Jesus tells us when His Word is in us, and He is in us, and we are in the Son, Father and Holy Spirit we will do what He commands and greater things than He did we will do.

I tell the story about when my dad was living alone after he had a stroke. When my family and I would come to visit him at his home, we knew he could only take the upset to his day so long, usually about two or three hours. He had a routine and TV shows he watched, and we interrupted those things. He was always glad to see us come and glad to see us go. He loved us but, how much did we really have to say to one another in a single visit anyway. 😊

I always thought that this was strange until Micki and I were living alone and had our own routines. I realized one time when some of my kids and grandkids were coming over that I was growing anxious. What’s wrong with you, Doherty, I said. The Lord brought to my mind how my dad acted when we came to visit. I knew in the moment I was letting the fact that family was coming, and my plans and routine were going to be changed, bothered me. I had to deny myself what I thought was good to get the best, time with my family.

What good things do you need to deny yourself to get God’s best? Who do you already love so much that you want to give yourselves for them? As Christians, the Love of God lives

within us. Who is God directing us to express that love to by “the gift” of ourselves? What does that look like? What does it mean for you to give yourself to them? What part of the real you does God want you to share? When will you act on God’s prompting?

Hands for Today

Make a list of the good things that you need to deny yourself to Get God’s best. Give one of them up today.

Heart-Day Five-Week Six

In Acts chapter twelve, when Peter was put in prison, the church was gathered in John-Marks home praying. This illustrates that the early church gathered in the homes of people when there was a critical need to pray. Jesus led the disciples to the upper room of a home to eat the Passover. The disciples (one hundred and twenty) were gathered in the upper room, waiting for the Holy Spirit.

I remember when the airplanes were flown into the towers in New York on September 11th, 2001. It was a Tuesday, and throughout the day, I received calls from people about whether I would have a prayer service that evening. Most of the calls came from people who did not attend any church. We had about fifty people there that night. In a crisis, people want and need to connect with God. If we have relationships with people, they will want to connect with us, as a way of connecting with God.

It is also true that we call people into our lives and perhaps our homes when we have something to celebrate. The parables of celebration teach us this principle. When the sheep was lost and found, the shepherd called his friends together, saying, “rejoice with me, I have found my sheep.” When the woman lost her coin and found it, she called her neighbors and friends and

said, come and rejoice with me, I have found my coin. When the prodigal son returned home, his father killed the fatted calf and had a great party.

We have great news, and so we have a reason to call our friends and neighbors together and say, Celebrate with me, I have found the answer to the questions in my life. *Is our home known as a place that people come when there is trouble? Is our home a place people come to feel the peace of God? Is our home a retreat for us or a hospital for the emotionally and spiritually wounded? Micki and I have decided we want our home to become a place of restoration for people. We are working on having a sign put above our driveway that reads, Shiloh, an Irish place of Rest. The concept of Shiloh is a geographical place of peace. We are Irish, and so we want our home to be a place of peace and rest. What do you want your home to be known as? Are there scriptures or phrases that shape the representative concept for your home? What do you have to do to make this concept a reality? Growing up, my parent's home was a place of gathering for all my friends and my sibling's friends. Everyone felt welcome, there was always enough food for teenagers, and there were activities to keep us busy.*

Hands for Today

I want the reputation for my home and our churches to be one that people feel welcome, safe and the Spirit of God Rest. How about you? What action steps can you take to make this a reality?

Heart-Day Six-Week Six

Read through Ephesians 4:1—16. There are many good takeaways from this scripture. Focusing on lifestyle evangelism and discipleship in this context, we have some rich material to help shape our thinking. The imagery is of the *body* working together to stimulate growth. This

growth is to continue until we all come together in the unity of Christ. We can agree, we are not there yet. While we are getting to the place of unity in Christ, the scripture gives expectations and promises. Expectations include bearing one another in love, living in humility, gentleness, patience, and that we be eager to maintain unity in the bond of peace.

There is a list of teaching about “one.” One body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, and baptism. These are teachings that, when we receive them, they unify us. These teaching, and others, are what Paul was writing to Timothy about in 2 Timothy 2:2 when he wrote, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” We are unified by the Spirit of God and the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, Jesus speaks about His Words, and Spirit being in us. There is transforming power in this combination that we are to pass on to those we are discipling.

As a leader in Christ’s church, it struck me how many times church troubles are started or exacerbated by immature Christians. These are not always new Christians; many times, they are people who have received Christ and attended church for years. They just never matured. This is a problem, especially if they assume leadership positions in the church. The church needs stable, well-grounded Spirit-filled people in all areas of a church. When storms come to a church from within or outside, a church of mature Christians will be stronger after the storm.

Who built into your life as you grew in faith? How did they help shape the Christian you became? What were some of the significant aha moments that shifted everything in your life?

Hands for Today

Thinking back to life before Christ, what has changed? Be specific. What have you learned or experienced that makes you a more stable and mature Christian today then you were before Christ led your life? As you think about the people you are discipling now, how can the

lessons you learned benefit them? Who does God want you to share one of these insights with today?

Heart-Day Seven-Week Six

Christopherson and Lake, in the book *Kingdom First*, write, "Not specifically related to discipleship, but a supportive concept is, "Our best theology is never truly believed until it is first integrated into our daily lifestyle." p. 34. After being in Sunday School classes for years, we kind of instinctively know this to be true. For years I used the example of a chair in this context. I can say I believe the chair will hold me if I sit in it, but that is only an intellectual exercise. Only when I integrated the action of sitting in the chair do I really believe. We learn about healing, evangelism, discipleship, and other truths in Sunday School or maybe a small group. We talk about it in class, read about others who have experienced these truths, but until we incorporate them into our own lives, we don't really believe.

I remember the first time I got on a plane, and there was a moment when I had to put aside any nervousness and just believe. We know this is true because we can think about experiences when we put action-belief into practice, and that was wholly different than safe nonaction-belief. I engaged action-belief when I first got up on a roof to put new shingles on it, or when working on grain elevator silos, 200 plus feet in the air painting, or walking into an adult prison to work as a corrections officer. You have done this as well and know the difference between action-belief and intellectual belief.

John 10:38, "but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

Even Jesus pointed to the works that He did as a place for people to anchor their belief. Lifestyle evangelism and discipleship should be filled with the works of the Lord in our lives that others can look at and be attracted to.

When were there times in your life that you went from intellectual belief to action-belief? What did you learn about yourself and the truth you believed in those moments? What action-beliefs or works are you living out today or in the last few weeks that would be attractive to others? How are you demonstrating action-belief when struggles come?

Hands for today

Action-belief is appealing to those around you. Be willing to take the steps from intellectual belief to action-belief. Chose one thing that you have learned intellectually in the last eight weeks and act it out today.

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson – Romans 5:1—21

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One

Week Seven-Head

This week I want to encourage and challenge you that you are the chosen tool of God to change this world and those in it. As we look at the book of Acts, we see many anointed people who go (Matthew 28:19) into the world to bring the gospel in power and truth. The model that the Church has used for at least one hundred years is a group of people gathered around one leader, and that leader does the work of the ministry.

In any other setting, we would say that process is crazy. No sports team says, “Coach, you are a great enough coach that we can win and not even go out on the field.” Or a football team where one player does all the work and wins the game. No business says to ninety-nine employees, we will pay you, and all you have to do is cheer on one employee who does all the work. I know this is a bit of an overstatement because many of you who are reading this have volunteer jobs in the church that are important and help the church keep running. I am suggesting that there is a focus that Jesus gives the church, and we can miss it if we are doing other things. Can we teach Sunday School and be involved in the primary job of the church? Can we be an usher and still, “Go and make disciples?” If not, maybe we need to stop teaching Sunday School or stop ushering because we are called, equipped, empowered, and sent to be disciplers. You have engaged in this ministry more intentionally in the last six weeks. Good job, keep up the excellent work. God wants to build His Kingdom through you!

Let me remind you that Jesus does not send us out alone, and He said in Matthew 28:20 that He would never leave or forsake us. In John Chapters 14 and 15, Jesus tells us that He will send the Holy Spirit to be with us and that He, the Spirit, and Father will be in us, and we will be in Him. We are NOT on our own. We listen to Him, and He will guide us, speak through us, and work on the hearts of the people He sends us too. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive spiritual gifts that He will use to build His Kingdom effectively. You are not alone when you follow the commands and directives of God’s Word and His Holy Spirit. This should encourage us as we step into areas of ministry that are unfamiliar to us.

I was speaking with a pastor a few days ago who said, “Many people say something like, “I know what Jesus says, or I know what the Bible says, BUT...” People intellectually acknowledge what Jesus or the Bible in a more general sense says, and then they add a negating

“BUT.” Do we do that sometimes? I know that the Bible says that people can be healed, BUT... I know that we are supposed to love all people, BUT... I know that Jesus tells us to go out and make disciples, BUT... But hearts are harder now than ever before. But we are close to the rapture. But no one wants to hear from the church. What we should say is, “The Bible or Jesus says (Through the Holy Spirit), and I will obey or agree. Test the scriptures and find them to be true.

Even with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the Mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16), we need experience. The adage, “Practice makes perfect” is true in this work as well. Even if you are a natural at swinging a bat like a baseball player, practice increases your ability. We must stretch ourselves in creating or recognizing gospel conversation opportunities. It will feel odd at first, but in time you will see opportunities to express Kingdom principles and pray with people. The Holy Spirit will highlight folks to invite to church or other Christian gatherings, lead people in a prayer to accept Christ as savior, or invite someone into a discipling relationship.

Remember, the Disciples in the book of Acts were empowered. In Acts 1:8, Acts Chapter 2 & Chapter 10, they were empowered to speak boldly and effectively. I always appreciate Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 2:1, “When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom for I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.” Many of us would say, “I don’t know what to say or how to say what I need to say.” We are in the same boat as Paul. The answer is to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. You are already empowered and gifted by the Holy Spirit.

