ABSTRACT

Mentoring Spiritual Leaders: Discerning Effective Practices

by

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Over two thousand years ago Jesus Christ prayed that his Father's kingdom would come on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10). For this prayer to be fulfilled, Jesus raised up spiritual leaders through mentoring in order to relationally establish and reveal God's jurisdiction on earth. Through Old and New Testament precedents, as well as proven methods throughout the timeline of Christendom, God's model for developing leaders is revealed. Without strong, godly leadership the kingdom of God on earth will not be fully realized. Therefore, a study to discern the best practices of mentoring spiritual leaders is integral for kingdom advancement, thus serving Christ's prayerful goal.

Due to the fact that the practice and lifestyle of mentoring is indicative of God's heart and expressed through scripture and Christ's example, we follow these Biblical cues for personal, spiritual, and wholistic growth. Because mentoring occurs through the dynamic human system of relationships, and people respond and learn differently, mentoring practices are diverse and multifaceted which lead to synergistic solutions and barriers to discern. This research study is designed to discern the effective methodology of mentoring spiritual leaders. Literature review of existing and past processes of leadership development, including mentoring, have been detailed in this study as well as research derived from contemporary practices from mentor and mentee participants.

Major findings of this project include the observation that intentionally establishing and nurturing a relational environment of trust for the purpose of maturity in

Christ is the best practice of effective spiritual mentoring. Secondary best practices

included the role of process assessment, relational transparency, and accountability.

Further findings concluded that primary barriers to developing effective spiritual leaders

through mentoring included busyness which is the number one barrier mentioned and

time constraints, lack of coachability or teachable spirit, incongruent investment between

mentee and mentor and trust issues. Other factors to be considered when effectively

mentoring spiritual leaders include chemistry, compatibilities, capacity and goal

congruence between mentee and mentor, cultural awareness (ecclesiastically, age related,

ethnicity, and others), healthy parameters, theological divergence, and systems theory.

MENTORING SPIRITUAL LEADERS:
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"For in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). All praise and glory go to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to whom my heart echoes, from the words of David, "apart from you I have no good thing" (Ps. 16:2). Thank you, Father, for breathing your life into me twice.

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

When God birthed the church at Pentecost, Spirit empowered leaders were used to reveal God's kingdom, influence, and jurisdiction on earth. For this kingdom to come, as Christ prayed, God requires a human component to be faithful on earth. Godly leaders, developed through effective mentoring and discipleship, are essential to this task. These leaders cannot emerge without proper development.

Without strong godly leadership the kingdom of God on earth will stall. This dilemma is evident throughout scriptural history and showcased in today's modern culture of post-Christendom. If Christians are to partner with God in accomplishing a divine work, they must develop godly leadership to fulfill God's will on earth.

Christians leaders need to know the most effective way and method of developing godly leaders for ministry in their sphere of influence. Therefore, the primary purpose of this research is to discern the best practices for mentoring effective spiritual leaders.

Personal Introduction

I have been blessed to grow up within post-Christendom. Throughout my life and ministry, I have been unequivocally molded and impacted by Christian leadership. I have witnessed Christian leadership being both positive and negative. The influence of spiritual leadership has impacted God's plan on earth perhaps more than any other natural variables as humanity partners with God to accomplish God's divine will.

The lens of scripture shows that God chooses to work through human actions as people partner with the divine to reach the world with the Gospel. Their task, as Jesus' witnesses, commissioned in Acts 1:8, carries with it the weight of balancing human frailties with the glory of God working in them daily, nurturing them to completion through spiritual transformation. At the personal intersection of humanity and God there lies a responsibility to impact their sphere of influence, as Christ did during his earthly ministry. The applied effect of this divine partnership takes many practical forms including the ministry of leading that gracefully evolves from effective discipleship and the call of God.

I accepted this call to leadership from an early age while observing the godly giants that pioneered a path for me through effective discipleship and mentoring. I witnessed God doing God sized things in and around me. The primary practical human catalyst for my growth was the strategically placed individuals who mentored me. During my development I also learned the impact of others was a double- edged sword.

On one hand there existed the time-proven template of wiser people molding me in the love and admonition of God, as observed in the Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately, I also experienced violation of the principles of the kingdom of God because of integral individuals who were not responsible in their calling to godly and sustained leadership. Under human leadership I have seen the influence of the kingdom Christ envisioned both ebb and flow, being significantly impacted by the stewards called to biblically lead the church.

I personally was called into ministry under the guidance and mentoring of a man who was the epitome of Christian leadership at the time. He started our church seemingly

single handedly while obtaining his law degree and becoming an All-American football player at the nation's championship school during the time. He connected countries with the love of Christ while preaching crusades in Europe and starting campus ministries in our town that would lead countless people to Christ, even to this day. After years of effective ministry, the leader's witness imploded in such a dramatic way that his marriage ended in a traumatic divorce, his children in pain, the church splintering and his life ending prematurely from a drunken car wreck. In Christianity we know all too well the trend.

On the other hand, God has raised up countless powerful ministry leaders who have worked selflessly and faithfully as they were used to grow the kingdom work and tirelessly be a witness of a love that eclipses the world. I have been a part of ministries that discipled and mentored leaders from conversion to ministry. The overflow resulted in resurrected marriages and vital relationships; where genuine healing has occurred, where addictive lifestyles have been transformed and people were led to embrace a vibrant walk with Christ. I have seen the power and legacy of one godly leader whose life reflects God's plan and who impacts thousands in his or her wake. As we seek this eternal legacy, we understand this truth in Christian history: without strong godly leadership the Christ commissioned expansion of the kingdom of God on earth is adversely affected.

One consistent variable I have witnessed throughout my life that has made an impact in this expansion is godly leadership. Strong godly leadership is the human catalyst that propels the kingdom of God forward, of which I am a part.

Statement of the Problem

God desires to partner with human beings for kingdom change to transform the world. This transformation cannot happen without effective discipleship and godly leadership. My observation is that currently in Christendom there is a problematic and systematic lack of leadership to grow the church forward. Without strong godly leadership the kingdom of God on earth will not be fully realized. Christians must discern a proper and effective mechanism for this development to occur or they will not optimally fulfill an integral purpose God has for them.

The pursuit of godly leadership is emphasized and inferred throughout the timeline of Biblical Christianity, encompassing both Old and New Testaments. Countless spiritual pioneers and scholars have written and praised this essential work of godly leadership that builds Christ likeness and maturity, both of which are practical aims of the Christian faith. Among others, Oswald Sanders lays out the groundwork when it comes to defining and understanding what effective spiritual leadership is in his authoritative work entitled *Spiritual Leadership*. As Trevor Wax points out, one thing that has empowered Sanders to be such a respected leader in the field of spiritual leadership for generations is his experience serving as "both a consulting director of Overseas Missionary Fellowship and a preacher who served in multiple countries", both of which produce a wisdom that transcends cultures and cultural shifts of our day.

In his authoritative work Sanders builds the case for spiritual leadership, which is synonymous with spiritual influence, and is rooted in godly ambition that is birthed out of godly goals that chooses to pursue the noble task of leadership (Sanders 18). Sanders defines the practical qualities for the task of leadership as "authoritative, spiritual, and

sacrificial" (Sanders 18). To define spiritual leadership qualities and qualifications,

Sanders then dives into scripture through the Biblical lens of Peter and Paul and other

spiritual leaders as he emphasizes the following attributes and defining characteristics of

a leader: discipline, wisdom, vision, courage, humility, sincerity, and integrity (Sanders).

Godly skills of a leader that Sanders espouses are embracing a good sense of humor,

speaking the truth in love effectively, cultivating patience, benefitting from friendship,

and inspiring others to execute, organize and pursue the right vision (Sanders). Above all

qualities of an effective spiritual leader is the indispensable quality of being Spirit-filled

(Sanders 77 as cited in Wax). As Oswald Sanders states, "All real Christian service is but

the expression of Spirit power through believers yielded to Him" (Sanders 80).

In *Spiritual Leadership* Sanders then explores the deeper and very practical

disciplines that serve to make the leader effective. These disciplines include prayer which

ignites the understanding of utter dependence on God and the work of the Holy Spirit,

time management, reading, embracing the process of being a student of lifelong

leadership, counting the cost of leadership (Sanders 90; 99; 104).

Sanders also includes experienced wisdom in the form of leadership tests such as

your contextual longevity once you are gone and warnings, perils and temptations of a

spiritual leader that range from the pitfalls of jealousy to the practical and painful weight

of leadership which includes loneliness and rejection, criticism and the toll and cost it

takes on others under your care (Sanders 143). Effective spiritual leadership springs from

a vibrant relational walk with God. This divine process is showcased through the

overflow of a Spirit fueled and led life. Christ modeled this in scripture. This Biblical

precedent combined with the witness of the saints who have gone, reveals the very

practical application of effective spiritual leadership which unveils the kingdom of God in today's sphere of influence.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to discern the best practices for mentoring effective spiritual leaders.

Research Questions

Below are the three research questions that set the parameters to discern the best practices for mentoring spiritual leaders. These three questions guided the research that reveals these best practices.

Research Question #1

What do recognized mentors of spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are the best practices to mentor effective spiritual leaders?

Research Question #2

What do recognized mentors of effective spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are barriers to mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

Research Question #3

According to recognized mentors of leaders and their mentees, what other factors should be considered when mentoring effective church leaders?

Rationale for the Project

First and foremost, the kingdom of God matters to God. The kingdom of God is the realm in which God operates and the reality Christians are to seek first according to the Messiah, God's only Son (Matt. 6:33). Jesus Christ came to practically build God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10). Secondly, Christ made a way for

redeemed humans to be the practical representation of God on the earth, and he called the

Church to minister the divine will through relationships and fulfill God's kingdom plans.

Fundamentally, redeemed humanity are the bricks and mortar of God's kingdom which is

revealed in Christian communities.

This theological tenet of the kingdom of God is at the core of the majority of

mainline Christian denominations, including the United Methodist Church and its

founder John Wesley. When referring to Wesley, Jeremy Bouma states that Wesley

> equated the Kingdom with the rule of God over the individual heart. In his
>
> [Wesley's] words: "Let him reign without a rival. Let him possess all your heart,
>
> and rule alone. Let him be your one desire, your joy, your love." And what is
>
> produced by letting God reign is righteousness, which is love of God and love of
>
> others. For Wesley the Kingdom wasn't merely about community transformation,
>
> but individual transformation; social changes were incidental to personal ones.
>
> (Bouma)

The lens of the Gospel of John chapter three reveals that Jesus spoke of the Spirit

of God making one born again as someone receives Christ. Essentially this spiritual

rebirth outcome would be God outgrowing one's skin and daily actions as the divine

jurisdiction grows, as God partners with the believer's will. The kingdom byproduct

would result in Christ followers reaching outside of themselves with God's loving

influence, thus the kingdom of God literally taking shape in a believer's space.

Thirdly, the lens of scripture reveals that God has a desire and role for healthy

spiritual leaders who will empower the Church to reveal the kingdom of God more

effectively on earth. Fourthly, to practically accomplish this goal, there must be a clear

methodology of proper discipleship and leadership development for reproducible and sustainable strong leadership.

Christ followers look to Jesus' biblical example to find the practical solution of how to develop leaders in the church who will direct kingdom change in the world today. The Son of God Himself lived the solution of creating the integral human longevity of the church by selecting twelve ordinary men, whom Christ would mentor personally into leaders. These twelve included three core leaders who would receive additional individual divine attention. Eleven of these twelve leaders would carry on the kingdom work after Jesus' resurrection and mold others for the mission. Furthermore, the Messiah promoted one of these leaders, Peter, and the spiritual revelation he received with a declaration of faith, to be the natural and supernatural foundation that God would build the Church upon (Matt. 16:18).

Definition of Key Terms

Throughout this dissertation, two terms--mentoring and spiritual leaders--are integrally important.

Mentoring is a learning approach categorized by relational imprinting for the purpose of an individual's development.

Effective spiritual leaders are persons of influence who are acknowledged by others as a spiritual leader who have a degree of success in guiding people in matters of spiritual maturity that in turn impacts everyday life. This spiritual success is clarified in the content noted earlier including the work derived from Oswald Sanders' classic work entitled *Spiritual Leadership*.

Delimitations

This project worked with emerging and established adult leaders who are seeking to grow and develop as front runners in their respective fields of ministry and who use mentoring practices to shape others and themselves. As researcher, I chose to limit the research to those in Christian ministry both inside and outside the walls of the Church. Research participants were adults whom recognized spiritual leaders chose in the areas of discipleship, evangelism or leadership development. To focus on the ministry issue of developing and mentoring leaders, the research excluded total church membership as a requirement for participation in the research.

In scripture, Christ, the greatest example, prayerfully discerned and then sought out certain disciples for leadership development and specific ministry. Personally, I have followed this example when selecting mentees and future leaders. For example, after prayer and discernment, I would initiate deeper conversations with potential mentees and leaders to probe for interest in future roles within the ministry where we both were serving. If there was reciprocal confirmation, we would both enter the mentoring relationship after communicating the goals and parameters of the partnership.

Review of Relevant Literature

This project consulted a diverse collection of biblical, theological, sociological, and educational literature to discover insights into the best mentoring attributes and practices that positively shape spiritual leaders. Resources included journals, articles, books, popular authors, and commentaries. Additionally, approximately fifteen experts in the field of mentoring from global ministries were interviewed as well as mentees from these ministries.

Reoccurring themes included mentoring, role models, effective attributes of mentoring, spiritual development, and leadership. Respected Christian authors from the global continuum of Christianity contributed to this work on mentoring and leadership development. This content included the contemporary works of Robert Clinton, Frances Chan, and John Allen to the knowledge and personal practices of various spiritual fathers including the Apostle Paul, Augustine, Benedict, Thomas à Kempis, and John Wesley among others.

This work is also grounded in academic sources such as dissertations and professional articles on mentoring and leadership development in Christendom, past and present. Among the dissertations and scholarly voices contributing to this project were Yong Seok Chung, Christine McCann, and Edward L. Smither. Biblical and theological content of this project relied heavily on established commentaries and authors from the Old and New Testaments that provided truth and insights into relational imprinting, mentorship, and development for the goal of maturity in Christ.