We have spoken and written a lot about methods and strategies thus far, but without the work of the Holy Spirit, there is no success. You are not alone this week as you go out in the

power of the Holy Spirit, following His command to make disciples. You are chosen by God for this mission. WOW! What a great adventure.

Heart-Day One-Week Seven

Often we are ruled by fear, and we don't even know it. We don't want to do something, and we convince ourselves it is a preference, or that it is someone else's job, but we are uncomfortable. In this week's Head section, I wrote about knowing what God wanted us to do and not saying, "But." If we know something that we are supposed to act on and a "but" comes to mind, we miss a blessing. Jesus doesn't tell us to do things that He hopes we won't do or that is impossible for us to accomplish.

2 Corinthians 3:17, "*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*" Walk in freedom, my friends. Where there is Freedom, fear does not live. 1 John 4:18, "*Perfect Love cast out all fear.*" Bondage and fear are forever linked just as Perfect Love and freedom. Jesus said in John 14:16, "*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,*"

A theme for this week will be "I know what the scripture says, and I will act on what I know. The word "But" does not belong in our vocabulary related to what we read in scripture or hear from the Spirit. When the Bible says, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, we believe and act in that freedom. We reject the whispers of the evil one that may cause us to pull back from God's best plan for our lives.

We believe that Perfect Love cast out fear, and we know that we are in Christ and His perfect Love and He is in us. Therefore we have the authority and power to cast out fear that

stands in the way of being our best selves. The Holy Spirit lives within us to comfort us against the torment of the evil one and to empower us to do God's will.

Where do you experience bondage? In what circumstances do you feel the emotion of fear? What would you do if you didn't feel fear? What good things are you limited from doing because of bondage in your life? What passages of scripture gives you pause? What scriptures do you try to rationalize rather than accept? If you could accept these scriptures for what they plainly say, how would your life change?

You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). You are God's Masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10). WOW! You are special. God must Love you very much. What does He want to do with you this week? Today? Right now?

Hands for today

Seek God in prayer. Let Him guide you to one or two truths, actions, scriptures that you fear. Decide to act on the truth and cast out the fear you feel. Choose to be free from this fear and act on what the Bible says is reality.

Heart-Day Two-Week Seven

Acts 1:8, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

I think it is a fair question to ask, "Has the Holy Spirit has come upon you?" Remember, in Acts 18:24—28 we read that Apollos only knew the Baptism of John. He was fervent in spirit, competent, and accurate in the scriptures and the things concerning Jesus, but he only knew the baptism of John. You might think that the phrase "the baptism of John" only appears in this passage. Actually, it is found in at least nine verses. The other eight passages help us understand what is being written about in Acts 18. In Mark Chapter 11 and 21 and Luke Chapter 20, Jesus is

asking does the baptism of John come from Heaven or man. The Pharisees did not want to answer this question. In Mark Chapter 1 and Acts Chapter 19, the baptism of John is defined as the baptism of “Repentance.” Finally, Acts 1:22 uses the baptism of John as a kind of starting point with the ascension of Jesus being the endpoint. When the disciples were considering who should take the place of Judas, they said it should be a person who had been with them from the time of the Baptism of John, meaning when John baptized Jesus.

These scriptures give information about Apollos and that he knew only the baptism of John. He understood the repentance related to the coming of the Messiah Christ, His death and resurrection. To what are we comparing the Baptism of John? The Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 3:11. Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16 all are references of disciples be baptized with the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 12:13, the Apostle Paul writes, “we were all baptized into one body ... and made to drink of one Spirit.” Acts 1:5, “For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Acts 1:8 reads, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses...” 1 Corinthians 6:19, “Do you not know that you are the Temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in you?” In Acts 2:38, Peter put the two baptisms together when he said in his sermon at Pentecost, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We believe and act on what the scriptures or what the Spirit says to us. No more, “I know what the scriptures say, but...” moments. *Do you have only an intellectual understanding of the word of God? Is yours only a baptism of repentance and water, or is the Holy Spirit living in you His Temple? Think about how you have been living out the mandates of scripture. Do your practices reflect the Wisdom, Anointing, and Power of God living within you? If not, how can*

that change? What would be different if you lived life as if the Creator of all things lived in you? How would your daily focus be different? How would you face the challenges of the day differently? Last thought for the day. God created the world, and all that was in it, and it was perfect. Sin came into that perfection through Adam and Eve, and all of God's creation was marred and headed for destruction. God put together a plan that cost pain and the life of His Son Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus, claiming power over death and sin put all of creation back on a path to perfection. Jesus' death and resurrection made a way for us to be resurrected, recreated, and brought back to life. You are on that pathway to perfection, and the God of creation lives within you. Adam and Eve spoke to God in the cool of the evening, but He is talking to you all the time. He is working through you to bring new generations of resurrected, recreated people to a pathway toward their perfection. You are so blessed.

Hands for today

If you are a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit living within you. The question is, have you experienced a more profound work of the Holy Spirit. Have you submitted to and received the empowering/anointing of the Holy Spirit? It is this sanctifying power that helps us overcome the sin in our lives. It brings wholeness and healing to us that change our very nature and character. It also empowers us to live out the mission to grow the Kingdom of God as Christ has commanded us to do.

The Holy Spirit does not possess us. He lives within us and will guide, comfort, direct, strengthen, and empower us to do God's will. He does not force us to do His will. Maybe you have received the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Still, you have been taught by doctrine or experiences that there is no power in you to follow God's directions, to overcome the brokenness of sin, to witness to the goodness of the Lord without fear.

God is faithful, pray, and ask Him to bring the fullness of His Spirit into you. Tell Him you will submit yourself completely (To the best of your ability each day) to Him. Over time you will be able to submit more completely. Ask God what He wants to empower you to do today and do it, or allow Him to do it through you. Act on His truth and be blessed.

Heart-Day Three-Week Seven

What does it mean to have the Holy Spirit living within you? Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Comforter (Helper – John 14:16), the Teacher (Luke 12:12, John 14:26), One who would bring all things that Jesus taught them to their minds, and The Empowerer (Acts 1:8). In the ESV version of the Bible, there are ninety references to the phrase, “Holy Spirit,” and Two hundred and forty-six times the word “Spirit” is used in the New Testament. From the sheer number of times the Spirit of God is referenced in the New Testament, we have to conclude that He is essential to how we as followers of Christ live out our call to being His disciplers.

Today let us look at how the Holy Spirit plays a role in our rejoicing or Joy. In Luke 10:20—21, Jesus gives us an important distinction in what we should rejoice. The seventy disciples were sent out to create relationships with persons of peace, tell the gospel message, and heal the sick in their homes. During their adventure, they learned that even the demons were subject to the name of Jesus and, therefore, the disciples had power over them. The disciples came back to Jesus, rejoicing about this newfound power. Jesus tells the disciples to refocus on what they really should be celebrating. The more fantastic reality in their lives is that their names are written in heaven. Jesus explains to them that He has given them authority over all the power of the enemy, and then Jesus rejoices in the Holy Spirit. His focus is on thanking the Father that He (The Father) has hidden these heavenly treasures from the wise and understanding and revealed them to the little children, *us*.

The truly remarkable thing is that the God of all creation and recreation wants to have a moment by moment relationship with us. It is out of that relationship that God grants us the authority to do the work of making disciples.

Looking at Acts 13:52 and the surrounding verses, we understand that the Joy of the Holy Spirit is not dependent upon our circumstances. In this section of scripture, the gentiles know that the salvation that comes from Christ is for them, and they rejoice at this news. This great news was spreading throughout the land. The Jewish leadership response was to invite the leaders of the community to persecute Paul and Barnabas. They were driven out of the district, they followed Christ's direction to shake the dust off their feet against the city, and yet the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

In Romans 14:17—19, Paul writes, “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.” Joyfulness, peace, and righteousness come in the Holy Spirit.

Since our joy is not in our circumstances but the Holy Spirit, *what should be our focus today? We can strive for specific things in life, like a better home, car, or job, but will any of those give us joy? Jesus says we should not rejoice because we have authority over demons, but because our names are written down in heaven, and we have a relationship with the creator. If our joy is dependent upon those things, what can separate us from our joy? Who has the power to blot our names out? If only the Triune God has that power, then where should we focus? The Bible teaches that where there is perfect love, there is no fear. A case can be made that The Joy of the Lord is found in perfect Love. If that is so, when we are rejoicing in our relationship with Jesus, the Love, and Joy of God drive out fear. Are you focused on your relationship with God?*

Are you being built up as you spend time in His Word and with His Spirit? Are you looking at Jesus, no matter your circumstance? Jesus loves you and has a plan for each of us that is specifically designed to bring us His Joy. Our Joy is not related to outside forces. It is related to building your relationship with Jesus. When who we are and what we do are tied to our relationship with Jesus, we will experience His Joy! May God bless you this week as you explore your relationship with Him.

Hands for Today

One of the tools we teach in ECGs is telling our story. Think of a time when your circumstances were not good, but you were still filled with the Joy of the lord. Look for an opportunity to tell that story to encourage someone else. Maybe use the story to encourage someone to trust in Jesus.

Heart-Day Four-Week Seven

Today I want to build on the understanding that your relationship with Christ is a personal, moment by moment connection. The Scripture is full of examples of disciples being commanded, directed, spoken to, and witnessed through. Acts 1:2, "... after He (Jesus) had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles." Jesus speaks to us today through the Holy Spirit. Referencing the account of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:3, "Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit..." The Holy Spirit gave this knowledge to Peter. In Act 7:55, after Steven had preached a convicting sermon to the Jews, they set out to stone Steven to death, and he looked into the Heavens and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right Hand of God. At a later time, Paul saw into the third Heaven. We can have glimpses of Heaven and beyond when The Holy Spirit opens our eyes. Acts 15:28, the Holy Spirit directed the leaders of Christianity not to burden the Gentiles with Jewish requirements.

He will guide us today in the same way. In Acts 16:6, Paul and his companions were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to go into Asia. Do you sense the Holy Spirit restraining or compelling you? That is how He works with the Disciples of Christ. Paul testifies to his companions that the Holy Spirit constrained him to go to Jerusalem in Acts 20:22—23. The prophet Agabus came to Paul and gave a visual demonstration of what the Holy Spirit told him when he took Paul's belt and bound his own hands and feet. He answered Paul's question from Act 20:22—23. He told Paul that he would be delivered up into the hands of the gentiles. His companions took this as a warning not to go to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit already had made it clear to Paul that he was to go to Jerusalem because He had constrained him to go.

Paul writes in Romans 9:1 that the Holy Spirit is bearing witness to what he is saying and is his conscience. Finally, the Holy Spirit witnesses through us as recorded in Acts 1:8 and to us as recorded in Hebrews 10:15.

We are back to, do we believe. *Do you believe that the Holy Spirit was this active in the lives of the early Church disciples? Do you believe that the Holy Spirit can be that active in your life? How would your life be different if there was a constant conversation going on between you and the Holy Spirit? How would your life be different if you were more influenced by your conversation with the Holy Spirit than you were with what other people said? Would this type of relationship keep you more focused? Would it drive fear from your decision-making process? May you hear the Holy Spirit more clearly this week than you ever have before.*

Hands for Today

Spend some time with God today and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you about something deep on your heart. Ask Him what He is going to do about it and ask Him what you

are supposed to do. Watch for God to do His part and act on yours. He might tell you to do something, say something, or be something.

Heart-Day Five- Week Seven

A recurring theme is that the Holy Spirit is poured out; people are filled or baptized or received the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10:37—38, we read, “you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” Since Jesus, the Son of God the Father, the Living Word of God was anointed with the Holy Spirit to accomplish His call, we might expect that we need to be anointed, filled, or baptized to fulfill our part in this equation.

Jesus promises that the Father will give the good gift of the Holy Spirit to us in Luke 11:13. In John 14:16, Jesus says, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (The Holy Spirit), to be with you forever.” It is an everyday experience for Christians to have the Holy Spirit living in them. 1 Corinthians 3:16, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit Dwells in you?” In the early church, what happened when the Holy Spirit lived within them? Acts 4:8, “Then Peter filled with the Holy Spirit, said to the elders...” The words that Peter needed to speak were given to him by the Holy Spirit. Acts 9:17, Ananias was sent by the Holy Spirit to Saul, who became Paul, to pray with him so that he would receive the Holy Spirit and have his sight healed.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the gentiles in Acts 10:44 when Peter was speaking the gospel message to the people at Cornelius’ home. Remember, Peter went to Cornelius’ after he had a vision about what was clean and unclean. He would usually have thought of gentiles as

unclean, Jesus cleared that up in the vision. Is there someone or some situation that we might think is unclean? Is there someone who you believe is incapable of receiving the gospel message? Finally, in Romans 5:5, Paul writes that the Love of God is poured into us through the Holy Spirit.

As a church, we should be experiencing these things today. Spend some time praying and fasting this week (Even if it is one meal or something other than food) and ask God if there are any barriers to experiencing this dynamic relationship with The Holy Spirit and the world around you?

Hands for Today

When God shows you the barriers that interfere with you experiencing a deeper relationship with Him, chose to reject, overcome, and push past them. Once you have identified a barrier and chosen your actions steps (Six Steps to Success), call a member of our groups to tell them about it and ask them to pray with you. Remember, folks that we need to pray in the moment that prayer is sought and continue to pray until an answer is received.

Heart-Day Six-Week Seven

The Holy Spirit plays a role in how we are chosen, set aside, and gifted. In Acts 6:5 and surrounding verses, we read the account of the people choosing (With the help of the Spirit) seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and wisdom to do specific work. These men took care of physical tasks so that the Apostles could focus on Spiritual things. Some of these men later preached the good news to the people, so they were not limited to the original tasks. In fact, these tasks were a growing stepping stone to other work God intended for them. They were chosen for the task laid before them, and we are chosen for tasks, including making disciples.

If we are chosen, we are equipped and empowered to succeed. Later in Acts 13:2, we read the account of Paul and Barnabas being *set aside* by the leading of the Holy Spirit for the work to which God called them. Are you catching this? God chooses and sets us apart for specific tasks. I don't know about you, but when I was new to a group of people, and there was choosing to be done to determine teams, I almost always was one of the last ones chosen. On this team of God's, however, we are chosen for the first team. God designed us to grow His Kingdom. Paul writes in Ephesians 1:13 that we were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Nothing can take us away from God. He has chosen us, and we need only to continue to choose Him. Finally, we receive gifts from the Holy Spirit, even as we received the Gift of the Holy Spirit. God distributes His gifts according to His will.

How can you go wrong? You have been chosen, set aside, sealed, and God has given you gifts to accomplish your mission. Belief and confidence are essential in everything we do. There is power in believing we can hit the ball, shoot the basket, run faster, or play an instrument. There is a self-fulfilling prophecy if we think people will reject or except us when we talk with them. Maybe it is something that we project when we talk with someone. It is like the salesperson who thinks, "No one wants the product I am selling." Or the Pastor who believes that no one cares about the sermon she is preaching.

People read your body posture and respond to what they think your body is saying. If we believe that we are on our own when we go out to make disciples, we can look fearful and defeated. When we look like we can't handle it, we are right, we can't. If you believe and act based on the fact that Jesus chose you, set you aside to accomplish His Work, gifted, and sealed you to reach people for Christ, you will succeed. You are not responsible for the outcome, just for giving people a Spirit-empowered authentic connection with Jesus? Do you feel like no one

wants the Jesus who you are offering? If so, how does that affect your approach to people? Can you identify some of the gifts the Holy Spirit has given you so that you can effectively connect people with Jesus? Thinking about people in your circle of influence, which of your gifts could connect them with Jesus? God shaped you to reach specific people. What are your spiritual gifts? What moves your heart to action? What aptitudes do you possess? What is your personality type? How do your experiences help you identify and connect with people? You lack in nothing, and you are God's Masterpiece, Ephesians 2:10.

Hands for Today

After considering what your “Shape” is, who would God have you reach out to today? Who are you uniquely designed to give an authentic connection with God? Pray, and reach out to them today. If no one comes to mind, prepare yourself for the person God is going to bring across your pathway today. Someone needs the “Jesus” in you today.

Heart-Day Seven-Week Seven

As we come to the end of another week, let us look at the Hope of God that comes through the Holy Spirit, that you are His temple, and you are in fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Paul writes in Romans, 15:13, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” What a powerful verse!! The foundational premise here that God is the God of hope. Paul is asking the God of hope to fill the Ephesians with “all joy and peace in believing.” There is an excellent interchange going on here. We can be filled with all joy and peace, which will help us believe, and at the same time, in believing in Jesus, we are filled with all joy and hope. It is, however, by the “Power of the Holy Spirit” that we will abound in hope. Why is that important? It is in abounding hope that we will

reach others. As humans, almost everything that we do that has an uncertain outcome is done because we have hope for something good.

1 Corinthians 6:19 tells us that we are the temple of God. It is easy to slide right by this concept but think about the temples of God from the Old Testament. There was the tent tabernacle in which God spoke to Moses. Then the temple at Shiloh that existed for 369 years, and the temple on the mount in Jerusalem. Think about how much care and dedication was given to all of these temples of God. It was a referenced place that was much loved. The only place that people could come and meet with God. We are the temple God has chosen to work in and through since the first generation of Christians. We are declared to be the meeting place for people to connect with God. Maybe that is why Jesus told us to “Go and make disciples.” He intended that people would not need to seek out a building but that the living God would be seeking people out through those He dwelled in and through the activity of the Holy Spirit.

A connected concept is that of fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit. 2 Corinthians 13:14 reads, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” Our relationship with God is more than that of awe and respect. It is more than obedience and tasks. It is that of person-to-person relationship. God wants to have fellowship with us because He wants us to really know who He is, to know His desires, heart, and character. He wants to restore what He intended in creation, even more than walking with us in the cool of the evening. He wants to have a profoundly intimate relationship with us.

How can you experience more fully the hope and joy of God? Are you propelled to do things with uncertain results because of the hope you feel? Have you compared yourself to the temples of the Old Testament and found them lacking? They are, compared to the best version of you. Why do you think God wants you for His temple? How is your relationship with God

impacted as you understand how valuable you are to God? What do you think when I write that you are an upgrade to any of the Old Testament temples? It may seem crazy, but God wants fellowship with you. Your relationship with God is unlike anyone else. He treasures you!

Hands for Today

Deep within us is the desire to create. In this world, that usually means risk. Seek God for what or whom He is asking you to risk. Reach out to that person or step into that situation, with the hope that God will bring good from your attempt. Realize that your efforts may not be successful in the way you envisioned. They may not be successful with your first attempt. God wants to create beauty and life through you. Take a risk today for Jesus.

John 6:30—59, 8:14

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?

10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Book One

Week Eight-Head

You made it! You made it to week eight of the first of five studies that are designed to change the way we as Christians think and act. We believe when individual Christians change, the power of God will transform churches and communities through discipleship. You are the first generation of this change in your family, church, and community. No pressure.



In the last seven weeks, you have immersed yourself in scriptures that are shaping your thinking toward God’s mission of discipleship. You have identified people to pray for who you have influence over. You have taken advantage of opportunities to engage people “in the moment.” You prayed authentically with people when their need was presented. You asked hard questions, give people the tools to study scripture, and help them understand. You are discipling people in informal and formal processes. You are looking for and finding people of peace to work with and through. You are on your way in the journey of being a discipler. Great Job!

The next booklet will continue this theme to help you begin to develop others who will develop others. To begin to build a bridge between this study and the next, we will explore what it can look like to disciple people who are discipling others, who...

In their book T4T (Training for Trainers), Smith and Kia focus on the power of disciplers discipling people who disciple others. The Concept we have spoken about in class from 2 Timothy 2:2, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” Smith and Kia emphasize the need to make trainers, not just members.¹⁸⁴ The implication is that we are designed to train others about

¹⁸⁴ Smith & Kia, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*. (Monument, CO. WIGTake Resources, 2011) pg. 35.