Research Methodology

For this project used four different research methods to collect and analyze data including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, surveys and document analysis of the publications and websites of the primary mentor's ministries. Accordingly, the researcher conducted 45 surveys and used 15 semi-structured interviews with recognized mentors chosen from effective ministries in the fields of discipleship, evangelism, and spiritual leadership development. From these interviews with mentors, two focus subset groups were comprised of the mentor's mentees, to further identify effective mentoring practices and barriers to these practices.

Type of Research

Research for this project was qualitative with a pre-intervention design which

used mixed qualitative and quantitative methods of semi-structured interviews, surveys,

focus groups, and document analysis. Research collected through a mixed design in this

study can offer insight into best practices for developing individuals and leaders through

the relational process of mentoring. The research analyzed and utilized data from surveys,

semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with recognized ministry's mentors, as well

as willing mentee contributors from these ministries who have been through the

ministry's mentoring process.

Participants

Strategic adult leaders within organizations that are effective in producing quality

spiritual influencers addressed research questions and similar inquiries that contributed to

the understanding of mentoring. To gather the most effective mentor models, and the best

practices as well as to identify barriers of developing spiritual maturity in individuals,

these leaders, consisting of mentors and their mentees, were interviewed as participants in

the process of mentoring. Christian multidenominational ministries of spiritual

development that adhere to the same core Christian beliefs and are effective in the field

of mentoring recommended these mentors on the basis of their mentor merit.

Instrumentation

Research instrumentation for this project included a survey sent to ministries in

the field of discipleship, evangelism, and leadership development and some semi-

structured interviews that flowed out of these surveys. The research surveys went to 45

mentors from these established ministries. After collecting the 45 surveys, expert or

model mentors provided the names of second tier mentors who granted semi-structured

interviews. Furthermore, these mentors identified mentees to be involved as research

participants in focus groups for data collection from mentees. The purpose of this

instrumentation was to discern factors, attributes, and methodologies associated with

effective mentoring for leadership development and barriers to the same process.

Research question 1 asked, "What do recognized mentors of effective spiritual

leaders indicate are the best practices (ways/methods/attributes) to mentor spiritual

leaders?" Data collected from the surveys sent to the 45 recognized mentors, semi-

structured interviews with this cohort and additional data collected from their mentees via

focus groups was used to answer the first research question. Research Question 2 asked,

"What do recognized mentors of leaders indicate are barriers to mentoring effective

church leaders?" Research question 3 asked, "According to recognized mentors of leaders

(and their mentees,) what other factors should be considered when mentoring effective

church leaders?" The same data techniques which assimilated cross-referencing all

participant data were used to answer question 2 and 3.

Data Collection

Surveys were sent to highly regarded Christian ministries known for their

mentoring, spiritual development, and discipleship proficiency. These surveys asked

these ministries to nominate ten top practitioners of spiritual mentoring leaders within

their organization. These organizations provided fifty names of top practitioners in the

field of mentoring, and these mentors agreed to the study. To glean specific information,

those who were nominated received a semi-structured interview about best practices,

barriers, and other considerations in spiritual mentoring. Surveys and interviews

addressed the research questions of the project that explored best positive mentoring practices, barriers, and other considerations to effective mentoring. Furthermore, these mentors then provided the names of mentees who agreed to participate as another cohort in focus groups to discern best practices, barriers, and considerations of the mentoring process. Two focus groups composed of 6 - 8 mentees each participated in the research.

Data Analysis

For this project I chose to conduct surveys and use a subset of semi-structured interviews with 50 recognized mentors chosen from established ministries in the field of spiritual development. I also collected data from two focus groups of mentees who were from these established ministries. Research for this project was both qualitative and quantitative with a pre-intervention design which used mixed methods of semi-structured interviews, surveys and focus groups. Strategic adult leaders within organizations that are effective in producing quality spiritual influencers addressed the research questions to provide pertinent data which included the most effective mentor practices for developing spiritual leaders. Research instrumentation included a survey sent to ministries in the field of spiritual development and semi-structured interviews and focus groups that flowed out of this initial survey. The purpose of this instrumentation was to discern factors, attributes, and methodologies associated with effective mentoring for leadership development and barriers to the same process. Surveys were sent to highly regarded Christian ministries known for their mentoring and discipleship proficiency. These surveys asked these ministries to nominate ten top practitioners of spiritual mentoring leaders within their organization. Once these organizations provided fifty names, to glean information a survey designed to assess best practices, barriers and other considerations

regarding spiritual mentoring went to those nominated. These surveys addressed the research questions of the project that explored best mentoring practices, barriers, and other considerations to effective mentoring. Furthermore, I asked these nominees if they desired to be interviewed to discern methodology for best mentoring practices. Based on the nominees' responses, approximately fifteen top practitioners in the field of mentoring were interviewed with semi-structured interviews. These nominated mentors also provided names of mentees who were asked if they would like to participate in two five-person focus groups to further discern mentoring practices. I collected data using each of these research methods.

Generalizability

Leadership is a universal catalyst needed for positive change and forward momentum in all aspects of life including spiritual advancement. Developing healthy leaders shapes cultures and improves progress across the global spectrum. This research project identifies the best practices of mentoring leaders for greater spiritual impact which has the potential to benefit every facet of the local community.

The research collected in this study was gathered from Christians who are faithful lay and ordained people in a church or similar setting that are focused on their slice of ecclesial or religious setting. Nonetheless this literature and research can apply across diverse areas of leadership development. These areas may include vocational coaching, educational and cross-cultural learning techniques, bridging of transgenerational divides, and global leadership development to name a few. Recognized effective mentors provided data and named techniques proven to be successful in molding leaders for greater kingdom productivity.

Project Overview

Chapter one of this project provides a framework for addressing the problem of the lack of effective spiritual leadership in Christendom. Chapter two provides the elemental foundations of what Christian leadership is as well as its established core practices of relational imprinting that exists for the purpose of spiritual maturity. These practices have evolved and been developed over millennia. Chapter two shares information from a diverse field of instrumental authors and proven practitioners in the field of the spiritual development of leaders and other individuals. Chapter two also communicates relevant data and literature review that explores and identifies effective methodology of leadership development throughout historicity. Chapter three presents the research project's methodology and assessment tools. Chapter four communicates the evidence gathered, and the final chapter five analyzes the project's major findings with a broad discussion and communication of the learning report to potentially further the field of effective spiritual mentorship.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Relationships are the human system God created to birth a divine kingdom on earth. As the Spirit of God ushers the realm or kingdom of God into humanity's existence, believers can choose to partner with this divine plan. Christ modeled this partnership of obedience to the Father when the Almighty put on skin and made His home on earth two thousand years ago. For God's kingdom to continue to be revealed among humans, their relationships must reflect God's plan that is outlined in scripture. Barriers to kingdom revelation and growth occur when people do not follow God or God's appointed leaders that guide them. Accountability to this divine plan occurs through personal discipleship and godly leadership. Discipleship, or following God, occurs through personal daily obedience and godly leadership occurs through mentoring relationships. Christ modeled mentoring relationships while among humanity and this practice continues to be effective in molding believers to influence others as the kingdom of God outgrows our skin.

Biblical Foundations

The Problem

A lack of strong godly leadership adversely impacts the full realization of the kingdom of God on earth today. This dilemma occurs throughout scriptural history, and it is showcased today in the modern culture of Christendom. If Christians are to partner with God in accomplishing a divine work, they must disciple and develop godly leadership to manifest God's will on earth.

The Purpose

For the kingdom of God to come in humanity's space as Christ directed in Matthew 6:10, humans must realize their role of being the relational bricks and mortar of this kingdom. One vital part of revealing and living out this kingdom in the heart of humanity occurs practically by molding effective leaders through mentoring. Mentoring is the biblical model of leadership development contained in scripture. To mentor effectively humans must discern the best practices that recognized leaders of the past and present are utilizing today.

Scriptural Basis

Since the beginning of humanity's story God has walked with humans to share love through relationship. Genesis 3:8 records the fact for the first time in human history that the divine walked among creation. The World Biblical Commentary states that in this context this "walking" is not an isolated occurrence because "the term 'walking' (*hithpael* participle of הלך) is subsequently used of God's presence in the Israelite tent sanctuary (Lev. 26:12; Deut. 23:15 [14]; 2 Sam 7:6–7)" (Wenham, 1987). This simple, yet profound prophetic act of God walking among humans would define the future of humanity's course with the divine. Walking together not only encompassed God's heart of approachability but God's desire to be one with humans by sharing their space. The premise of walking with God is woven throughout both Old and New Testament scriptures and articulated with priority and significance.

The lens of scripture reveals the evolution of God's involvement with creation. Along these lines, God articulated divine law and word through prophets and spiritual leaders. The primary vehicle of the assimilation of this law and these commandments

were through people who were walking with one another. Walking life out together led to spiritual community found in the family group of the Patriarchs, called the Hebrews.

One of the earliest divine directives of the Hebrew people contained in the Torah, is called the Shema. This portion of scripture found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 beautifully and practically paints the picture of how humans are to communicate, process, learn and obey God's statutes together. The Shema encapsulates walking in God's way. The Shema states "

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deut. 6:4-9 NIV).

Once again, the scriptures reveal the relational picture of humans living life in tandem, actually walking one with another, in the same direction, together to learn and obey God's plan. The prophet Micah further unpacks God's word and says that the Lord has shown what is good, which includes walking humbly with God (Mic. 6:8). The practical theology and evolution of the budding Hebrew nation was identified through its monotheistic relational religion and the strong familial bonds that they maintained through communally walking together.

Relationally walking out God's will together is a divine sign detailed in the earliest writings of the Hebrew people. As God built the Adamic family into a people

group and then into a nation, to showcase a grand divine nature to earth's entire

inhabitants, the Almighty relied on specially called leaders to accomplish the task of

shepherding Israel. Throughout this biblical process, as God led the Hebrews in scripture,

the development of transgeneration, or building relational bridges to preserve a way of

life between these generations is evident. At the heart of this transgeneration was

mentoring which allowed one person to mold another and impart the reality of God

through relationships to impact many. Numbers 27:18-20 encapsulates this truth as the

scriptures consistently chronicle the mentoring of emerging leaders by established

leaders. One Old Testament example is Moses mentoring Joshua. "So the Lord said to

Moses, 'Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on

him . . . and you shall put some of your authority on him'" (Num. 27:18-20). Another is

the mentoring of Elisha by Elijah during King Ahab's reign in Israel found in the early

chapters of 2 Kings.

Old Testament scripture abounds with narratives of leaders shaping future leaders

to promote godly maturity for a grander purpose. This process of leadership development

ensured future stability for God's people that showcased God's image to Israel's

neighbors and perpetuated a divine legacy. Within the process and product of this

leadership development the model God used not only to develop individuals but

evangelize the world is found. Among examples in the Old Testament, this model is

perceived through the relational lens of Moses and Joshua.

Out of the leader Moses, Joshua's life would be personally molded as a leader. In

turn, Joshua would mold the Israelites so this God appointed process would continue.

Both men were connected through calling, and their actions were replicated, while the

bridge between both was forged on the fulcrum of mentoring. The number of parallel life

events that this mentor, Moses, and his mentee, Joshua, experienced is uncanny. David

Zucker points out a few of the many comparisons when he states:

> Joshua not only follows Moses as leader of the Israelites, he consciously repeats
>
> events in Moses' life. Just as Moses sent scouts to seek out the land, so Joshua
>
> sends scouts to reconnoiter Jericho (Num. 13, Josh. 2). Just as the waters of the
>
> Sea of Reeds split to allow the Israelites to cross through in safety, so a similar
>
> event takes place with Joshua at the Jordan (Ex. 14:21-30; Josh. 3:7-13; 4:23).

Joshua, like Moses before him, needs to adjudicate between the territorial wishes of the

various tribes (Josh. 17:14-18; Num. 32). . . .

> [A close reading of the text] reveals that the biblical narrative portrays Joshua as
>
> more than just a successor to Moses. Numerous passages seem consciously to
>
> portray him as [a counterpart] of Moses . . . The Lord assures Joshua that the
>
> divine presence will accompany him as it did Moses (Josh. 1:5, 3:7; cf. 4:14). The
>
> crossing of the Jordan, led by Joshua, is described as analogous to the crossing of
>
> the Red Sea (Josh. 4:23). Joshua's encounter with the commander of the army of
>
> [God] (Josh. 5:13-5) exhibits a striking resemblance to Moses' encounter with the
>
> angel of [God] at the burning bush (Ex. 3:2-5). Joshua exercises the authority to
>
> reinterpret or even suspend divine commands spoken to Moses (Josh. 6:17; 8:27) .
>
> . . Joshua 12 juxtaposes a summary of Joshua's military feats (12:7-24) to those of
>
> Moses (12:1-6). Joshua's assignment of the inheritances for nine and one-half
>
> tribes [west] o f the Jordan is paralleled to the simi- lar work by Moses for the
>
> Transjordanian tribes (Josh. 13:8-33 = 14:1-19:51). Joshua's function as covenant

mediator in Joshua 24 resembles that of Moses at Sinai (Ex. 20-24). The note of

Joshua's death (Josh. 24:29) assigns to him the epithet 'servant of [God],' which

was frequently used of Moses (e.g., Josh. 1:1; 8:31). (Zucker 225)

Joshua's life paralleled Moses' because of intentionality on the part of Moses. God

commanded Moses to fulfil this intentional relationship through mentoring and laying

hands on him (Num. 27:18-20). Freeks notes:

According to Numbers 27,18-23, Joshua was commissioned to succeed Moses. At

that point in time, he was referred to as someone in whom the spirit was. Joshua is

further described as one who "stood before" Moses. So God commanded Moses

to strengthen Joshua because Joshua would cause Israel to inherit the land (cf.

Deuteronomy 3,2 8). God spoke through Moses to tell Joshua to be strong and

courageous (Joshua 31, 23) and according to Deuteronomy 34, 9 the spirit of

wisdom filled Joshua when Moses laid his hands on him. These events

demonstrated that Joshua's leadership was based upon God's instructions to

Moses to appoint him. (Freeks p. 242)

This laying on of hands by Moses in this context is symbolic but also a practical

application of a spiritual and literal transference of God's Spirit, and wisdom as well as

Moses' authority. On one hand it symbolizes "the handing on of Moses' office to Joshua"

(McNeille), but this act also denotes other meanings including a solemn blessing,

consecration as well as succession to office and authority to teach and lead (Ellicott 23).