Christ. Eph 4:7 for reads, “But Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says, When he ascended on high, He led a host of captives and gave gifts to men.” You are gifted for the work.

"If we have learned even the most elemental truth of discipleship, we must know that we are called to be servants of our Lord and to obey his Word. ... but only to carry out his orders. Unless there is this dedication to all that we know he wants us to do now... There is no place in the Kingdom for a slacker,"¹⁸⁵ Coleman agrees with Smith and Kai that we are all called to disciple others.

In his book, “Biblical Church Growth,” McIntosh writes about organizational strength that is built with at least three discipleship blocks, “evangelism, assimilation, and maturation.”¹⁸⁶ He also makes the point that most training in the area of discipleship is concerned with “How” and not “Why” we disciple people. It is critically important for us to accept the “why’s” we disciple. The challenges of discipleship are too much to accomplish the tasks if we only know “how,” and not “why,”

Why do we disciple? Matthew 28:19, because Christ commands us to “Go and make disciples.” 2 Corinthians 5:14—15, “the Love of Christ controls us ... those who live no longer live for themselves...” Ephesians 2:10, “For we are His Workmanship, created in Christ for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Friends, we are commanded to make disciples. We are filled with the Love God for other people, so we will desire to make disciples, and we are designed to make disciples. These are some of the “whys.” Remember that all of our “Why’s” must be rooted in the scriptures. We do

¹⁸⁵ Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 29.

¹⁸⁶ McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth.*, 62.

what we do because the scriptures direct us to and the Holy Spirit empowers us for those purposes.

As we step into this final week, we will take a look at scriptural accounts of people discipling others to see what we can learn. May God add His best blessing on you this week.

Heart-Day One-Week Eight

What can we learn from Acts 9:10—22, & Galatians 1:15—18? In the Acts passage, Ananias is sent to Paul, who was Saul, to bring healing to him. To open his eyes to physical and spiritual sight. In this scripture, there is a synopsis given for the next three years of Paul's life. We don't know it is a synopsis until we read Galatians 1:15—18, where Paul writes in Galatians 1:15, "But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days." What can we learn from these scriptures about discipleship? First, Once Paul saw the light of truth, he spent a few days with the disciples who were in Damascus and learned from them. Acts 9:20 reports that "Immediately he proclaimed Jesus." In Galatians 1:15—16, Paul writes that he was set apart before he was born to preach the gospel to the gentiles. We can see that the Holy Spirit is preparing people to hear the message and engage in witnessing or proclaiming it immediately after they receive Christ. Paul grew in strength as he proclaimed the message of Christ and proved that Jesus was the "Christ." Is there a strengthening that only comes when we practice/act out what we learn? We also learn that Paul was marked as a man who brought havoc to the church. New disciples may have to demonstrate a change from the past character and

behaviors before people will believe that they are indeed made new. We can see from the passage that becoming new and witnessing and proclaiming Jesus can cause people who used to like you be against you. It might even be a motivation for people to work against you. It can be a kind of double-edged sword. People from the past don't like you, and new people from the church don't trust you yet. New disciples need to have someone who is walking with them through the early days.

Finally, we need to remember we are the junior member of a team that is working with each disciple, the Holy Spirit, and us together. The Holy Spirit also empowers our part.

When you first became a Christian, was there a desire to tell someone else about Jesus and what He did in your life.? When looking back at your Christian experience, when did you feel the most confident and engaged? What were you doing? Were you telling people about Jesus? Were you involved in some kind of outreach? When discipling someone else, when do you see them most excited? Is it when they are talking about Jesus and something they learned? Do you remember times when the Holy Spirit showed some new truth to you through reading His Word or when fasting or praying or some other time? It seems that Paul learned and was disciplined directly through the Holy Spirit. Be encouraged by remembering what it felt like when you first experienced Christ. Let those memories vitalize your current walk. The first experience Paul had on his journey was to be blinded and hear the voice of Jesus. That was followed by Ananias coming to Paul to heal him. I wonder how much the impact of the first experiences Paul had impacted how he saw and fulfilled his ministry. How do the early experiences you had surrounding the time you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior affect the way you see ministry and fulfill it? For good or ill.

Hands for Today

Ask God to show you one or more of the people you are currently discipling and begin to train and encourage them to seek God for the person He has in mind for them to disciple. Tell them that you will coach them through this process.

Heart-Day Two-Week Eight

Acts 9:36—43 gives us another kind of glimpse into how God can use the life of a disciple to impact many others. From this scripture, we understand that Tabitha (also known as Dorcas) was a person who was full of good works and acts of Charity. She made many articles of clothing and gave them to people. This is important for at least two reasons. First, if she had not been a person who impacted so many other people's lives, the other disciples might not have sent word to Peter for him to come. Second, if Tabitha had not expressed the Love of God so freely to the people of Joppa, her resurrection would not have been as impactful. If she had not expressed Christ's Love, would Peter have come, and would she have been resurrected? What is more impactful to us? I heard someone somewhere in the world was resurrected from the dead, or my friend who helped me was resurrected from the dead? Therefore, we learn what we already know. The personal connections a person has with others impacts people the most. It matters how we live out our lives when it gets hard. People are watching to see if there really is a difference in our lives when things are not easy. I wonder how much more impact people like Tabitha and Lazarus had on others after they were raised from the dead. The passage recounting Tabitha's healing stated that because of her resurrection, many people believed in the Lord. In fact, all disciples of Christ are raised from the dead. We were Spiritually dead, and now we are alive, this too should be made known all over the land, and it should cause many people to believe in the Lord!!

How has your life changed since receiving Christ as your Lord and Savior? What would people notice about you that is different? What can you share in story form that would demonstrate to others the difference Christ has made in your life? How can you help those you are discipling identify the changes Christ is making in their lives? How can you help them tell their stories of the transition to the people they are reaching out to with Christ?

Hands for Today

Help those you are discipling to be ready to step into opportunities to pray with people who open up their lives to them. Teach them to identify times in their lives or someone they know that shows God's willingness to help a person who is opening up to them. If the person tells them about a physical ailment, help them to identify a time when God healed them or someone close to them. Teach them the power of praying "in the moment" with the person who needs prayer so that that person can sense the presence of the Holy Spirit. Teach them about bridge conversations like the example above.

Heart-Day Three-Week Eight

Acts Chapter 16:1—15 teaches us at least five principles. Paul comes to Lystra and finds a disciple there named Timothy. The Disciple (Timothy) was well spoken of by the brothers who knew him, but he had a Jewish believing mother and a Greek father. This mixture could make him suspect to other Jews. Therefore, Paul circumcised Timothy so that the Jews they came into contact with would not be able to use that as a reason to deny the truth they brought about Jesus. The Council at Jerusalem indeed decided that there was no need to put Jewish practices like circumcision on the non-Jewish Christians, but Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother.

The next principle we see is that although Timothy had been being disciplined at Lystra when Paul came, he left to be disciplined by Paul on their journey. A disciple may have more than

one discipler in their life for different chapters in their lives. Third, while traveling with Paul, Timothy learned that the Holy Spirit can guide your everyday decisions about where to go. In verses :6 —10, we read about two places that the Holy Spirit told Paul not to go to and one that He told Paul in a vision to go to preach the gospel. I seek God when I go out to see if there is a place, he would like me to get my gas or the items I am picking up at the store. If he has an encounter that He wants me to have, I want to be there.

In Chapter 16, the account continues, and we see Paul and his companions going to the place that the vision directed. It was a very prominent place, and they spent some time in the city. Their meeting was outside the city by the river to a place of prayer. Paul spoke there, and Lydia had her heart opened to listen to Paul, and she and her hold household were baptized.

Four, many times, the Lord leads us to the ordinary person in the midst of the powerful because He has a different plan. Five, the Lord opened Lydia's heart, and the Holy Spirit directed Paul to an everyday person to express the gospel message. Lydia's heart was made ready to hear, and she heard because Paul obeyed the directions of the Holy Spirit.

Hands for Today

Help those you are discipling to listen to the Holy Spirit. Teach them to practice seeking and listening. Show them the scriptural principles related to being willing to make cultural adjustments when they don't conflict with the Bible and be ready not to go somewhere so they can go somewhere else to meet those God has prepared.

Heart-Day Four-Week Eight

In Acts Chapter 14:19—23, other concepts become apparent to the reader. First, opposition can be very harsh. In Lystra, Jews from Antioch and Iconium stoned and left Paul for dead. The disciples gathered around Paul, and he rose up. Literally, this could mean rose again,

from death or near death. They went on to preach the gospel to the city. They had great results in part because Paul did not let the opposition dissuade him from the call that God had on his life. Remember, as Christ called Paul, who was Saul into ministry, He showed Paul that he must suffer for Christ. It is easy to miss that Paul and his group went from one city to another pretty quickly. The disciples made in each town didn't have a long-term person to disciple them. These new disciples needed to step out pretty quickly on their own and learn. When Paul and his group came back, they set this right by appointing Elders to each city. The dual nature of this teaching is that disciples can be lead by the Holy Spirit and carry out the ministry, but there is value in having a person in their lives who can disciple them. You are a discipler for others. Who will they disciple?

What will it take for you to face strong opposition when you express the gospel message in your witnessing? Where would you find the strength to carry on if you were attacked like Paul? Did you have someone who personally disciplined you when you became a Christian? If so, what did you learn that you can pass on to the people you are discipling now? If not, how would your development have been different?

Hands for Today

Talk to those whom you are discipling about the opposition that might come when they witness or preach. Tell those you disciple about where you get the strength to continue when you face resistance. Tell them some of the stories when you overcame the conflict that sometimes comes with witnessing. Tell them about the results.