In a similar respect, this laying on of hands-on Joshua from Moses was the official sign

of the practice of intentional mentoring of Moses to another. Joshua learned about God,

life, and leadership by following Moses and by Moses teaching Joshua and intentionally

pulling Joshua alongside himself. As Freeks points out:

> Joshua was Moses' servant because he was the only person permitted to go up
>
> with Moses on the mountain of God (Exodus 24, 13) (R.D. Moore: 2007, pgs.
>
> 158-159). It was here that Joshua observed everything that Moses did and how he
>
> approached God.
>
> . . . Moses mentored Joshua, at first his servant, to become one of the best
>
> trained and qualified leaders for the people of Israel to lead them into the
>
> promised land (Deut. 31,1-8; 34,9). (Freeks p. 243)

God directed Moses to train Joshua through mentoring to mold and lead a nation. Joshua

observed Moses in action in all things and therefore the man and mantle of Moses

permeated who Joshua was to others. God's Spirit lived in and through Moses, and in

turn, through mentoring and life exchange, Moses would live through Joshua as God's

Spirit continued the legacy.

The faithfulness of God's perfect relational existence is written throughout the

tapestry and longevity of human lives. The thread of each life's witness, that Christ

commissioned his followers to be in Acts 1:8, confirms God's truth. The primary mover

of God's plan on earth, the Holy Spirit, weaves together these universal narratives of

grace to showcase who God is to His Creation in order to grow a kingdom. The human

embodiment of this divine kingdom is believers working through relationships and

mentoring to impact lives for the grand purpose of relationship for the glory of their

Maker.

As God's Abrahamic family expanded numerically and geographically around the globe, so also did the practice of effective mentoring. In this fertile seedbed of relational discipleship, nurtured through the Hebrew communal and Biblical paradigm a light that would change everything dawned on all humanity. Jesus the Almighty Christ made His entrance in a feed trough on the outskirts of Bethlehem. As the Kingdom of God made the grace filled exponential leap from the Jewish to the Gentile peoples, relational evangelism and discipleship blossomed and bloomed across the Mediterranean seaboard as converts to Christianity were faithful to proclaim the good news of the Gospel of the kingdom, now open to all. Jesus was God among humans and the divine teacher in their midst who raised up His Church with mentored leaders at the helm.

Biblical leadership examples from the Old and New Testaments abound when it comes to the effective Kingdom work of mentoring or molding leaders. One example was Barnabas with Paul in Acts 9:27 that states, "But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him..." and Acts 11:25-26 which says "Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch". Other notable mentors and mentees included the apostle Paul, Timothy and others as showcased in the following scriptures: "And the things you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men and women who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2) and "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:9). The lifestyles and examples of these godly examples show us the relational approachability and consistency of the Gospel expansion, but they

pale in comparison to the King of Kings who also chose mentoring as the primary method of personal kingdom assimilation into everyday culture.

Theological Foundations

Having discussed the biblical foundations for mentoring, this section now incorporates the larger theological lens that links biblical, sociological, and modern mentoring. In a more current setting, sociologically speaking, Belsterling states that, according to Rhodes, "mentoring, as a recognized concept has been around since at least 800 B.C.; and based upon Reglin's work, most attribute its beginning as a concept to Homer's Odyssey as Mentor was a wise and trusted friend of Odysseus" (Belsterling, pg. 77). Belsterling continues by saying:

> The term 'mentor' came to be expressed as a concept most notably in the French romance *Telemaque*, in 1699. Soon, thereafter, "mentor" came to be accepted as a noun, meaning "wise counselor." "Mentor" became established as a term in English, in 1750 (American Heritage Dictionary). Generally mentoring occurs between a more experienced, wiser person and another, less experienced person, who desires to be in relationship with the wiser person (Cannister, 1999; Daloz, 1996). (Belsterling 77).

As observed earlier, relationships of a mentoring nature were contained in scripture long before Homer and as Carruthers states, "it is the source of the term 'mentor' which lies in Homeric times, not the relationship" (Carruthers 10). "Though the term "mentor" is never used in scripture, the Greek term, *meno* (enduring relationship), does occur in Scripture" (Belsterling 77).

This lens of *meno* better expresses the mentor vernacular and action modeled by Jesus to His disciples. "The term (*meno*) also occurs one-hundred and eighteen times in the New Testament and thirty-three times in the Gospel of John (Beisterling 78). "Jesus uses the term (*meno*) heavily in His farewell discourse, particularly in John 14 and 15, to describe an abiding relationship, the type of relationship He desires with His twelve disciples" (Köstenberger; Belsterling 78). Jesus' lifestyle of imprinting and imparting the kingdom to men and women in His sphere of influence demonstrates a mission transferred through mentoring. This abiding relationship would define this mission and transform the mentees in God's midst.

The historical lens of the Gospel, shows Jesus at the epicenter of the social strata of His day, holding a public presence while also investing more personally in more private settings with those He chose. According to Belsterling who drew from Wilkins, the concept of the disciple, or follower, permeated Jesus' culture and often defined those in Jesus' space, as "even unbelievers could be considered to be disciples of Jesus, if they followed Him" (Belsterling, 78; Wilkins). During Jesus' day, the Hellenistic period, the term "disciple" was synonymous with "adherent" or "apprentice" and the teacher, religious leader or master philosopher would define their expectations as to the level of adherence to their teachings (Belsterling 78; Chan 16). According to Marshall that Belsterling drew from, many people followed Jesus for diverse reasons, yet Jesus allowed them to come while encouraging individuals to think for themselves and personally internalize God's truth (Belsterling pg. 83).

Disciple was a broad term including the faithful and unbelieving in Jesus' wake. As Wilkins communicates in Besterling's work, "Context truly determines disciple

distinctions" as witnessed in the life of Judas, the betrayer who was also a disciple and

recipient of Christ's teaching, genuine investment, and love (Belsterling, 78). As noted

earlier, the Son of God was intentionally inserted into the earth's sea of humanity for the

purpose of building the kingdom of God relationally through revelation and rescue. God

went out of the way to be no stranger to people.

Within the social strata of Jesus' day, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom to all.

Smither states:

> Three of the Gospel writers depicted a larger group of disciples including some
>
> who parted company with Jesus after a while as they could no longer accept his
>
> teaching. Luke recounted Jesus' interaction with a band of seventy followers
>
> whom he sent ahead of him to cities where he would be preaching. Yet, the
>
> greatest significance given in the Gospels to Jesus and the notion of 'disciple'
>
> pertains to his relationship with the Twelve. Meier, describing the three groups,
>
> writes: 'we imagine the followers of Jesus in terms of concentric circles: the
>
> "crowds" form the outer circle, the "disciples" the intermediate or middle circle,
>
> and the "Twelve" the inner circle. (Smither, 18-19; Meier, 3).

Accordingly, scripture and tradition reveal that early Christian mentoring for Jesus and

other leaders like Paul was assimilated in a group context of followers who were

prospective leaders (Milavec, pgs. 13, 48).

Jesus, the master teacher, used everyday word pictures, approachable themes, and

common items to build bridges to spiritual truths during His earthly ministry as He

walked on earth. To farmers, God, with skin on, taught through the illustrations of soil,

planting, branches, and roots. To fisherman Jesus used metaphors of nets and fish; to

shepherds God incarnate used stories of guarding and nurturing the flock. Jesus's supernatural adaptation to various audiences, teachings styles, methods, and vernacular meant that each of Christ's lessons could be grasped by both kings and commoners. Although Jesus Christ made it vividly clear that God loved the entire world and that His nail pierced hands and teachings were big enough to reach everyone who followed Him as a disciple, Jesus made a special effort and investment to nurture select followers. As Köstenberger is noted in Belsterling's work, "Terms like "adherent," "student," or "pupil," do not reflect the personal attachment and commitment that was inherent and expected in Jesus' advanced conception of "discipling" with the twelve, as presented in John 6:66" (Köstenberger; Belsterling, p. 78). These first disciples experienced a relational life process of "covering yourself in his dust" which pertained to the practice of following so close to your rabbi that his "sandy granules would cling to your clothes" as a part of your teacher became a part of you (Tverberg, p. 28). For Jesus, His disciples were more than mere students or followers, for He would not only live with them, but give His life for them.

Mentoring: Christ's Relational System of Development

The Gospels delineate between the masses who claimed to follow Jesus and a special subset of twelve men with whom he initiated a vital relationship. The Bible makes it clear that Christ was intentional in the selection, nurturing and development of his appointed twelve disciples who would serve as spiritual leaders of the Church. Christ intentionally imprinted truth into and onto the lives of these unique mentees and this imitation modeling, and their observation in turn, were integral parts of their learning and the mentoring process (Clinton 83). This divine and practical intentionality of choosing

and developing a subset of spiritual leaders led to a greater intimacy with these emerging leaders and a greater investment for kingdom impact. Jesus' precedent, as well as the practices of the Old Testament demonstrate the unique selection and grooming of spiritual leaders for God's work. The highly relational nature of Jesus' interaction and contiguity with these twelve men reinforced Christ's mentoring prowess and purpose for their mission of spreading the kingdom proclamation as recorded in Mark 3:14 "And he appointed twelve, that he might be with them, and that he might send them out to preach."

Jesus' methodology of molding and mentoring his leaders was not congruent with the global approach of learning in his day. Being a Jew, Jesus' methodology of teaching and mentoring reflected the Hebrew paradigm of lifestyle and apprenticeship learning instead of the predominant teacher to student Greek style of philosophical education that Rome's empire endorsed. For instance, Raymond S Moore and Dorothy N Moore state,

> Greek education relies on the teacher's knowledge and tools (curriculum) while the Hebrew education relies on the teacher's love for the student. Jesus walked with His disciples and taught by example; He did not give classes or instruction; they walked in the way together and this is the Hebrew method of education. While the Greek method focuses on CONTENT, the Hebrew method focuses on CONTEXT. The Greek method sees minds as empty jars that need filling, using an impersonal curriculum. The Hebrew method sees minds as clay needing to be molded, personalizing the education process by daily interaction with the student, or a discipleship pattern. (Moore and Moore)

In essence, Jesus' personal, consistent approach of impartation was because the love of

his Father poured through his life to others. Accordingly, in line with the teaching of the

Shema discussed earlier and walking out life in community, Jesus ate with these twelve

men, often using the locale of the meal table for eternal lessons; drew them away from

the crowds for special training, nurture, and rest; and actively engaged this micro

population to process His macro instruction. This relational learning model of mentoring

showcased God walking with creation as the creation poured that love into others to

manifest the kingdom.

Belsterling states "As Jesus modeled authentic relationship with God His Father,

Jesus taught the twelve disciples mostly through His cultivation of authentic relationship

with them (John 4:13-17)" (79). The impact was such that "He penetrated the minds of

the disciples" (Lewis and Demarest vol. 2, 323). Jesus' relational approach with the

twelve disciples as seen in John, and especially in the farewell discourse, demonstrates

the key elements of a mentoring relationship" (Belsterling 79). Belsterling continues,

> mentoring another or helping another person to grow includes: (1) casting and
>
> communicating a life vision, and (2) teaching through: (a) verbal instruction, and
>
> (b) experiential learning in the context of (c) a secure, mutually committed
>
> relationship; (3) intimate relationships with mentees (protégés), in which they are
>
> allowed to determine some of the direction of teaching based on questions and life
>
> circumstances, and; (4) enduring life-long relationships, though they may vary in
>
> frequency of contact. According to these criteria, Jesus truly was the ideal
>
> mentor" (Belsterling 79).

Jesus lived the truth of God for many reasons including living as an example in developing leaders that would continue God's Kingdom forward.

The proof of Jesus' success in masterful mentoring is found in the fact that after Christ ascended to heaven, eleven of the twelve of his mentees changed the world by the power of the Holy Spirit. The love of God, the practices of God's word and God's Kingdom followed them to "Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) just as Christ commanded. The Kingdom was the mission, the Church was the vehicle and mentoring the system.

Christ's impact of mentored ministry would not be limited to the first twelve apostles, but rather it would continue to be a proven kingdom relational catalyst as chronicled in the Old Testament that would network throughout the newly birthed Church in order to manifest a diverse portfolio of God's will including a new evangelistic fire. This evangelism would consume the world and lead to Christianity being the world's largest religion over two thousand years later (Tuklika and Singh). Evangelism and mentoring were earmarks of the early Christian church that would spread in its development and create a living legacy of sharing and nurturing faith through mentoring. As Smither states "The nature of Christianity as a missionary faith — where the *evangelion* (good news) is proclaimed and people are invited to believe and join the community of faith — necessitates mentoring" (15). Throughout Jesus' ministry he demonstrated mentoring that served many purposes for God's will to be made manifest in the first disciples' sphere of influence ranging from discipleship to personal development, each orbiting around the goal of maturity of Christ.

This relational synergy called mentoring was not limited to accomplishing only one Kingdom directive in the early church. Although Christ mentored evangelism to the first disciples as when he told them in Matthew 4:19 to catch men as they caught fish, he also mentored service as a God directed means to fulfil a kingdom directive of moving to maturity in Christ.

The Purpose of Spiritual Mentoring: Maturity in Christ

At its heart, the purpose of godly mentoring is molding people into God's image and specifically, Christ's image. The lens of scripture reveals that humanity was created to bear God's image (Gen. 1:27). To bear God's image, the Creator imprints the divine onto creation through design, the guidance of scripture, the redemptive work of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and Christian development through the community of believers or the Church. In a practical sense the Bible provides textual godly knowledge for development, the Church provides the experiential knowledge, and both are under the guidance, impartation, and illumination of the Holy Spirit's work. It is through the God birthed mechanism of the Church that much of this relational imprinting occurs for God's kingdom to grow as Christians bear God's image in their communal and strategic sphere of influence.

One example of this relational divine imprinting through mentoring that occurred in the New Testament was witnessed through the life of the Apostle Paul. Paul, previously referred to as Saul, grew to be a major player in the expansion of the early Church and the proclamation of the Gospel message. Throughout Paul's radical conversion by Christ Himself, spiritual formation and development, God appointed believers to his side to guide him. For example, Barnabas mentored Paul and in turn, Paul

mentored Timothy and others. This relational process was showcased practically through writings in the book of Acts as well as the Pauline epistles. One of the major themes of these early church Biblical writings, including Paul's inspired work, was the call to move the Church, thus every believer, on to Christian maturity, which is the essence of discipleship and quintessential goal of Biblical mentoring. According to Christ, making disciples, those who are moving toward maturity in following Christ, is the Biblical goal, not simply conversion which is the practical starting point.

This foundational Biblical goal of presenting everyone "fully mature in Christ" was the apostle Paul's chief aim recorded in Colossians 1:28, as he proclaimed Christ and planted new churches in his wake (Carpenter and McCown). Paul also states, "He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me" (Col. 1:28-29). Scripture states that Paul was poured out like a drink offering for this end, and yet, according to scripture, it is the chief end not only of Paul, but every believer and the Church itself. Matthew Henry describes this segment of scripture as "a summary of the doctrine of the gospel concerning the great work of our redemption by Christ" (Henry). Accordingly, Paul explains the grander goal for all believers and the Church in attaining to Christ's mature image in Ephesians 4: 11-13 as he states, "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). It is through the lens of scripture, including Ephesians and Colossians,

understand the goal of Christianity is understood. The goal is for Christians to be brought into the fullness and maturity of Christ to glorify God by bearing the divine image. Furthermore, the comprehensive view of larger Biblical Old and New Testament history clarifies how this goal has always existed, beginning in Genesis, and finding its fulfillment in the incarnate Christ, the true image of God among human beings.

Practical Behavioral Indicators of a Believer's Maturity in Christ

At the heart of this ultimate Biblical goal of becoming mature in Christ's likeness, there lies an essential spiritual, developmental, and behavioral change that is both supernatural and natural. It is supernatural in the sense that the work of the Holy Spirit produces it, originating, fueled, and completed by God's power at work within us. It is natural in the sense that it occurs within human faculties as people choose Christ and therefore partner with the Holy Spirit's work as they submit their will to God which leads to sanctification and transformation. At this crossroad of the supernatural and natural, the Holy Spirit provides companions to walk with humans through the grace offered to them in order for their transformation to occur. As previously stated, the Bible contains many examples of walking out this relational Christianity together through mentoring in order to attain maturity, starting in the Garden of Eden with God. Whether it is Barnabas who led Paul in this process, Paul who led Timothy, Moses who led Joshua, Elijah who led Elisha, or Christ who led the first disciples; biblical examples abound of walking together intentionally for God's work to be manifested in human beings. This walking together was a message of priority in the early Church and observed as essential as a means of growing further in God and Christ as individuals desired to attain spiritual maturity (Eph.

4:12; Phil. 3:12, Col. 1:28; 4:12; 1 Cor. 2:6, 16; James 1:2; Rom 8:28-29; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2

Pet. 3:18).

The Emergence of Christ Centered Spiritual Formation

As the Gospel spread globally from Christ and the early church's influence

expanded, spiritual formation also evolved as new church leaders emerged. At the

epicenter of the expansion of the early and newly emerging global church, there existed

the supremacy and example of Christ. In line with this Biblical precept there also arose

the practice of the imitation of Christ which has been an important element of Christian

theology, ethics, and spirituality (Richardson and Bowden 285-86.). As Yong Seok

Chung states,

> The early Christians believed that eschatological, messianic expectation was
>
> fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, who thus became the center of Christian
>
> spirituality. Humanity's relationship with God became in this way dependent
>
> upon its relationship with Christ, whose entire historical life—birth, passion,
>
> crucifixion, resurrection-was of decisive significance. Since the person and the
>
> historical life of Jesus Christ became the center of Christian spirituality, he was
>
> constantly set before the Christian believers as a pattern and as an ideal of the
>
> Christian life. The Christian was thus designated as an imitator of Christ. (Chung
>
> 49)

As individuals received Christ, their life goal spiritually evolved to be like Christ and to

attain to the fullness of maturity found in Christ as outlined in scripture.

To minister to the growing Church, early church fathers sought to define what maturity in Christ was according to scripture as believers transitioned to a new life. Keathley states:

> One of the key Greek words used in scripture describing this maturity is *teleios*, "having attained the end, purpose, complete, perfect. It was used of a full-grown, mature adult. A comparison of Hebrews 5:13 with 14 and 1 Corinthians 2:6 with 3:1 we find an instructive contrast. Teleios, "mature," is contrasted with the word for "babe," *nepios* in both of these passages. Thus, in a spiritual sense, *teleios* speaks of one who is fully developed, spiritually mature according to the spiritual qualities detailed in the New Testament.
>
> Thus, spiritual growth and greater and greater levels of maturity are key objectives of Scripture and a key responsibility for church leaders (Eph. 4:11f) and for individuals to be concerned about in their own lives (1 Pet. 2:2; Jam. 1:2f). (Keathley)

This maturity was a Biblical call from inspired scripture as well as a form of stewardship of the Gospel and gift of life, both entrusted to new converts. Church fathers understood that attaining to this maturity of Christ was a process of Church community and grace through the Holy Spirit that requires disciplines and a working out of practical behaviors through which believers can receive more grace and maturity by their willingness and obedience to comply to God's ordinances.

The Catalyst of Monastic Life

It was through this new vehicle of grace, called the Church, that existing Biblical paradigms began to take new root, specifically through living in Christian community

and mentoring as believers sought full maturity in Christ. One fertile seedbed for the development of spiritual mentoring in the early Church occurred in Egypt in the fourth century that was inspired by "Saint Anthony the Great (251-356), as ascetic monks led by Saint Pachomius (286-346) formed the first Christian monastic communities under what became known as an *Abbot*, from the Aramaic *abba* (father)" (M. Chambers 188). "Within a generation, both solitary as well as communal monasticism became very popular which spread outside of Egypt, first to Palestine and the Judean Desert and thence to Syria and North Africa" (M. Chambers 188). As McCann points out, "Monasticism began in Egypt during the third century, and people from all over the Roman Empire eagerly emulated the Egyptian monks. The monks themselves believed that spiritual mentoring from a holy man was essential to become a true monk" (McCann, pg.16). Among early Christian communities, monastic and ascetic principles were esteemed in high regard and impacted clergy and religious thought and practice that would evolve for centuries.

In the Monastic community, spiritual mentoring played a central and vital role to Christian development. McCann continues,

Cassian, Augustine and Gregory the Great all wrote of the importance of receiving spiritual mentoring from another human being. Its import was also clear to Saint Bede, who wrote, 'The Lord appeared from God the Father in the humble form of a human being for the sake of instructing human beings.' Even the creator of the universe found that taking on human form was the best way to demonstrate divine love to human beings.' These church fathers knew that the Incarnation was

more than a historical event; it was a metaphysical event as well, occurring daily

in the Eucharist and in spiritual mentoring relationships. (McCann 25)

It was in Egypt that significant structure and practice emerged in the ministry of

mentoring as religious communities sought to attain maturity in Christ and realized this

could not occur in a relational vacuum. As McCann states:

It was in the Egyptian desert that monasticism first took root and flourished.

Spiritual mentoring was part and parcel of the desert experience, for the monks

and nuns quickly realized that it was foolish to attempt the spiritual life without

the advice of some wiser individual. Spiritual mentors were supposed to be those

persons who had attained spiritual maturity, which consisted of love for both God

and their disciples. They also needed to be able to discern between good and evil,

in order to counsel their disciples appropriately. Thus, they required of their

disciple's absolute obedience, for only thus could they keep their disciples safe

from demonic influences and help them to grow in spiritual maturity. Moreover,

even in enormous monasteries such as those founded by Pachomius, intimate

spiritual mentoring relationships could thrive, filled with tender, nurturing love.

The approach to spiritual mentoring that the Egyptian monks learned in the desert

was handed on to their western counterparts and successors. (McCann 29)

As the Gospel spread and Christian communities flourished in new localities, new

disciples were molded by similar and diverse trends and techniques. These discipling

methods contributed to a relational cross pollination of various spiritual fathers' practices

and theology.

As these monastic religious communes began to develop from Northern Africa and spread to the West so did the structures and expectations of mentoring. Common expectations that often existed within early Egyptian mentoring communities included a voluntary and intentionality from the mentee to initiate and sustain the mentoring relationship as well as a basic conviction and understanding in the potential for the believer to attain spiritual maturity (McCann 30). In the early monastic Christian communities, the sacred biblical Old and New Testament goal of pursuing the journey toward spiritual maturity was the driving force of spiritual mentoring. Other early expectations of spiritual mentoring seen through the lens of Egyptian monastic life included a strong sense of obedience from the mentee to the mentor although there were variations of this in the larger Christian community (McCann 31). Mentoring practices were and are shaped by many variables and nuances, including theological understanding, culture, and context. For example,

> Augustine of Hippo and Jerome were among the best educated and most intelligent scholars of their day. Like Pelagius, the British monk, they came from the provinces of the Roman Empire, yet all three men wrote spiritual mentoring letters in the classical Greco-Roman philosophical tradition. In this tradition, the spiritual mentor did not command obedience from the disciple. In fact, it would have been difficult to do so, considering the problems of distance. Yet Augustine in particular seemed to prefer not to be in a position of definite authority in spiritual relationships. Instead, he favored spiritual friendships. There are many possible reasons why Augustine did not approach spiritual mentoring in the same way that Cassian did. Chief among them would be his pessimistic view of human

free will. Augustine did not see spiritual maturity as an attainable goal in the way

that Cassian did. Moreover, Augustine's belief that Christ himself was the one

who taught individuals, also meant that he saw less efficacy in the role of the

spiritual mentor. (McCann 32)

In this instance, as in others, theological incongruences shaped the practice and polity of

mentoring between spiritual fathers that in turn impacted other schools of thought and

spiritual development for years to come.

The diversity of the body of Christ, as it supernaturally evolved, led to the

diversity of its mentors and their practices. For example, Basil of Caesarea along with his

brother, Gregory of Nyssa (335-394), and dear friend, Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389),

comprised the celebrated trio known as the Cappadocian fathers who sought to reconcile

the crisis of leadership in the church through mentoring (Smither 90, 94). Basil, thought

to be the most influential of the three in the area of mentoring, was ordained bishop of

Caesarea in 370 and mentored through monasticism, his writing (which included his

books and letters on doctrinal and moral matters), church councils and spiritual formation

through groups (Smither 2; Sterk 43). Basil's practical guiding principles of mentoring

included the emphasis of a being a lifelong disciple, the group context, the selection of

the mentees, sound teaching with the basis of scripture, releasing and ordination and

resourcing (Smither 115-116; Rousseau 326). Basil, as well as other church fathers,

focused on the life of Christ for the aim of their godly pursuit as they practiced spiritual

development, maturity and mentoring to this end.

At the heart of the concept of spiritual maturity is the desire to imitate Christ.

Christ commissioned his followers' role as His global witnesses prior to His ascension in

Acts 1:8. The personal witness of the believer is a platform to the world to behaviorally

showcase Christ. In line with this biblical directive, the apostle Paul refers to every

believer as a part of the universal "body of Christ", which is the physical manifestation of

the divine that reveals grace to the local community (I Corinthians 12:27). Because the

believer's personal witness, and therefore the believer's physical actions matter to God,

the overarching goal of pursuing godly maturity must incorporate godly behavior.

Essentially, the process of believers choosing to step into a different worldview involving

a new spiritual value set in order to follow Christ is called the pursuit of Christian

maturity. This transformation impacts all aspects of the life of the believer and in turn,

affects others through a Christian witness. Mentoring is the model where proven leaders

influence others for positive change. For example, in the Christian tradition, established

leaders spiritually mentor others by walking life out together under the guidance of the

Holy Spirit and Biblical directives. This mentor and mentee relationship, emphasized

through lifestyle, accountability, and direction imprints one life upon another.

Whereas the primary purpose of spiritual mentoring, seeking maturity in Christ

because of one's stewardship of the Gospel, remained intact, there were differences in the

implementation of mentoring in early Christian communities. For instance, diverse

understandings and theology of whether spiritual perfection, and thus full maturity in

Christ, could be attained prior to glory impacted the role of mentoring depending on the

strength of the role of someone's will in the transformation paradigm (McCann 33).

Additionally, issues of status between mentor and mentee arose (McCann 13).

Hermeneutics also impacted mentoring practices and discipleship as spiritual mentoring

relationships, at differing levels, abounded. For example, the term "spiritual friendship"

or *custos animi*, first discovered "in the writings of Gregory the Great, defines a friend as "the guardian of one's soul" and whereas this certainly plays a role in one's spiritual development, this term (and others) was too broad for more intentional mentoring (McGuire xiv-xv).

Also, some, such as one Pelagian, publicly taught that a woman may mentor a man (McCann 33). There also existed differing views of obedience between mentor and mentee. For schools of thought that filtered from the Greco- Roman epistolary custom adopted by fathers like Augustine, Jerome, and the Pelagians, who were embraced more by early bishops and priests that followed Pope Gregory the Great, mentoring focused on more connection through a "loving trust" than strict obedience that the early Egyptian fathers seemingly espoused (McCann 37-38). Nonetheless, it was clear that it was the teaching of the early Church fathers, ranging from Jerome, who was an ardent disciple of St. Gregory of Nazianzus and Augustine, mentored by Bishop Ambrose among others, to Pope Gregory who grew up within an ecclesial heritage that the practice of spiritual mentoring held great importance in the life of the Church and the development of the believer (Burghardt; McCann 33).

Obstacles and Barriers of Mentoring

In such a large, diverse, and seemingly timeless seed bed of mentoring practices and context, obstacles and barriers to effective mentoring were and are a reality at times. For example, as just discussed, differing views of the role of compliance and obedience in mentoring, the nature of the mentor's authority, status, culture, and gender of those being mentored by whom, communal or individual dynamics of mentoring, and the expectations of the process were but a few issues that had the potential for barriers of

efficacy. Because of the bond of a mutual and concerted relationship that is forged through mentoring, multiple dynamics are involved and must be nurtured, communicated, evaluated, and calibrated throughout the evolution of this process. These dynamics do not occur in a vacuum but rather are manifested through behavior and implementation that may produce pitfalls as circumstances such as organizational issues and individual needs change (Alayoğlu 163).

The Global Assimilation of Personal Development through Mentoring

Once again, as Christianity expanded globally so did its practices and disciplines including mentoring. Believers across the developmental spectrum realized that with a new faith came a personal witness and with a personal witness came personal transformation. This spiritual transformation occurred through the power of God working through human interaction and relationships, including intentional mentoring. These mentoring practices were developed and forged in the centuries that followed as the format of some monastic communities would grow and spread globally into bands, societies and communes in the West that would then shape the future of ecclesial impact. Noticeable changes did occur in mentoring practices through the ages. For example, one development dealt with the "the shifting of spiritual authority from a charismatic basis to a hierarchal one" around the third and fourth centuries (Rousseau, *Basil* 51). Another development in mentoring was the diversity of populations being mentored, which included not just adult mentoring but the emergence of education for children in monastic life which became essential to the spiritual mentoring and development of the next generation (Riche and Ledercq 255-290, from McCann 9).