Heart-Day Five-Week Eight

Acts 15:1- 35 gives the account of certain Jewish Christians adding to the requirements of being saved. They want to require the Gentiles to be circumcised to be saved. Paul and Barnabas argued against this practice, and the council at Jerusalem agreed. We have to be careful that we as disciplers don't add to what the scriptures require of us.

What are some examples of extra-biblical requirements that people have tried to put on you or others that you know? How did you identify that these were not biblical requirements? How would you re-evaluate the things you are teaching to determine that they are biblical principles? As parents, we can look at our kids and say, "They got that from me." Sometimes what we are pointing to is a useful skill or characteristic, and sometimes it is not. When I see the character issues that are not helpful, I grieve because it is my doing. As disciplers, we can pass on what I call faults truths. These may be convictions that God gave me but not to everyone, and I treat those as the same as basic biblical principles. It may be that I have misunderstood a scripture and passed that misunderstanding to the next generation. There is a responsibility that comes with stepping into the call God has placed on His disciples to become disciplers.

Hands for Today

Focus on teaching those you are discipling the central truths of the scripture. If you go beyond those truths, make sure you have a sound biblical foundation for what you are teaching. What will you teach one of the people you are discipling today? Do your best to be sure it is biblical truth. I have been preaching or testifying about the Lord for forty-five years. I wish I could tell you that I can look back on all that I have said, and I could write to you today that it was all sound doctrine now. I would be lying to you. I have continued to learn and teach and learn and teach, and you will as well. Don't beat yourself up for the wrong thing you said ten years ago or last week. Do your best, and God will do the rest.

Heart-Day Six-Week Eight

In Chapter 6, Matthew records the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples. Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” And he said to them, “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

If Jesus thought it was essential to teach this prayer to His disciples, it probably would be good for us to teach it to His disciples today.

There are many things that we can learn from the prayer that are general principles, but as the individual disciple prays this prayer, asked them, “What God is saying to you.” This needs to be a constant question from you to those to whom you are discipling. “What is God saying to you?” This prayer begins by acknowledging that God the Father is Holy, and He is the Father. This can be taking many directions, but one of the most basic is that God is Father Creator-Authority-Life Giver-Judge-King. The first focus for the person praying is that God’s Kingdom will come, and there will be a likeness to His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. You and your disciple can explore all that this might mean. Second, there is a request for daily provision. Third, a request that our sins be forgiven with the caveat that we will forgive those who have sinned against or are indebted to us. Fourth, that God leads us away from temptation and delivers

us from Satan. Not in the version above, but in the 1611 KJV version of the bible is the phrase, “For thine is the kingdom, power, and the glory forever.”

What does this scripture say to you? What is the Holy Spirit saying to you right now about this Scripture? What would it look like if God's Kingdom on earth resembled His Kingdom in heaven? How would you be different if you forgave everyone who sinned against you?

Hands for Today

Show this prayer to one or more of the people you are discipling and ask them what they think God is saying to them about the meaning of the prayer. Share your insight. Explore it together. Find a way to pray it personally for them in their presence, if possible.

Heart-Day Seven-Week Eight

I find 1 Corinthians 4 an intriguing chapter in the bible. Several teachings come together in the text. Paul is writing to the church at Corinth to instruct, rebuke, and encourage. He sent the letter in the hand of Timothy, whom he has been discipling/fathering in the Lord. He wants the people there to have a clear understanding of his intent, and Timothy can also give Paul a firsthand account of what is going on there.

Paul is sending his spiritual son to confront other sons and daughters in Christ. He claims to be the spiritual father of many of the people at Corinth. In verse :19, Paul writes that he will come soon, “if the Lord wills.” I know that there have been criticisms of people if they pray or speak in this manner, “if the Lord wills.” There is a defendant connection between authority and power. Paul writes that there are those who are arrogant, and he will come to find out not about their talk but what power they have. Paul writes that the Kingdom of God does not consist of talk

but of power. He ends this section by asking if the church wants him to come in love or with a rod?

Paul is a man who has been jailed, stoned, and left for dead, wiped, and mistreated in several other ways. In this letter to the Corinthians, he claims to have power. Is there a difference between earthly and Kingdom power? Do we naturally rely on earthly power? Do we look for earthly answers when we should be looking for Kingdom answers? It seems that we can be misused on earth and still have great heavenly Kingdom power. Jesus died on the cross, Stephan was stoned to death, and Paul was beheaded. What is Kingdom power?

Hands for Today

Seek God's help in understanding and walking in His Kingdom power. Ask God of the people you are discipling, which ones does He want you to have this conversation. Help them to begin to explore the difference between earthly power and Kingdom Power.

Reproducible Inductive Bible lesson – Hebrews 10:19—39, 11:6, 12:2.

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
8. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
9. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
10. Why was it written to the original audience?
11. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
12. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Hands Section for the week

To put in practice the things we learned from the head and heart information is understood as the hands part of our discipleship practices. Each day read through the head

information and process through the heart work of the day. These aspects of discipleship should be refocusing the way we express our Christian life.

Hands assignments for the week:

1. Actively engage in the 6 two's in 12.
2. Be ready to be the answer/resource of healing love for someone who God brings across your life pathway. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to one person outside of the church this week. Bless them in some fashion and be God's love in their life this week. You owe the world an encounter with Jesus. How does God want to show up to them today?
3. Pray for someone who opens their life details to you. If someone tells you about a struggle in their life, pray for them right there on the spot. How does God want to show up for them today?
4. Work through the Inductive Bible Study material for this week.
5. God is speaking to us every day, and we simply must listen and hear. Be ready to bring one thing back to the group that He said.
6. Encourage two participants in the group during the week.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

In-Class Activities

Welcome and Prayer & Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week

Who is your Oikos

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Practice:

Telling your story

6 two's in 12

Bridge Conversations/Gospel-driven conversations

Leading people in a prayer of salvation

Praying in the moment

Review:

Six steps to success

Six requirements for Growth

Biblical "Whys"

What it means to advance toward preferred future

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Whom do we reach? “Oikos”

Making your list

How do we have spiritual conversation?

1. Be upfront with your faith
2. Be ready to pray
3. Bridge conversations are critical
4. Know your story
5. Don't forget to invite
 - a. Coffee
 - b. Dinner
 - c. Your home
 - d. A Church Function
6. Enculturating Evangelism
7. Invest in others

“6 two's in 12” process.

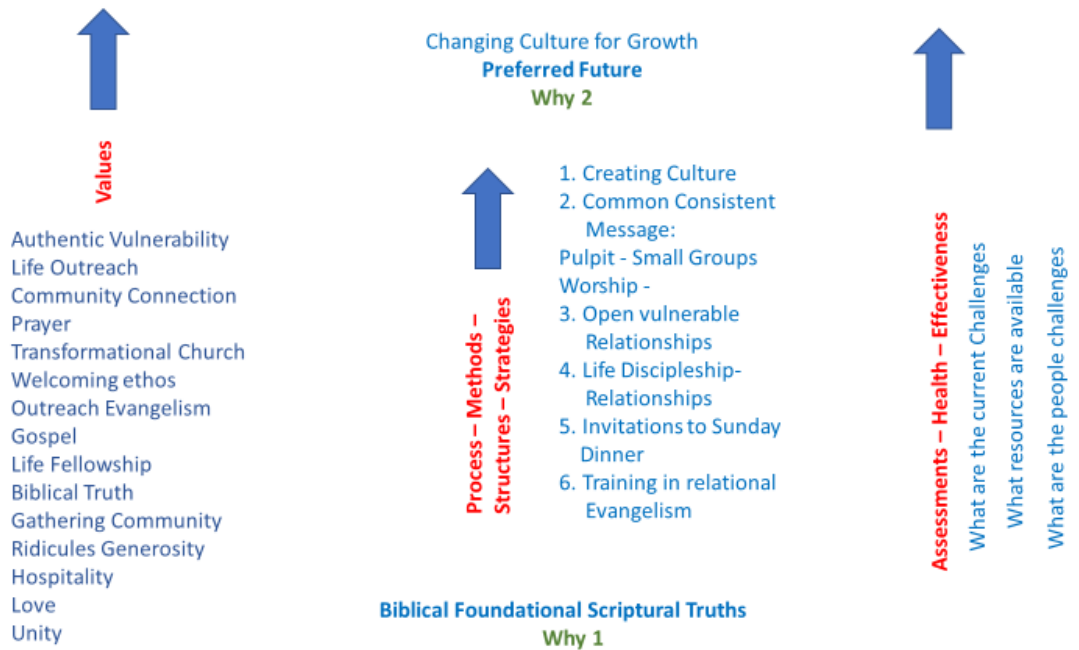
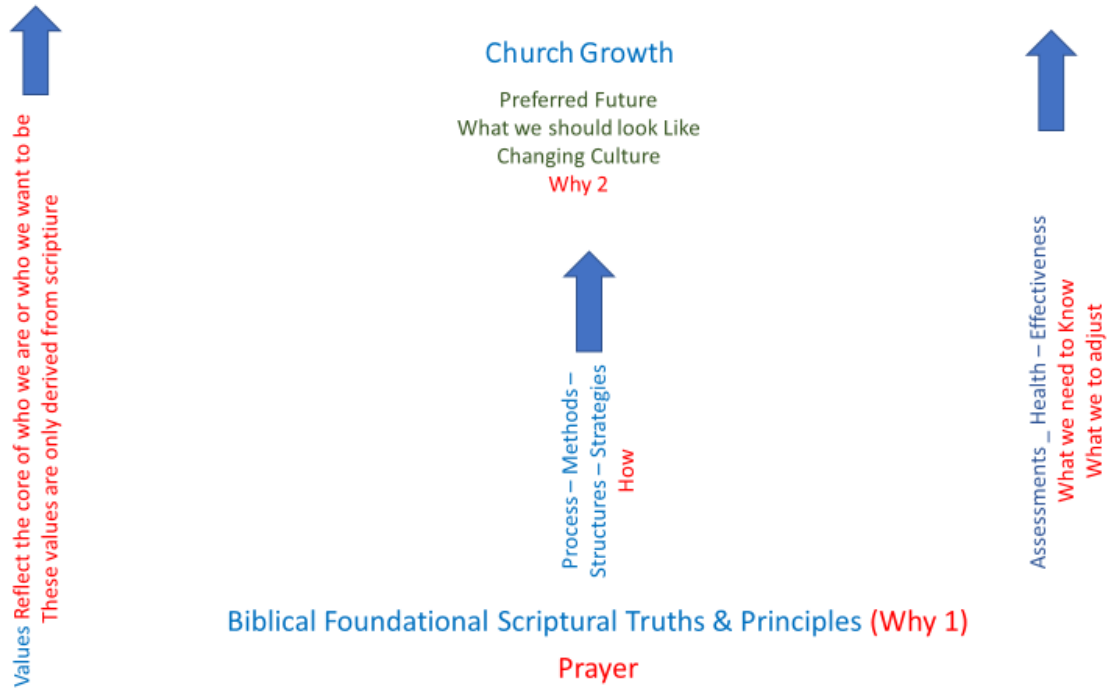
1. Pray two times a day, asking God to show you the people he is bringing across your life pathway in whom to express the Love of Christ.