Whereas the delivery system of the biblical mentoring model would evolve with the culture, its core premise would remain largely intact as more religious leaders realized its essentiality to Christian maturity that impacted personal witness, transformation of the believer, and expansion of the Gospel.

Both spiritual and secular core mentoring practices have evolved and been utilized over centuries. Many of these proven practices of human-to-human development through relationship have stood the test of time and remain applicable today including the techniques of accompanying, sowing, catalyzing, showing, and harvesting ("Mentorship"). Atlantic International University in a session entitled "Mentorship and Training" describes these mentoring periods that have ranged Socratic period to modern day business as follows:

> 1**. Accompanying**: making a commitment in a caring way, which involves taking part in the learning process side-by-side with the learner.
>
> 2. **Sowing**: mentors are often confronted with the difficulty of preparing the learner before he or she is ready to change. Sowing is necessary when you know that what you say may not be understood or even acceptable to learners at first but will make sense and have value to the mentee when the situation requires it.
>
> 3. **Catalyzing**: when change reaches a critical level of pressure, learning can escalate. Here the mentor chooses to plunge the learner right into change, provoking a different way of thinking, a change in identity or a re-ordering of values.

4. **Showing**: this is making something understandable or using your own example to demonstrate a skill or activity. You show what you are talking about, you show by your own behavior.

5. **Harvesting**: here the mentor focuses on "picking the ripe fruit": it is usually used to create awareness of what was learned by experience and to draw conclusions. The key questions here are: "What have you learned?", "How useful is it? ("Mentorship").

These mentoring skills allow relationships to be focused toward the development of the mentee through a multifaceted approach.

As effective as mentoring can be solely on secular levels, wholistic development includes the spiritual component of an individual as well. In line with this eternal aim, spiritual mentoring involves God: a third divine party in this relational connection. Through spiritual mentoring, development and transformation eclipses temporal limitations and occurs not only in the life of the mentee and the mentor, but through the life of the Creator. Doriani describes this divine mentoring collaborative that transpires through relationship and involves the practices of "helpful presence and self-disclosure" as tenets in this "God centered model for friendship" (Doriani 16). For example, the mentoring relationship and friendship between God and Abraham is clear, as James 2:23 notes. Beginning in Genesis the scriptural narrative builds, and the mechanics of this mentoring relationship include the roles of helpful presence and self-disclosure as two early ear marks of effective spiritual mentoring (Doriani 16). According to Doriani these spiritual mentoring practices and qualities have persisted through the ages, manifesting in church leaders including Calvin, Farel, and Bucer (Doriani 17, 19).

Among church leaders who embraced mentoring for spiritual development and relational accountability in the late modern era (1400s through the 1900s) were John Wesley and George Whitefield, who not only embraced personal development through mentoring but also encouraged this discipline in the lives of others (Bezzant 2). As Kidd states,

When Whitefield arrived to study at Oxford at Pembroke College in 1732, he was taken under the wing by Charles Wesley and began to attend the Holy Club (Kidd, pgs. 27-28). Whitefield in turn invested spiritually in James Habersham, who accompanied him later to Georgia. (Kidd, pg. 252). John Wesley had been mentored by William Law, who was described as "a kind of oracle" to him, though latterly they had fallen out over the place of philosophy in theological reflection (Wesley 207; Henderson 22, 121). Additionally, Charles Delamotte was a "son in the Gospel" to John Wesley and travelled with him to America, where he "did much good, and endured great hardships for the sake of Jesus Christ" (Whitefield 291).

Early relational practices that John Wesley promoted, such as bands, accountability groups, and mentoring have molded not only the Methodist movement, but Christianity globally. These relational disciplines were a part of John Wesley's spiritual DNA from the beginning. As Vickers describes, "Wesley had inherited from his father "an interest in the role of religious societies in the spiritual and moral renewal of English church and society," (Vickers 11) and later recounted the genesis of the Holy Club, where "Methodist" undergraduates met for mutual edification:

In the year 1725, a young student at Oxford was much affected by reading

Kempis's "Christian Pattern," and Bishop Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and

Dying." He found an earnest desire to live according to those rules, and to flee

from the wrath to come. He sought for some that would be his companions in the

way, but could find none; so that, for several years, he was constrained to travel

alone, having no man either to guide or to help him. But in the year 1729, he

found one who had the same desire. They then endeavoured to help each other;

and, in the close of the year, were joined by two more. They soon agreed to spend

two or three hours together every Sunday evening. Afterwards they sat two

evenings together, and, in a while, six evenings, in the week; spending that time in

reading the Scriptures and provoking one another to love and to good works.

(Wesley, "On Laying")

Through the practical construct of the spiritual disciplines being worked out

through Christian community and relational accountability, an interpersonal seedbed was

formed through Wesley and his companions. These practices, including an emphasis on

spiritual maturity through mentoring and relational imprinting through societies and

bands, would further nurture the Methodist movement and the expansion of the Gospel.

As Hempton points out, "The genius of Methodism, its combination of communal with

personal disciplines, was well suited to the spirit of the age, and the practice of personal

work benefitted from the collaboration" (Hempton 31). The partnership that this

movement espoused between an empowerment of the communal laity in a clerical age, an

emphasis on the believer's utilization of the Bible and the personal work of the Holy

Spirit in conversion led to a new paradigm. A paradigm and development that Pelikan

labeled the "affectional transposition of doctrine" (Pelikan 119), as small groups of

Christians, would now shape a new way of the church impacting the landscape of society geography, the human heart and church culture (Bezzant 7). At the heart of these relational and Christian communal movements was the desire to work out salvation together, in Christian love in order to fulfil the law of Jesus and attain maturity in Christ.

The practices or mechanics of spiritual mentoring are both spiritual and practical in their application and implementation. As mentioned, the mechanics or "how to" of mentoring have been shaped through the ages yet contain commonalities in their utilization. The various practices of spiritual mentoring revolve around the central goal of developing spiritual maturity or Christlikeness to produce effective spiritual leaders. Throughout church history, the theology and effective practices of spiritual maturation have always occurred within community. The Creator God, expressed through the community of triune existence, initiates this relationship with creation and this connectional intentionality flows into our lives for intimacy, transformation, and developmental maturity. Christ, the culmination of this incarnate revelation of God's relational purpose, is the source and example of this pursuit of maturity for every believer. God began the work, providing the power of the Spirit for its implementation with the template of scripture and Christ invites believers to community through the Church, birthed at Pentecost.

The Mechanics of Mentoring

Through the lens of relationship, manifested in community, we perceive our understanding and theology of God. Furthermore, it is through the practices and relational mechanics of mentoring that this truth is assimilated for each other. Old Testament examples of practically walking out faith through community as well as early church

New Testament patterns have led believers to form best practices of maturing in Christ through mentoring and community.

Early spiritual leaders such as the Apostle Paul, Peter, Augustine, Benedict, and others sought to cultivate and communicate these mentoring practices in order to undergird the Church and grow leadership for the longevity of Christian doctrine and spiritual development. Along these examples, was *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, a book written in 516 by Benedict of Nursia that detailed best practices or precepts for monks presiding in community under the authority of an abbot, their mentor, who was the male head of the monastery (Dugdale). These best practices were clear and directive. Saint Benedict created these precepts for the maturity of the believer as well as the practical order of life to attain maturity in Christ. As Kardong states

> Benedict's concerns were the needs of monks in a community environment:
> namely, to establish due order, to foster an understanding of the relational nature
> of human beings, and to provide a spiritual father to support and strengthen the
> individual's ascetic effort and the spiritual growth that is required for the
> fulfillment of the human vocation, theosis" (Kardong 279).

Saint Benedict's practices were effective to the point of being used as essential mentoring precepts for Benedictine monks for 15 centuries that has shaped current Catholic hierarchy (Kardong 279).

As Benedict's work begins, he states the case for his best practices clearly. As Herbermann elaborates:

> "The *Rule* opens with a hortatory preface, in which Saint Benedict sets forth the
> main principles of the religious life, *viz.*: the renunciation of one's own will and

arming oneself "with the strong and noble weapons of obedience" under the

banner of "the true King, Christ the Lord" (Prol. 3). He proposes to establish a

"school for the Lord's service" (Prol. 45) in which the "way to salvation"

(Prol. 48) shall be taught, so that by persevering in the monastery till death his

disciples may "through patience share in the passion of Christ that [they] may

deserve also to share in his Kingdom" (Herbermann).

Benedictine's best practices of mentoring monks through communal life and the

hierarchy of spiritual leadership instituted by their abbots covered a wide range of

disciplines, precepts, and practices, each for the same purpose of maturity in Christ.

As with the tapestry of God's work on earth, Benedict's rules of best practices, was

forged through relationships with others, under the Spirit's guidance and formed through

a Kingdom collaborative effort. Benedict's work itself was developed from the works of

others including Saint Basil of Caesarea who "codified the precepts for earlier eastern

monasteries in his Ascetic Rule, or *Ascetica*, which is still used today in the Eastern

Orthodox Church." (M. Chambers 188). Saint Augustine also pioneered early constructs

of best practices of holy living meant to be practiced in community through relational

interaction and mentoring. His work entitled *The Rule of Saint Augustine*, written around

400, is a brief document that "was divided into eight chapters and serves as an outline for

religious life lived in community. It is the oldest monastic rule in the Western Church"

(Zumkeller et al.). Neha Patil states Augustine's work emphasized "such considerations

as charity, poverty, obedience, detachment from the world, the apportionment of labour,

the mutual duties of superiors and inferiors, fraternal charity, prayer in common, fasting

and abstinence proportionate to the strength of the individual, care of the sick, silence,

and reading during meals" (Patil). Augustine's structure of righteous practices and pattern of pious living was practical and spiritual for the religious community to glorify God through every good work, so attaining the image of Christ.

Through Augustine's one can observe an outward trend from monastic life to the general public as he sought to expand the Gospel and promote maturity in Christ through lifestyle and witness. For instance, although Augustine embraced monastic and religious life comparable to his contemporaries, and "drafting rules for the monks and nuns of Roman Africa," he also "observed contemporary criticisms of the methods of the Eastern hermits in the Egyptian desert" cited in *The Ways of the Catholic Church* (Augnet). Their extreme isolation and excessive asceticism "were no longer productive" for the church or society. In response to this, "Augustine promoted poverty of spirit and continence of the heart while living in the milieu of a town such as Hippo" (Augnet).

Like a river of Christian inspired thought, patterns of spiritual behavior were formed through the evolution of ideas molded by ecclesial leaders to develop Christ-like maturity. Each proven pious practice was built on the precedents of saints before, each finding their roots in scripture. Throughout this process, Christian classics would rise to the forefront of best practices of spiritual formation, including the great devotional work *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis, authored originally in Medieval Latin (as *De Imitatione Christi*) c. 1418–1427 which provided thorough spiritual directives and practices (Espin and Nickoloff 609; Miola 285). This work, culminating in four books, communicates the following major sections: "Helpful Counsels of the Spiritual Life", "Directives for the Interior Life", "On Interior Consolation" and "On the Blessed Sacrament". The methodology of this work is categorized by its emphasis on

"the interior life and withdrawal from the world, as opposed to an active imitation of

Christ by other friars" (Espin and Nickoloff 609). Many of these spiritual practices of

these disciplines would grow to have far-reaching influence in global Christendom and

inspire many in their mentoring directives and practices.

Other spiritual directives of this time, such as those instituted by Teresa of Avila,

would leave a different mentoring emphasis in their wake. For example, while Teresa of

Avila embraced disciplines of holiness and the interior life that Thomas à Kempis

espoused, she also constructed strong networks and practical administration of mentoring

principles for spiritual development on a more institutional scale. Egan notes that "during

her reform years Teresa founded seventeen foundations for women and assisted in the

development of fifteen for men" (Egan 332). Teresa had the gift of mentoring in the form

of spiritual direction, which involved "the systematic pairing of directors with directees

for the purposes of inducting them into the spiritual life and providing guidance for them

in self-understanding and daily living" (English 88). These configurations, as well as her

advocacy of the process of impartial mentoring regardless of class, and her intentional

system of protégés and mentors, led to a fresh understanding of Christlike spiritual

development and in turn, reformation of the spiritual order in her context that continues

to impact millions (English 89; Anderson and Reese 47).

These rules, directives, and precepts, founded by early church fathers and

mothers, shaped communal and monastic life that was developed through everyday

mentoring. These practices of behavior drew the distinction and correlation between

personal holiness and public witness with Christlike spiritual maturity as the aim.

Common traits of these mentoring practices were communicated among Biblical and

early church authors as to the practical attributes associated with spiritual maturity that defined maturity in Christ. These traits included intentional daily time spent in spiritual formation including prayer and mediating on scripture, social and personal holiness, sanctification, and the pursuit of baring God's image found in Christ. These traits were indicators of a believer's maturity in Christ and goals that mentoring sought to attain. Other commonalities of these early indicators of spiritual maturity included relational devotion to God that overflowed into a wide range of righteous behavior, as well as communal connection to the Church and others for personal and public transformation through service and outreach to the world.

Current Mentoring Models

Thousands of years later in modern Christianity, followers of Jesus continue to embrace the spiritual maturity of Christ that manifests the same behaviors as those who have gone before. As in earlier generations, this Christian maturity is manifested through outward behavior due to an inner spiritual conversion. Mentoring, birthed through the directive and tradition of Christian community, is the midwife that molds this external witness of a Christian that occurs because of internal godly transformation.

Whereas the journey of what exactly constitutes the mechanics of mentoring has evolved through the ages, particularly in Christian circles, the time held practice of imprinting maturity through relationship has been a constant. Mentoring has been forged through time and built civilizations while connecting generations. Whether it was the lifestyle relational learning of the Hebrews encapsulated in the Shema, the student to pupil exchange that occurred with the Greeks, the monastic communities of the early church, the apprenticeship of the craftsman of the Middle Ages or the bands and societies

of the Enlightenment, mentoring has endured and continues to play a significant role in modern day society as emerging spiritual leaders are formed.

As mentoring practices vary, the purpose of spiritual mentoring orbits around the central goal of maturity in Christ, a goal proclaimed repeatedly in scripture. John Allen lists the six primary purposes of spiritual mentoring as discipler, spiritual guide, coach, counselor, teacher, and sponsor (Allen 3). Allen further defines each role that serves as purposes and functions of mentoring as follows:

Discipler – to assist a mentoree to become a follower of Jesus Christ. Spiritual guide – to hold a mentoree accountable for commitments and decisions affecting spirituality. Coach – to provide motivation, and skill training as needed for the task. Counselor: to share advise and perspectives. Teacher – to share knowledge and understanding. Sponsor – to assist the mentoree in the development of their career as a minister. (Allen 3)

Modern mentoring functions and methods can be diverse and depend upon the needs addressed as the mentee is developed, maturity level of those involved, and other factors. Additionally, the context of the mentoring relationship can be diverse, as seen in the evolution of mentoring. For example, in one context, monastic and communal mentoring prevailed, in the other contexts more individualistic approaches were used, and still others consisted of small groups or bands. Context, shape, and scope may vary but trends are observable in mentoring practices across historical and geographical divides that share commonalities. Therefore, mentoring principles, techniques and practices are largely universal and transferrable in their scope and application.

One modern global ministry that is impacting and training Christian leaders while employing mentoring as a primary tool of development is the International Leadership Institute (ILI). ILI embraces a classical model of mentoring that incorporates a strong relational emphasis between mentee and mentor while utilizing a flexible approach to its implementation. According to Norival Trindade, Vice president of training at ILI, "Mentoring is a relational experience in which one person empowers another person by sharing God-given resources. Mentoring is a relational process in which a mentor, who knows or has experienced something, transfers that something to a mentee, at an appropriate time and manner, so that it facilitates development or empowerment" (Trindade 89). According to ILI, relationships are the key to effective mentoring. Wes Griffin, ILI President and CEO states that "mentoring is highly relational and built around the mentee's agenda and intentionality. If the mentee is seeking to live out that greater purpose, then mentoring can happen, which can be enhanced discipleship" (Griffin). Griffin says that mentoring is best driven by the mentee and occurs through a Holy Spirit led transference of life from mentor to mentee by walking life out together. Lifelong mentoring is among the most effective even though intensity may wane throughout the life cycle (Griffin).

The International Leadership Institute believes that mentoring has the potential to impact the next generation and accordingly, seeks to be transgenerational because "it ties needs, dreams. and resources together in a relational way" (Trindade 91). Current and future leadership growth and development are core values of ILI and therefore basic building blocks are identified to attain maximum impact. For example, with ILI, "Three key steps to multiply the number of leaders are discipleship, coaching, and mentoring.

Each part of this process is essential for developing a leader of leaders who is mature in Christ and effective in service" (Trindade 91). For ILI, discipleship is the spiritual formation of an individual through the focus of the spiritual disciplines, coaching is focused on life skill development, and mentoring is whole life counsel through a supportive relationship (Trindade 91). The Biblical vision, process, and practical plan of mentoring is clearly communicated in ILI's *Mentoring History Makers Journey Manual* which serves as a trusted guide for new mentors and mentees. Essential mentoring practices that are embraced by ILI are a highly relational approach, the overarching goal of maturity in Christ, a broad approach to methodology to appreciate the diversity and flexibility of practical application, valuing the longevity of the mentoring relationship. and the diverse intervals of intensity in that life cycle, being mentee driven and appreciating life transference (Trindade 91).

Another global organization that is setting the pace for developing leaders is Arrow Leadership. For over 30 years Arrow has been pioneering leadership development and mentoring in our modern society. About Arrow's mentoring model, Steve A. Brown, Arrow's president, explains:

Within the Arrow Leadership Program, each participant in a class (usually 25 leaders), is matched with a mentor/coach that we call a leadership partner. That leadership partner meets one-to-one with the participant at each of the three face-to-face intensives as well as monthly (usually by Zoom) in the six-month intervals between intensives. The one-to-one mentoring is often a highlight of the program. The leadership partner provides a "safe but not soft" relationship to help the

participant process life and leadership, act as a sounding board, encourager,

prayer partner, mentor, coach and sometimes spiritual guide. (Brown)

One definition that Arrow uses to define mentoring is "a relational process of sharing

resources to empower others" (Smith 2). Furthermore, Arrow defines Christian

mentoring as "a dynamic, intentional relationship of trust in which a mentor enables a

mentee to maximize the grace of God in his or her life through the Holy Spirit, in service

of God's kingdom purposes, by sharing their life, experience and resources" (Lawrence

207).

Like ILI, Arrow Leadership's mentoring approach and model is clearly defined,

communicated, and implemented with a textual and electronic guide throughout their

organization and sphere of influence. Although both global organizations have a well-

articulated plan of action for their mentoring which includes clearly defined best

practices, the plan itself is housed and assimilated through a fluid relational method of

delivery which is varied and open to the mentor's preferred utilization. Arrow's

mentoring guidebook, entitled *Great Mentoring for Life Change* practically defines,

explains, and expounds on their best practices of mentoring. These practices and

methodologies are contained in the following steps: commitment, a formal arrangement

for a period of time; connection, meet an established number of times; covenant, establish

a mutual agreement); plan, determine needs and direction; engage, be open with prayer,

active listening, learning and discernment; and tracking, evaluate the relationship and

progress (Douglas and Simmonds 62). Each of these Arrow mentoring practices have at

their core DNA a strong relational approach that relies on the maturity of Christ for their

chief aim and relational transference between the Holy Spirit, mentor, and mentee as the vehicle for this spiritual developmental change.

Another global leadership developer that utilizes mentoring as a key strategy is Youth with a Mission (YWAM). For over 60 years YWAM has sent long term and short missionaries across the world to fulfill the Great Commission found in Matthew 28. YWAM's hierarchy is structured around the nexus of its founder, Loren Cunningham. Its reach is global and vast, geographically and practically manifested in strategic "bases" which are typically led by base director(s) and staff. YWAM's doctrine and inner workings flow from its values and beliefs which emphasizes a structural decentralization, under Biblical guidance. Therefore, in the words of Tammie Riscili, YWAM International Registrar Pacific Islands, explaining the "mentoring model is a bit difficult as a great portion of it is at the discretion of each base and or leader" (Riscili). Accordingly, one of the core values of YWAM is decentralization of its structure as well as raising up and empowering the next generation while functioning in teams (Beliefs YWAM).

Youth with a Mission's discipleship structure, that works through strategic geographical bases across the globe, is embedded in the DNA of YWAM schools that embrace the "live learn" model. This model passes on knowledge, discipleship, and godly training to promote Christlike maturity through mentoring. This mentoring occurs through small groups, corporate group learning, and one on one interaction as YWAM staff walk alongside each student throughout each course (Riscili). Apart from the DNA of mentoring within YWAM, the ministry also incorporates special mentoring emphases and training such as Leadership 13 in their Mission Builders schools to further raise up

future leaders (Hefty). Based on Hefty's work, the goal of these specialized plans within the community of Youth with a Mission is to develop future leaders through strategic smaller scale partnerships which include mentoring and small groups for greater concentration of life transference.

Cru, previously known as Campus Crusade for Christ, is another global evangelistic and discipleship entity that relies heavily on mentoring to make disciples and develop leaders. Capitalizing on an accessible digital age and a technologically emerging global church footprint, Cru assimilates the message of mentoring through its website as well as in person mentoring process. Cru's website, cru.org, serves as a platform and launch point for diverse and insightful articles that cover a wide range of topics including teachings and testimonials regarding salvation, discipleship, and growing in one's faith. Mentoring is emphasized in numerous articles as a catalyst for desired maturity in Christ, and links and various articles funnel the reader to resources including an actual advocate to serve as a mentor or discipleship partner. Location services and demographics also help the site reader connect to a local representative of Cru for follow up and personal, relational connection. By being in tune with the culture's technical prowess and consumer mentality, Cru has provided a website that is diverse and insightful. This approach has decentralized a one size fits all methodology of Christianity so their readers can now find their own Biblical options to growing in their faith, which includes the mode of mentoring if desired. Although Biblical directives and parameters are the standard with Christlikeness as the ultimate goal, Cru's online methodology of mentoring is loosely structured and caters to the desires and goals of those in the mentoring relationship. Not a single mentoring methodology is espoused, but rather a user-friendly

openhandedness that is crafted through the mutual relationship between mentee and mentor.

When defining the dynamics and advantages of mentoring, Cru's website explains the similarities and differences regarding Christian and secular mentoring. Cru explains that while both share commonalities concerning personal development, Christian mentoring's clear goal is different as stated on their website "Christian mentoring is about more than self-improvement or personal development. It's about helping people become more and more like another person, and that person is Jesus" (Kight). Cru describes practical components of mentoring which include:

Discussing specific areas of life to grow in, agreeing to a plan for studying the Bible and praying together, choosing a relevant book or series of articles to read together, spotting blind spots and opportunities for transformation in both parties' spiritual lives, finding and celebrating evidence of becoming more conformed to the image of Christ and addressing areas of ongoing struggle or ungodly thinking and behavior. (Kight)

Cru's articles and online teachings regarding mentoring address practical themes and topics such as "expectations of Christian mentoring, traits of mentors, Biblical practices of mentoring, the Holy Spirit's role in mentoring, tips for effective mentoring, resources for finding and becoming a mentor and Biblical and modern examples of mentoring" (Kight). Cru emphasizes the fact that mentoring is valuable in multiple areas of life, whether it be the private, public, spiritual, or professional sectors. Unlike the broad stroke of its online mentoring emphasis, Cru also provides a detailed, in person and

highly structured approach to raising up and mentoring the next generation of spiritual

leaders.

Shana Powell, Executive Director of US Missions with Cru, explains that Cru

sees itself as a first step ministry with the goal of introducing and leading individuals to

Christ. Within this focus of evangelism and discipleship there also exists a strong

leadership development mentoring program called "Leadership Framework" that Cru has

developed to build leaders. Powell explains that this leadership mentoring process begins

with individuals enrolling in an initial investment called "New Staff Training" which is

renewed with the individual every three years. This "New Staff Training" includes

theological development covered by seminary courses tailored for their staff. This

development curriculum also incorporates Bible survey classes of Old and New

Testaments, theology, administrative learning, history of Cru, and perspective classes to

develop understanding and learn adaptation to diverse cultures. As well as gleaning

theological knowledge and Biblical foundations, these individuals are put into 3-4 person

groups with mentors to help them process, connect, and learn. Once leaders finish the

initial phase, they receive another mentor or coach for wholistic coaching, then onto the

next phase of mentoring entitled the "Key Designated Assignment." In this phase the

mentees have an appointed weekly mentor as well as other mentors/trainers for the next

three years for the purpose of modeling and training while using online tools to track

progress and development. After completion of "New Staff Training," the emerging

leader may choose to continue to become a team leader and then onto a regional director.

At each phase of Cru leadership there are new mentors who work to tailor the structured

overall program called the Leadership Framework to meet mentees' specific needs (Powell).

Another global ministry that impacts multitudes while utilizing mentoring is the Navigators. Developed in the 1930's by Dawson Trotman who personally experienced the power of discipleship through mentoring, Dawson embraced II Timothy 2:2 as his ministry model to impact others through relationship (Navigators/History). Today, ministering in over 100 countries around the world, the Navigators lead individuals to Christ and develop global leaders through individual interaction, mentoring and small groups (Navigators/History).

Dave Hawes, who serves on the Navigator's leadership team to develop leaders and leadership curriculum, explains that relationship is at the core DNA of their mentoring and development of leaders (Hawes). Hawes explains that the evolution of the Navigator's leadership development began with relational mentoring and grew to lecturing. Coaches and mentors developed a national plan that started out with 30 individuals being mentoring then to 80 people, with 5 mentees on a team with one mentor per team. Initially a standardized curriculum was used for leadership development. The program included main content items that did not change, with six task skills and six relational skills that were revised as needed for the mentees. This methodology was prevalent in the 1990's and lasted approximately 12 years until it became more lecture based which resulted in conferencing which allowed more people to be taught. After approximately 25 years of this trend, the Navigators realized changes needed to occur that included more intentional relationships with the mentees. Seminars would then lead the mentors and mentees through topics covered. This premise of personal change

through personal relationships is primary to the Navigator's mission and was forged at its beginning. Essentially, as Hawes states, if you are going develop leaders you must have someone to come alongside them to develop them and this is the role of mentoring (Hawes).

In the 21st century, in the last sixty years, these ministries represent a cross section of some of the more well-known mentoring models active today. Their lenses reveal an eclectic portfolio of mentoring assimilation. Some are more group based, some individual, some more catholic, while others are more parachurch in nature. Whatever the delivery method, they each seem to funnel down into the goal of concentrated, smaller scale life transference between individuals. Entry points begin the mentoring process, such as joining a specific ministry, with the end goal of Christlike maturity as their ultimate aim. Once individuals communicate a commitment to a certain ministry, the mentoring process takes shape, dependent on the mentee in some ministries or the mentors in others. Some mentoring methods are more clearly defined in a certain order, whereas others are more organic and flexible. Whatever the exact mentoring methodology of these ministries, a broad approach to their relational implementation seems prevalent across the board; meaning the "how to" steps of mentoring may be clearly defined, but the process of achieving those steps steers clear of being dogmatic or highly structured. Rather, the integral relationship between those involved determines the timeline and even order of the steps. This aspect of the implementation of the mentoring process seems more qualitative than quantitative, more spiritual than mental and more Holy Spirit led than textbook, although framing of the process often occurs through literature and resources of the specific ministries.

Within the mentoring methodology of key ministries of modern Christendom, the spiritual disciplines are highly valued as a vehicle for spiritual maturity, as well as healthy interpersonal dynamics such as intentionality, self-disclosure, and authenticity. An intimate connection to God that overflows outward is paramount in the mentoring process and a commitment to Christian community is fundamental as well. A clearly defined mentoring relationship between mentee and mentor and communication of the mutual goal of Christlike spiritual maturity are essential in these diverse methodologies of mentoring. The vision and goal of an individual's spiritual maturity propels personal development to occur as the emerging close relationship of mentoring promotes life transference that makes this development possible.