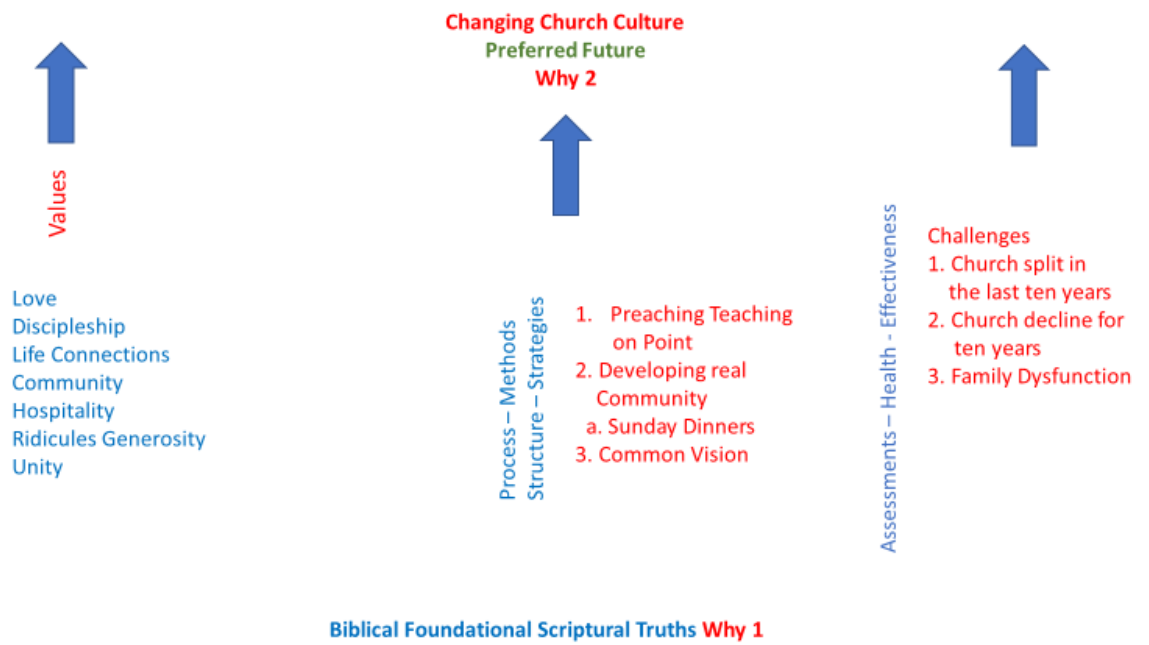
2. Ask two people each week to come to an event with other Christians. It could be a formal church service, bible study, cookout, sporting event, or anything that will expose these folks to Christian culture.
3. Look for two people who Christ opens a pathway into their lives, Create community with these folks. Real and ever-deepening relationships. You are the primary tool that God has *recreated* for the purpose of reaching the world with the Gospel message. We might just point a person to a resource to help in their life, but likely God intends us to be that resource.
4. Be ready to lead two people in a prayer of salvation over the next twelve months. Be looking for opportunities for people as the needs arise and specifically be looking for people who are showing openness to the gospel. Remember, our purpose is found in Matthew 28:18-20. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
5. Look for Persons of Peace. A Person of Peace is someone who is open to the message of the gospel, wants to invest themselves in Kingdom through your discipleship, has influence over others, and has needs that you can ask God to meet through prayer. Read Luke 10:8—9.
6. Identify two people each week in your church to encourage. Encouraging people in your church helps each person experience their God-given version of who they can be.

This head information is useful, but it needs to seep into the heart and hand aspect of our lives to fulfill God’s transforming work in and through our lives.

Good morning God/Holy Spirit! What are we doing today?

Biblical Why – Preferred Future Why





Six Requirements for Growth

1. Believe that the resources are in the harvest.
2. Everyone leaves every meeting with a “to do” list
3. Systematic group and personal encouragement to complete “to do” lists
4. Reproducible actions: 2 Tim 2:2
5. Believe your church can grow
6. Develop a sense of peace and unity

Six Steps to Success

1. Set Goals
2. Identify Actions Steps
3. Engage in Loving Cycles of Accountability
4. Record Level of Success Toward Goals
5. Evaluate Progress
6. Start Again

Looking at these principles closer:

1. Set Goals (X to Y in when)

There are many things that we have to do to get ministry done. While that is true, we need to choose to focus on one or two Wildly Important Goal(s). These goals can be measured, and they can be accomplished by doing identified behaviors. It is also essential to include a timeline for completion.

2. Identify action steps

Once the goal(s) are established, choosing action steps that will move the goal in a positive direction. These action steps have to be things that people can do, and they have to be things that can be measured.

3. Engage in cycles of loving accountability

Accountability is critical to success because we will fulfill our commitments when we know we need to report to someone. It is vital because when we don't meet our commitments, we sometimes need help to understand how to get the job done.

4. Record the level of success toward goals

The best accounting system is created when including the people who are acting out the action steps. You had seen this concept maybe when your church was raising money for something. Many churches have used a giant thermometer. It was easy to read because you could see within seconds how much money you were trying to raise and how much you actually had raised. The kind of accounting system we are talking about measures the actions steps that are supposed to cause us to get to the goal.

5. Evaluate progress

6. Start Again

Appendix O

Scripture References from the 2019 Discipline of FMC

Salvation Christ's Sacrifice (see Paragraph 114) Luke 24:46—48; John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8—11; Galatians 2:16; 3:2—3; Ephesians 1:7—8; 2:13; Hebrews 9:11—14, 25—26; 10:8—14.

New Life in Christ (see Paragraph 115) John 1:12—13; 3:3—8; Acts 13:38—39; Romans 8:15—17; Ephesians 2:8—9; Colossians 3:9—10.

Justification (see ¶116) Psalm 32:1—2; Acts 10:43; Romans 3:21—26, 28; 4:2—5; 5:8—9; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Philippians 3:9.

Regeneration (see ¶117) Ezekiel 36:26—27; John 5:24; Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:22—24; Colossians 3:9—10; Titus 3:4—5; 1 Peter 1:23.

Adoption (see ¶118) Romans 8:15—17; Galatians 4:4—7; Ephesians 1:5—6; 1 John 3:1—3.

Sanctification (see ¶119) Leviticus 20:7—8; John 14:16—17; 17:19; Acts 1:8; 2:4; 15:8—9; Romans 5:3—5; 8:12—17; 12:1—2; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 12:4—11; Galatians 5:22—25; Ephesians 4:22—24; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 5:23—24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 10:14.

Restoration (see ¶120) Matthew 12:31—32; 18:21—22; Romans 6:1—2; Galatians 6:1; 1 John 1:9; 2:1—2; 5:16—17; Revelation 2:5; 3:19—20.

Appendix P

Embrace All Evaluation:

Written by Thomas M. Doherty

Buildings, grounds, curb appeal:

- There is a significant space for Youth and Children's ministry
- There are baby-changing tables available to both mothers and fathers
- The building is clean and well kept
- Items are not stored visibility in shared spaces, like the sanctuary, entrance area, hallways or classrooms.
- All spaces are well cared for and up to date.
- The Sanctuary is well cared for.
- The sound and video systems are good enough that they don't distract from the service.
- The outside of the buildings are well kept.
- The grounds are well-groomed
- Signage is clear, not too busy, a size that can be read by passing traffic, and is well kept.

Vision/Goals:

- Our church has a vision.
- Our leadership knows and are able to articulate our vision.
- Our members and regular attenders know and are able to articulate our vision.
- Our Church has specific goals.
- Our leadership knows & are able to articulate our goals & the plan to reach them.
- Our members & regular attenders are able to articulate our goals & the plan to reach them.
- We are using six steps to success process or something comparable.

Ministry Focus:

- All our ministries have a focus on outreach.
- All our ministries have goals and go through an evaluation process at least yearly.
 - We have a plan in place for Children's ministry that:
 - Has measurable goals
 - Uses the space and staff we have in the most effective way possible
 - Recruits people by casting the vision of what we are reaching towards
 - Disciples people in the "how too" of children's ministry

We have a plan in place for Youth ministry that:

- Has measurable goals
- Uses the space and staff we have in the most effective way possible
- Recruits people by casting the vision of what we are reaching towards
- Disciples people in the "how too" for Youth ministry

Worship Service:

- ___ Our worship services use people in leadership that best represent who we are and who we are trying to reach.
- ___ We know our target and our worship services are intentionally designed to reach those folks
- ___ We understand the personality of our church and our worship services represent that well

Outreach efforts:

VBS:

- ___ Is designed to have measurable behaviors to make connections with non-churched families
- ___ Is designed to have measurable follow up behaviors

Greeting process:

- ___ We have greeters who are connective/friendly and able to give good directions to new people.
- ___ We have people available to take new people where they need to go.
- ___ We have people available to accompany new people while they are attending SS and worship service.
 - ___ They accompany them where they need to go.
 - ___ They let them know the process and answer questions.
 - ___ They help them understand what is happening in the worship service
 - ___ They intentionally introduce them to regular attenders of the church
 - ___ They make sure they know about other events that might interest them.

Each church has specific outreach ministries like a food pantry, 12 step groups, monetary assistance programs, Higher Ground, backpack ministries, etc.. Use the blanks below to evaluate your outreach programs.

Is designed to have measurable behaviors to make connections with non-churched families

Is designed to have measurable follow up behaviors

Is designed to have measurable behaviors to make connections with non-churched families

Is designed to have measurable follow up behaviors

Is designed to have measurable behaviors to make connections with non-churched families

Is designed to have measurable follow up behaviors

Is designed to have measurable behaviors to make connections with non-churched families

Is designed to have measurable follow up behaviors

Local Churches: Goal – Increase the number of people in Worship ___%+ per year

Everything depends on bringing people into the church.

Lead Measures – What we do to accomplish the important Goal

1. 6 two's in 12
 - a. Pray two times a day for God to show you who He is bringing into your life to express His love too.
 - b. Invite two people per week to a church function
 - c. Seek two pre-Christian to create community with in the next twelve months
 - d. Be ready to lead two people in prayer to accept Christ
 - e. Seek for a find two persons of peace over the next we months
 - f. Take ECG's training and apply the principles
2. Specifically, what Lead measure(s) will you engage in each week to reach the Goal – to move the Lag measurement.

Process:

1. Church Wildly Important Goal – X to Y in when
2. Choose Lead Measures ——
3. Set up a compelling scoreboard ——
4. Create a Cadence of Loving Accountability ——

**Appendix Q
Vision Blueprint**

Written by Thomas M. Doherty

One-time or annual events:

What is the purpose of each one-time or annual event? Each “One Time or annual event” needs to have a purpose that is in line with the overall church vision. What is the purpose or reason you are doing a “One Time or annual Event?”

The purpose needs to be in line with the vision. How does this one-time or annual event meet one of the elements of the vision statement? In this case, does the event line up with the concept of “Making Disciples?” We should define what Making a disciple means. Does the event express an authentic, credible witness of Christ that will bring transformation in a person’s life? Does this event advance the concept of making outreach a natural part of our lives?

What are the goals for this event? Are we trying to draw in a certain number of folks who don't know Christ yet as their savior? Are we trying to draw a certain percentage of folks in who are not yet Christians? An example would be a VBS event. We all know that many of our own children from our church will attend the VBS and hopefully many of them are Christians. We also know many children will come from other churches in our area and hopefully most of them are Christians. In this case we might try to make one of our goals be that 25% or 50% of the kids that we draw in will be kids who don't know Christ as their Savior or who come from unchurched families. This embraces a part of our stated vision, i.e. to focus on outreach. Having this goal should than shape the way we reach out. We don't just get our VBS flyers into the other churches in town, but we get them in the apartment complexes, and trailer parks, and other neighborhoods. We go places that will put us into contact with people who might not yet be a part of a church. We might develop a strategy of personal outreach.

The next few questions are connected so I put them together here.

How will you engage the Church folks in this event?

How will you organize for this event?

How will you train for this event?

What are the Lead Behaviors that you will employ, count and evaluate for this event?

A critical part of all of this is casting the vision to engage those who God has prepared to be a part of the event that we are talking about. As Church leadership we need to have a clearly defined and articulated vision for the event. The visionaries need to be people who have credibility with the folks. The vision needs to be reasonable. The Vision needs to be conveyed with enthusiasm by a true believer.

It is important for our Pastors and Local Leaders to believe the basic truths that the Bible teaches about what God expects from the church if we have Pastors or Local Church leaders who don't believe that their church can grow, well then they are right. But not because they are unable to grow, it is because Churches accomplish what they expect. If a Pastor and the Local Leaders believe that they can grow, they can.

If you are going to have a VBS event, there has to be a compelling, well defined, well-articulated vision given by people who believe in it and are enthusiastic about it.

If a Pastor and Local Leadership have lead the church to success in a variety of areas in the past, they will have the credibility they need to cast an effective vision for the event. If that is not the case or if the vision is too much for some of the folks to buy into in the beginning, connect with those who are willing. Create successful events and grow credibility. If the Vision

is rooted in biblical principles and the answers to the “Why” questions extend from biblical principles to helping people you will get support.

How will you engage your church folks in the event? Define all the things that you think might need to be done. Look at the folks in your church and see if there are areas they can use their gifts set in. For instance, in a VBS situation you might not have a plan at first to have a hospitality tent when you planned the VBS. When you look at your church you see that there are several people who would fit this ministry and it can be designed for outreach to parents. People want to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves and something that has significant impact.

Above we ask, how will you organize, train and what Lead behaviors will you employ for this event?

I have found it is important to organize far enough ahead that we can plan for what I call, "Beyond basics," if we are going to have success. What I mean is when we wait until we get to close to the event all we can do is try to pull together something that takes care of the basics of what is expected. We miss opportunities for good training, or good plans for follow up and relationship building. In other words, we miss the things that will have a long-term impact on the Kingdom and our churches. This leads us to the questions about what do we train for? In a VBS we might do all the normal kinds of training related to how to handle situations, best practices, the schedule of how things will happen, showing everyone what all the other folks are doing, but also the outreach elements, like building long term relationship, getting info to follow up, make it fun and informative.

The last on our list relates to lead behaviors. Once we understand the foci of the event we can train folks about lead behaviors that they can engage in which will help reach the goals. Some of those will be lead behaviors that happen before the event. Others will be lead behaviors that staff engage in during the event and other lead behaviors are things that we suggest to the people coming to the event to do. Still other lead behaviors will not be employed until the conclusion of the event.

How will you build relationship into this event?

Each person or area in the VBS needs to think through intentional authentic ways to build relationship with the adults who are coming and or the children who are coming. Also by using the children's relationships with one another to draw people into an ever-growing relationship with Christ.

How will you bridge this event?

It is great to get a lot of folks together for a VBS or a Fall Fun event or a concert or something else, but it is just as important that we find effective ways to create bridges from the event or contacts made, to the Kingdom and the church. This could be as simple as making sure we let folks know about other ministry opportunities that they might want to be involved with. It could be making significant enough contacts with folks so that you as an individual could follow up with them.

How and when will you evaluate this event?

Once you have an event that is a part of your vision and goals that fit your purpose and you know what you are focusing on, what are the lead behaviors that will help you accomplish the vision? When and how are you going to evaluate if you accomplished your goals and did the lead behaviors help or do they need to be adjusted in the future?

How can you articulate the larger church vision at the event?

One last thought here. I think that it is important for us to in some way articulate the larger vision of our church at events and other ministries. We want to connect the vision that God has given us to the people He is drawing to us, because He (God) has prepared the hearts of these folks to hear the gospel message and the vision of your church. They will want to connect with both of those things and they can only do that if they hear them.

Small Groups

What is the vision for the small group ministry? There needs to be a vision for the small group ministry specifically. Ask yourself how long are the classes going to be designed for? Who is giving oversight to the leaders? How are leaders chosen and developed? Where are the classes going to be held? What are you trying to accomplish? i.e. what are the goals? When will the classes divide? How will they divide? What are the big goals? What are the Lead

Behaviors you think will lead to accomplishing the big goals? What is your cycle of loving accountability? How are you keeping track of lead behaviors?

How does it fit within the larger vision? What is the discipleship component? You can be training about how to do small groups while you are teaching/demonstrating how outreach works and teaching some elements of biblical truth. Is there an outreach component? This can be through invitation to on-going groups or when groups divide and start anew. Another way is to teach in the group sessions how to do outreach in our everyday lives. What does it look like? How are you intentionally inviting new people into the group? Is there an element that teaches everyday outreach? What does it look like?

What is the outreach focus of the small groups? [What are the intentional elements of outreach taught and practiced?](#)

How are you training the participants of the small groups to multiply themselves? [This especially needs to be done before you start or restart a small group ministry. Everyone needs to know the vision, goals, process and expectations. Once you do the first round of training I would recommend that you build training into the small group ministry itself. Monthly meetings for support, follow up, loving accountability and training. I also would recommend that you have a ministry wide training event every year before restarting the ministry.](#)

How and when are you evaluating the small group ministry? *As with any newly formed ministry, I believe that they should be evaluated at least after 3 months, 6 months and at the end of the program.*

How are you casting the larger vision within the small group ministry? *It is also important to cast the overall church vision in the small group ministry. This is how you introduce person of peace to the vision and give them an opportunity to give themselves to fulfilling it.*

CE

Sunday School Classes (Adult)

How does the Sunday school class ministry fit within the larger vision of the church?

When looking at your Adult SS program you must ask the same questions as when looking at the small group ministry. In what ways are we accomplishing the discipleship of the folks in the groups? How are we teaching the 2 Timothy 2:2 process?

How is the larger vision of the church expressed/articulated in the Sunday School Class?

It is important to keep casting the vision in every ministry context. Most people want to be part of something that is bigger than themselves and something that is important. We need to create a culture and develop structure and intentionality that teaches truth, and holds folks accountable for acting on what they have been taught. Everyone should leave every meeting with everyday life tasks to do and there should be a cycle of loving accountability.

How are teachers trained to lead the class? Has there been any kind of training for the teachers of the adult classes? We need to make sure that the teachers understand the vision, structure and process that we are trying to create in our classes. Teachers should be trained in the process of both effectively conveying the information and helping the students apply it in their every life.

What is done to create a good space for the class? (The physical space itself, refreshments, visual – audio – is any thought given to pre-class conversation starters) There are several aspects of trying to create an atmosphere that attracts and keeps folks coming back. You want the space to be warm and inviting. Things like cleanliness, lighting, enough space, the smells and sounds in the room all can draw and keep people.