Research Design Literature

This was a preintervention research study designed to discern the best practices for mentoring spiritual leaders, including potential barriers and additional factors. Research for this project involved the collection and analysis of data using four different research methods including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, surveys and document analysis of the publications, and websites of the primary mentors' ministries. Accordingly, the research participants responded to 45 surveys and 15 recognized mentors from effective ministries in the fields of discipleship, evangelism, and spiritual leadership development granted semi-structured interviews. From these interviews with mentors, two focus subset groups were comprised of the mentor's mentees, to further identify effective mentoring practices and barriers to these practices.

Research for this project is qualitative with a pre-intervention design which uses mixed qualitative and quantitative methods of semi-structured interviews, surveys, focus

groups, and document analysis. One key piece of research design literature that guided

this research was by Tim Sensing. Sensing emphasized the importance of surveys, that

were employed in this research, because "they are useful to describe characteristics or

understandings of a large group of people" (Sensing 115). Additionally, interviews were

employed because of their ability to provide clarification and additional information

(Sensing 115). Research collected through a mixed design in this study can offer insight

into best practices for developing individuals and leaders through the relational process of

mentoring. The research analyzed and utilized data from surveys, semi-structured

interviews, and focus groups with recognized ministries' mentors, as well as willing

mentee contributors from these ministries who have been through the ministry's

mentoring process.

Research questions and similar inquiries that contributed to the understanding of

mentoring were addressed by strategic adult leaders within organizations that are

effective in producing quality spiritual influencers. To gather the most effective mentor

models, and the best practices as well as to identify barriers of developing spiritual

maturity in individuals, I interviewed these leaders, consisting of mentors and their

mentees as participants in the process of mentoring. The basis for choosing these mentors

was their mentor merit and a clear demonstration of their effectiveness in the field of

mentoring, or the Christian multidenominational ministries of spiritual development that

adhered to their same core Christian beliefs recommended them as effective mentors.

Research instrumentation for this project included a survey sent to ministries in

the field of discipleship, evangelism, and leadership development and semi-structured

mentor interviews that flowed out of these surveys. The research surveys sent to 45

mentors from these established ministries were then collected and second tier mentors were selected after collecting their names from expert or model mentors to complete semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, these mentors identified mentees to be involved in research composed in focus groups for data collection from mentees. The purpose of this instrumentation is to discern factors, attributes and methodologies associated with effective mentoring for leadership development and barriers to the same process.

Summary of Literature

Mentoring can be a vital tool in building and shaping Christian leaders as the Kingdom of God is revealed in the world today. What this literature has showcased is the diverse practices, parameters, and evolution of mentoring throughout Christian history, beginning in Genesis, while providing a resource to strengthen the capabilities of those desiring to develop leaders through mentoring relationships.

This literature has laid the practical and historical groundwork for the viability of mentoring and communicated its proven longevity and effectiveness in empowering others through relational imprinting. Because maturity in Christ is an overarching goal in Christendom that is shared from the Church's inception at Pentecost, and because relationships are the catalyst for Kingdom transformation, mentoring is an asset to this godly development which combines goal and process.

Because the practice and lifestyle of mentoring is indicative of God's heart and expressed through scripture and Christ's example, Christians follow these Biblical cues for personal, spiritual, and social growth. Because mentoring occurs through the human system of relationships, and people respond and learn differently, mentoring practices are

diverse and not one size fits all, thus leading to assorted practices and potential barriers to reconcile in this interactive process.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter explains the methods of research utilized for this project and the nature and scope of the project itself. Furthermore, The chapter explains the problem that this project addresses, the context where the research occurred, and the participants observed. Lastly, this chapter explains the data collection process, which instruments were implemented for this process, and how this gathered information was examined.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to discern the best practices for mentoring effective spiritual leaders. The lens of scripture reveals that God desires to partner with human beings for Kingdom change in order to transform the world. This transformation cannot happen without effective discipleship and godly leadership. Currently in Christendom there is a problematic and systematic lack of leadership to grow the church forward. Without strong godly leadership the Kingdom of God on earth will not be fully realized. The church must discern a proper and effective mechanism for this development to occur or it will not optimally fulfill an integral purpose God has for it.

Research Questions

The research used three questions to discover the best mentoring practices, identify barriers to effective mentoring, and learn about other factors that the mentor-mentee relationship.

RQ #1. What do recognized mentors of spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are the best practices (ways/methods/attributes) to mentor effective spiritual leaders?

This qualitative pretest research employed semi structured surveys and interviews with mentors to gather data through emailed out surveys, phone calls and Zoom. This instrument of qualitative data collection allowed the mentors themselves to identify the best practices of mentoring.

Initially the mentors received via email a survey of 15 interview questions. This survey was used to gather demographics data and discern the best general and specific practices of these mentors' mentoring practices. These survey questions gathered information regarding mentoring practices, selection and environment including duration as well as the curriculum of the mentoring process. Other data collected included the assessment of the mentoring process, mentoring qualifications, and characteristics.

RQ #2. What do recognized mentors of spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are barriers to mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

For this qualitative pretest research, semi structured interviews with mentors were employed to gather data through phone calls and Zoom. This instrument of qualitative data collection provided information regarding the barriers that mentors faced in the best practices of mentoring.

In section two the second 5 interview questions are used to assess barriers identified by the mentors in their mentoring.

RQ #3. What other factors should be considered when mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

Question 12 through 16 in the second part of the survey assessed the barriers that the mentors identified in their mentoring.

Ministry Contexts

The ministry contexts for my research took place within established global ministries that develop godly leaders. These ministries were comprised of various Christian denominations and held no direct organizational affiliation with each other yet shared the common goal of the pursuit of maturity in Christ.

The mentors from these established ministries were cross cultural, adult, male and female proven Christian leaders in their respected ministries. These mentors have exhibited effectiveness in ministry, Christian witness and developing leaders through mentoring.

Participants

This research used participants who were established in the field of Christian mentoring to glean information that is useful to the goals of this study in order to discern effective practices, barriers, and additional factors to be considered in mentoring.

Criteria for Selection

All participants of this study are adults who were recommended by their respected ministries as leaders in their field of mentoring or recognized as mentees in their ministry's mentoring process.

Description of Participants

Participants of this study represented a wide range of diversity with no limitation based on gender, adult age, ethnicity, season of life, education level, or vocation. Prerequisites for their ministries were believers in Christ with aspirations of intentionally growing in their faith.

Ethical Considerations

Participants of this study were informed of its purpose prior to data collection and their consent was obtained prior to collection. I kept all collected research responses confidential. I kept the collected responses in the strictest confidentiality and avoided potential liability by keeping the data between mentee and mentor separate and confidential. Therefore, the reporting of the findings were anonymous or aggregate and I removed all identifying data from the responses.

Instrumentation

For this study, three forms of instrumentation were used. One is a survey, one is a semi structured interview for individuals, and the third is a Zoom administered semi-structured interview format for two focus groups of mentees. First, I sent surveys to highly regarded Christian ministries known for their mentoring, spiritual development, and discipleship proficiency. These surveys asked these ministries to nominate ten top practitioners of spiritual mentoring leaders within their organization. Once these organizations provided fifty names of top practitioners in the field of mentoring, and these mentors agreed to the study to glean specific information, I sent a semi-structured interview on best practices, barriers, and other considerations in spiritual mentoring to those nominated. Surveys and interviews addressed the research questions of the project that explored best positive mentoring practices, barriers, and other considerations to effective mentoring. Furthermore, these mentors then provided the names of mentees who agreed to participate as another cohort in focus groups to discern best practices, barriers, and considerations of the mentoring process. Two focus groups with 6 to 8 mentees in each group participated in the research.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design

The research tools utilized for this study were researcher-designed and the researcher's dissertation coach, Dr. Thomas Tumblin, received and approved the tools. All three assessments were used to measure and to gather data related to the project's research questions dealing with best practices, barriers, and additional factors to be considered in the field of effective spiritual mentoring.

Data Collection

Apart from a thorough literature review, I contacted multiple current Christian global discipling ministries and asked for their processes of mentoring spiritual leaders. Furthermore, I contacted other Christian ministries and to discern best practices, barriers and further information pertaining to mentoring the entire group of 45 received and responded to surveys via email. From the responses of the surveys, I identified mentors and invited them to participate in additional research by way of personal semi-structured interviews.

I then set up interview appointments with these mentors who chose to participate. Before the interview appointments, I provided the semi-structured interviews to the interviewees for their review and preparation. I conducted confidential interviews after I had received permission to record the interviews for data review and collection by cell phone. I then reviewed the data collected from the interviews, assessed, and organized the data into discernable trends and practices. I also requested the mentors whom I interviewed to provide the names of mentees who were invited to participate in a short-term focus group to gather the perspectives and insights of mentees in the mentoring process. I used preset interview questions for the focus groups, and during the focus

group discussions, I collected confidential data from the mentees and then reviewed, assessed, and organized the data into discernable trends and practices as I processed the information. Data collection occurred over 6 months from September 2022 to March 2023 in the form of surveys, semi structured qualitative interviews, and Zoom focus group discussions.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this research study was to discern best practices for mentoring spiritual leaders. The data collected from the interviews was analyzed, organized, and compared for trends among global ministries that utilize mentoring as a key practice of developing leaders. The research utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data collected from the three tiers of assessment tools used in the research. Throughout the project, participants made qualitative comments to describe the best practices, barriers, and alternative factors to be considered for mentoring effectively. Therefore, I used "inferential statistics to try to infer from the sample data what the population might think" (Trochim). The researcher additionally read each of the statements made throughout the data gathering process, in the forms of interviews, surveys, Zoom calls, and questionnaires, multiple times to recognize themes, and discern patterns that might appear in the pre-intervention content. All information was further analyzed using techniques including Google tools, document analysis, statistical analysis, T-tests and Mean scores, participant observation, and narrative analysis to organize, process, and report data to get the objective pulse of the information.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

For the Kingdom of God to be revealed in the earth today, Christian leadership must be developed and empowered through effective mentoring. In Judeo Christian history the integral role of mentoring consisted of relational imprinting, scriptural practices, and methodology. Without this proper leadership growth, Christendom will stall in its Biblical efforts and purpose. The purpose of this project was to discern the best methods of effective mentoring to develop godly leaders to serve in God's Kingdom work on earth.

This chapter provides a description of the participants who contributed to this research study. The chapter also reports the findings of the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the survey of mentors which included structured, semi structured, and open-ended inquiries, semi-structured interviews with mentors and data collected from two focus groups consisting of those mentored. Finally, the research communicated in this chapter identifies the major findings gathered from the data.

Participants

This research study focused on adult mentors who mentor in established ministries and churches that identified as Christian. This study consisted of research collected in three parts. The first data collection tool was a survey that consisted of data collected from 45 Christian mentors who gave their informed consent to the interview. They were both male and female, of various ages and serving with both national and international organizations, all agreeing to informed consent, represented nationally and

internationally, of various ages, of both male and female. (See Figures 4.1 and 4.2.) The second component of research involved semi-structured Zoom interviews with 12 of these mentors from the initial survey pool. Finally, the last group of participants included adult individuals who participated in two focus groups with six to eight members in each group. Their mentors had participated in the initial survey and interviews and recommended some of their mentees to be focus group participants. The focus group participants provided research data by reflecting on their experiences as mentees.
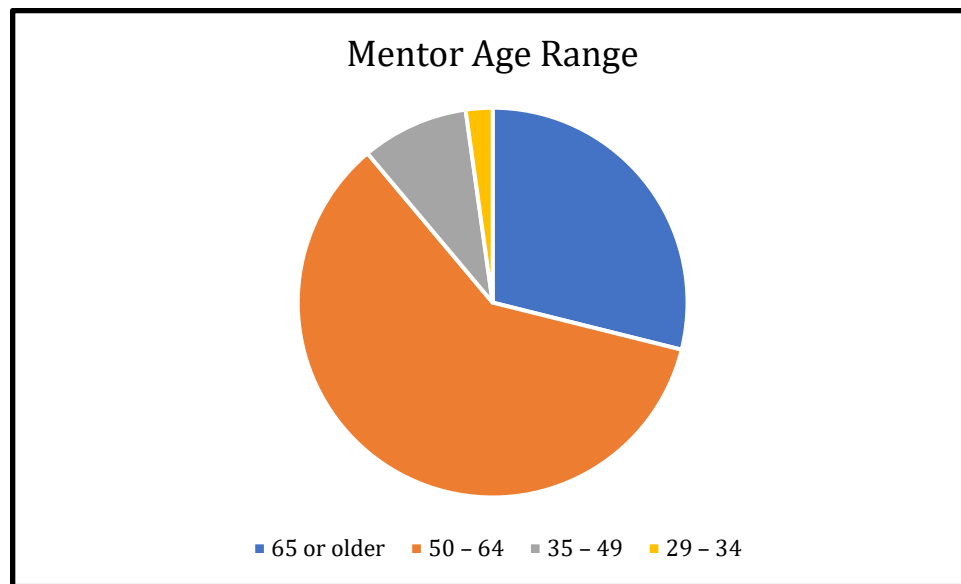
Fig. 4.1. Mentor age range.

The survey consisted of data collected from 45 Christian mentors and the survey data is reflected as follows: As Figure 4.1 shows, the age range of participants contributing to the first data collection tool varied. One participant was from the age range of 29 to 34, four were between the ages of 35 to 49, twenty-seven or 60% of the survey participants were from ages 50 to 64, and thirteen or 28.9% of the participants

were 65 or older. Regarding the gender of the study participants as shown in Figure 4.2, 9 or 20% of the study participants were female and 36 or 80% were male.
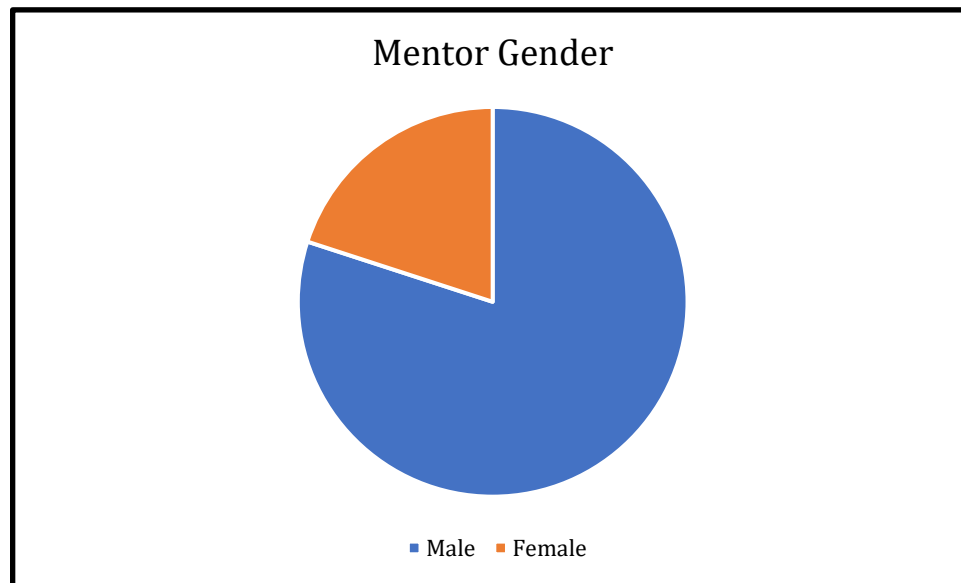
Fig. 4.2. Mentor gender.