If you are expecting that folks will be writing, there should be a hard surface for them. It is a good idea to have coffee or tea as well as treats. Eating seems to be a part of proper fellowship. Other things to consider might be having enough space so that new people coming in don't feel crowded or like they are taking someone else's place. Another idea is having background music on that fits the group you are reaching.

What are the expectations for those attending the class? What are the tasks that they will do because of the things they have learned? A weekly mantra should be laying out the expectations of the class for those who attended it. This might seem like a turn off, but it really feeds into the people who are prepared to hear your message and step into to it. It is my belief that we either engage people in something significant and bigger than themselves or we teach them that there are no real expectations. When we teach people that there is no real expectation they either become ineffective in their Christian walk or they get bored and began looking for fulfillment somewhere else.

How is loving accountability handled? The process is to take a few minutes at the beginning of each class to ask how people did the last week with the tasks that were given to them. Ask about their stories, celebrate the victories and talk through the challenges.

What are the goals of the class? Each class should come up with goals that relate directly to the Vision for the Sunday School department and the larger church goals. Perhaps one of the goals could be to increase the number of people attending the adult Sunday school classes. A lead behavior (which could be given as tasks each week could be to invite someone to the class.

What tools are given to the folks so that they can effectively accomplish the tasks/goals?

When I talk about tools I am suggesting that the students are taught how to live out the lessons taught and how to effectively live out the lead behaviors given to build the Kingdom of God.

CE – Youth

What is the Vision of the Youth group/program? In many cases vision is not a first consideration for Youth groups. Either a church doesn't have one and they think that they need one, so they want one. Or, they have a bunch of youth and must figure out what to do with them.

What we want to put together is a vision that is connected with the larger church vision and bring the Youth vision into alignment with that. We want the youth to be engaged in elements of discipleship and outreach. We want them to see their place in the body and

understand God’s call on them to reach out to their friends. We want to give them effective tools to accomplish this vision. The goals should fit the broader goals of the church. If the churches goal is to increase the worship attendance, the youth goal should connect with that. The Youth should be trying to get youth to be a part of their larger group, but also, small groups so that they can be discipled in their walk with Jesus. We want to them to be part of our 2 Timothy 2:2 process. They will learn and live what they learn well enough to teach the next spiritual generation.

How does that fit the larger Vision? Knowing what the larger church vision and goals are helps you bring your youth vision in line with it?

How is the larger vision expressed/communicated to the youth group? In what practical, methodical, intentional and authentic ways will the youth leaders express the larger church vision? How will they infect the culture of youth groups with the vision? What Structures will be put in place to ensure that the youth are being exposed to the vision every year?

How can they participate in the larger vision and goals? How will you include the youth in choosing and supporting vision and goals?

What are the expectations for the youth? In what ways will you introduce the tasks that they are expected to engage in every week? How will you hold them lovingly accountable?

What tasks are they given to complete? Some tasks will be the same, week in and week out. Like being ready to pray with someone in need. Or, praying that God will open your eyes to those who are ready to hear the message of the gospel. Or, asking people to come to youth stuff and church events. Other things may relate more to the specific lesson you are teaching that week. It might be related to reading a certain scripture and digging into it with an inductive study method. Or it may be teaching about hurting others and asking them to take time this week to think about those who they may need to ask to forgive them. This connects to the idea that everyone should leave every meeting with a to-do-list. When we teach the youth

something it should impact their lives going forward and they need to know what to do with the teaching.

How are they held loving accountable? [When and how do we do Loving accountability?](#)

What tools are they given to accomplish the stated vision and goals? [When we ask the youth to do something, how are we preparing them to do it? What training or tools are we giving them to be successful?](#)

What are the goals of the Youth group/program? It is not enough to say we want more youth to come and be a part of the group. We need real numbers to reach toward, but remember that number is the end goal measurement. What we are counting is how many times we are doing Lead behaviors.

How are those goals being evaluated? How-when-who is evaluating the goals, or more specifically how-when-who is evaluating the effectiveness of our lead behaviors in meeting the goals?

What training is done to help develop the Youth leaders? What training is done with each one who works with our youth? Do they understand the church's vision, goals, process and Methods? Do they understand effective ways to engage their youth? Do they understand the principles taught in ECG's?

Is their adequate space for the youth groups and how is it being prepared? See our
“Embrace all evaluation.”

CE – Children [See explanation form the Youth section.](#)

What is the Vision of the Children’s program?

How does that fit the larger Vision?

How is the larger vision expressed/communicated to the Children and Leaders?

How can they participate in the larger vision and goals?

What are the expectations of the Children and leaders?

What tasks are they given to complete?

How are they held loving accountable?

What tools are they given to accomplish the stated vision and goals?

What are the goals of the Children's program?

How are those goals being evaluated?

What training is done to help develop the Children's leaders?

Is their adequate space for the Children’s programs and how is it being prepared? See our “Embrace all evaluation.”

Worship

What is the vision of the worship team? *What we are looking for here is what is the target group? What are they trying to accomplish with Worship? What do they see as Worship related? Are they focused primarily on music? How will they address the visuals in the Worship setting? How do they integrate the various elements of the service together? The vision statement should be crafted in a way that encompasses the scope of what they are trying to do.*

How does this support the larger vision of the church? **Let's make sure that the Worship team vision and actions support the larger vision. A disconnect here can destroy a church.**

What are the goals of the Worship Team? **As you think about these goals, try to express them in ways that can be measured. For instance, our goal is to put together a Worship experience that will draw people in and connect them with the Spirit of God. Great goal, how do we see if we are accomplishing this goal and why is that important? It is important because we want to draw people in and we want them to have an ever-deepening experience of**

worship. We must have truthful ways, imperial ways of measuring our effectiveness to continue to get better at our calling. How can we accomplish this? We can't simply ask the people who are related to us or like us. We can't even just ask the people who are always there. We need to find effective ways to know if the target groups are being drawn in and are experiencing a deepening worship connection with God

How does the WT help with outreach?

How does the WT continue to grow spiritually, in their areas of giftedness, and scope?

We need to be intentional, methodical and put in place a culture of growth and structures that will support growth. Does your Worship Team study scripture together? How are the folks on the team growing in their area of giftedness? How is the Worship Team growing in how they can affect the Church and Kingdom in larger ways?

How is the worship space made ready for each time of worship?

How are all the elements of worship congruent with one another?

When and how is the Worship experience evaluated?

Information – Bulletins – greeters/seaters – ushers – visually – technology – music
experience – skits – preaching -- sacraments – etc..

Nursery

What is the vision of the Nursery?

How does that vision support the overall church vision?

Does the nursery space support the overall church vision?

How do the procedures put parents at ease and support the overall church vision?

How is the Nursery program evaluated?

First impressions:

What does the outside of our building look like?

Does it advance the vision of the church? If so, How? What needs to be addressed?

What does the property look like?

Does it advance the vision of the church? If so, How? What needs to be addressed?

What does your parking look like?

Is there enough parking? Is it well marked? Are there greeters or parking helpers available?

Appendix R
Adjusted Weekly Training

Week One Bible Study

Complete the inductive Bible below and be ready to discuss it at our weekly meeting.

Inductive Bible Study

Passage: Luke 10:1—9

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the most apparent meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week One: 1 — 1.5 hours

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

During the week one class time, the students were introduced to the concepts of “Loving Accountability.” Each week the student was given assignments to carry out that week. When the students return the next week, they were expected to explain how they did with their tasks. If the student did not attempt or did not complete their tasks, the researcher and other students explored ways to overcome the obstacles that stopped their engagement with the assignments. When the student completed the tasks, the class processed through their report. They celebrated the successes and problem-solved through the challenges.

Each week the students were asked to understand what God said to them in that particular week. At the class meeting, each student reported what they thought God said to them during that week.

During weeks three and four, the students practiced in class, telling their stories about their salvation and other significant spiritual encounters with Christ. They practiced turning everyday conversation into a spiritual discussion.

In week one, they began to make a list of their Oikos or their circle of influence. They asked God each week who, on their list, He wanted them to focus on. They intentionally

developed spiritual relationships with these people. They added people to the list throughout the eight weeks of the project as God revealed new people they could influence.

Each week the students had a different scripture passage to read and apply the inductive Bible study questions provided in the workbook. They came to class ready to work through the Inductive Bible study with the group.

At the end of each class time, the students committed to three or more Lead Behaviors. These were the tools that the students used each week to accomplish the thesis project's goals. These goals include increasing the number of people discipling others. Increasing the number of salvations and discipleship groups and increasing the Sunday Morning worship attendance.

Week Two Bible Study

God's directives for outreach Matthew 28:18—20

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?

10. What is the most apparent meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Two

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Three Bible Study

Ephesians 2: 1 — 10

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the most apparent meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Three

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Four Bible Study

2 Timothy 2:1—13

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?

12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Four

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Five Bible Study

Ephesians 6:10 — 20

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?

7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Five

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Six Bible Study

Romans 5:1 —21

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Six

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Seven Bible Study

John 6:30 – 59, John 8:14

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?
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8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?

12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Seven

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors

Week Eight Bible Study

Hebrews 10:19 – 39, Hebrews 11:6, 12:2

Inductive Bible Study

Read the verses in at least two versions.

1. Write out what you think each verse or section means in your own words.
2. Write down any questions that arise from the passage and answer what you can.
3. Are there other passages that speak to the same subject?
4. Who is the audience to whom this passage is written?
5. What is the purpose or focus of the passage?
6. What is the cultural and historical context/background of this passage? Who was the original audience? When was it written?

7. It was written about when Christ was walking the earth
8. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
9. Have I overlooked anything or made any assumptions?
10. What is the clearest meaning of this text?
11. Why was it written to the original audience?
12. How can I apply what I have learned in my life?
13. What insights did you gain from the passage?

Agenda Week Eight

Welcome and Prayer

Worship in Song

Loving Accountability

What did God say to you this week?

Practice telling your story

Who is your Oikos?

Taking a look at the Inductive Bible Study

Commit to Lead Behaviors