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

RQ #1. What do recognized mentors of spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are the best practices (ways/methods/attributes) to mentor effective spiritual leaders?

First Tier Mentor Surveys

To discern best practices, the survey collected data regarding the specific mentoring methodologies the mentors used. The majority of 51.1% or 23 of the participants described their mentoring environment as an in person one on one setting. The second highest of 22.2% or 10 of the participants reported that they used a virtual one on one setting via Zoom or Face Time. Other results in order of prevalence included multiple persons in combination with one on one in person conversations as well as phone calls and Zoom calls. Each of the remaining mentoring environments were reported by 1

participant or 2.2% of the overall participants. They included equal time between one on one and Face Time; a combination of in person, phone and Zoom meetings; both virtual and in person one on one settings; one on one either virtually or in person during mentoring sessions; virtual and in person; a combination of all of the settings; and one on one with local or same church settings and virtual with remote people.

Table 4.3. Mentor Environment.

How would you describe the environment where the majority of the mentoring takes place?

51%
22%
9%

- In person one on one setting
- Virtual one on one setting (such as via Zoom or Face Time)
- Multiple persons in person during mentoring sessions
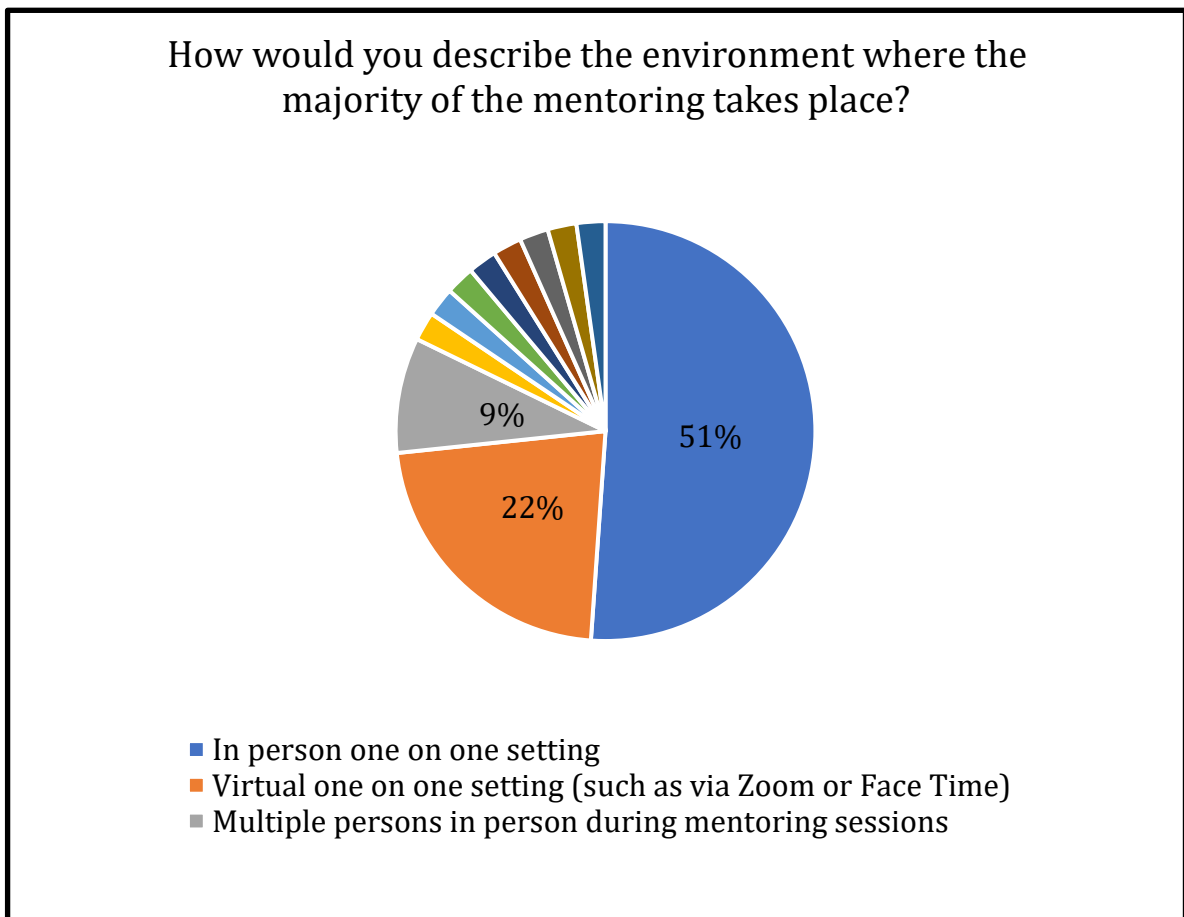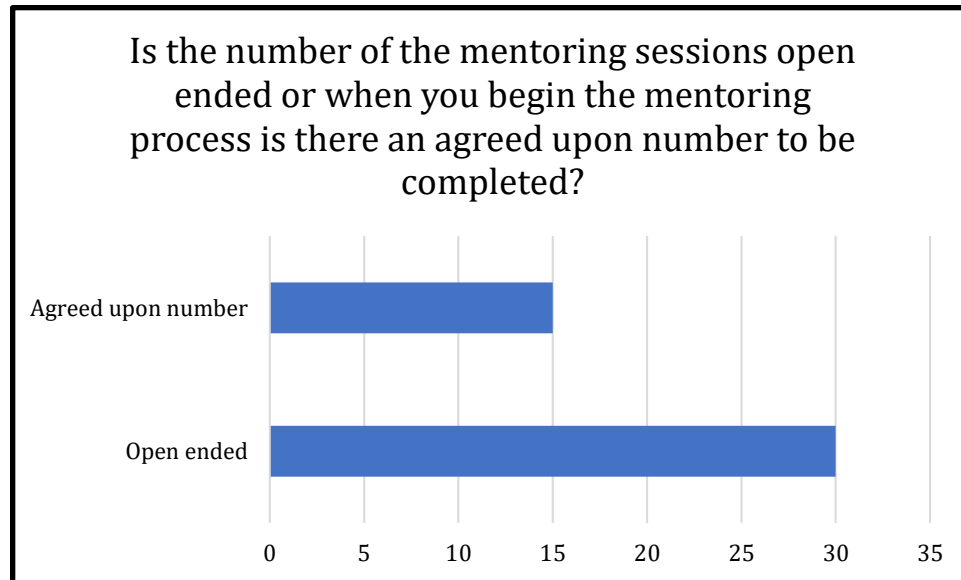
Fig. 4.4. Defined duration of mentor sessions.

Regarding longevity, parameters, and duration of mentoring, 30 participants

representing 66.7% of total number of participants communicated that the majority of

their mentoring sessions were open ended. (See Figure 4.4.) Thirty of the mentors or

66.7% of the survey respondents reported that their sessions were primarily mentor

driven. The other 15 or 33.3% of the mentors reported that the sessions were mentee

driven. (See Figure 4.5.)

Fig. 4.5. Mentor or mentee driven sessions.

Are the mentor sessions primarily directed by the mentor or mentee?
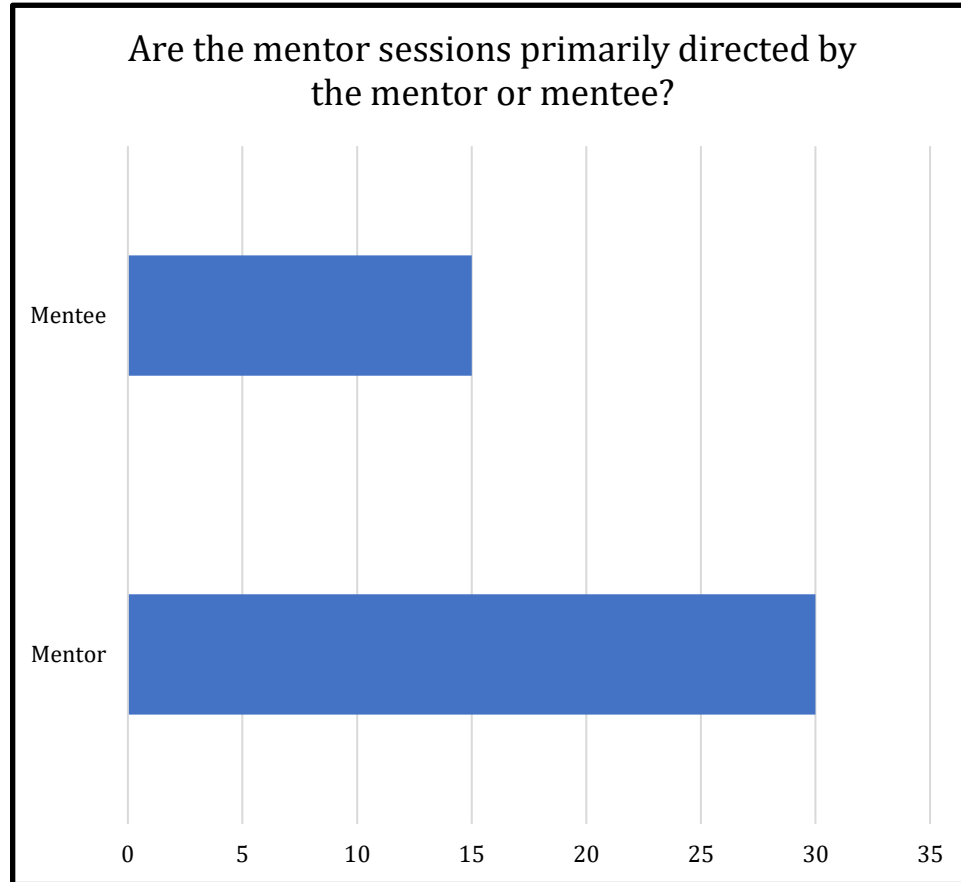
A total of 14 individuals of 31.1% of the participants communicated that the mentee initiated the mentor relationship. Another 9 respondents or 20% of the participants reported the mentor had initiated the mentor relationship. Another 6 or 13.3% of the participants indicated that the mentor relationship began with a referral. Other individuals said that the organization or ministry that the participant worked with initiated the relationship, or it was a combination of several factors involving mentor, mentee, and the organization.

Table 4.6. Initiation of Mentor Relationship

Count of Who initiates the mentor relationship?

- ■ Mentee ■ Mentor ■ Referral
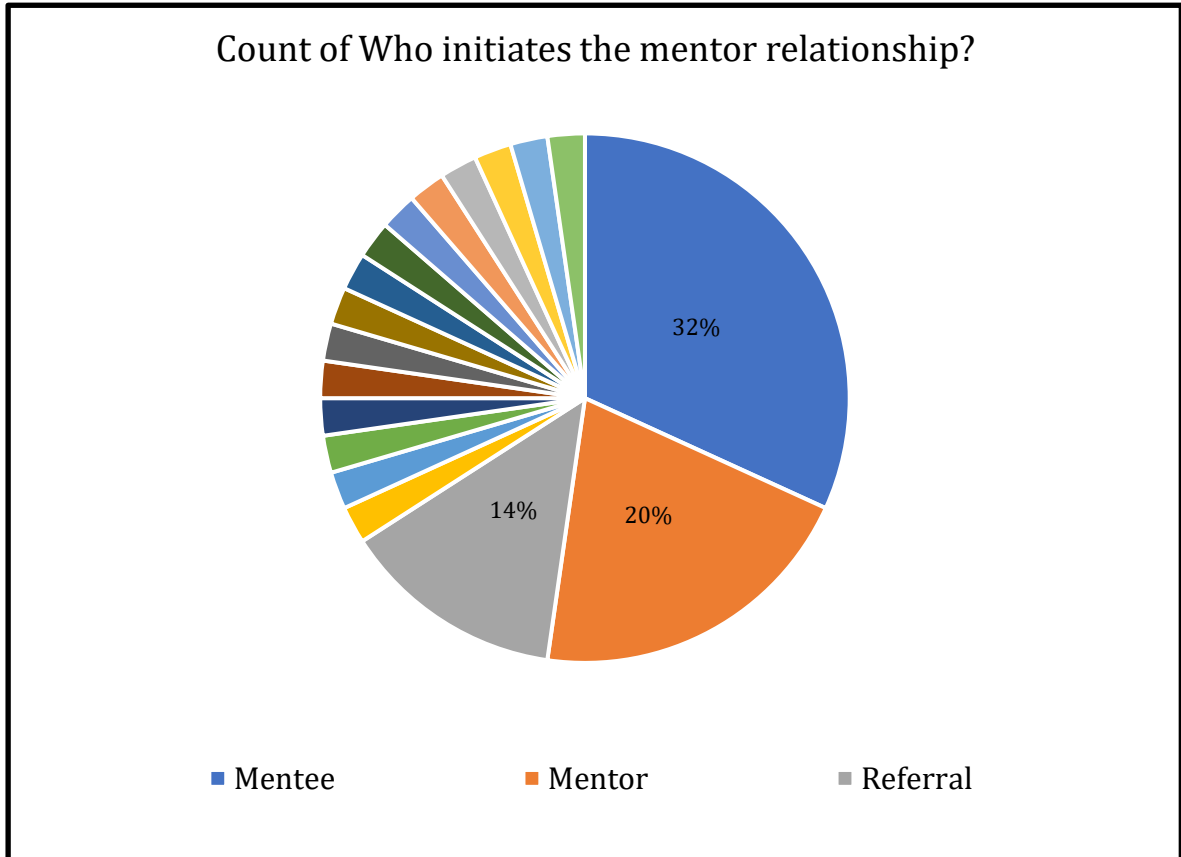
Regarding format, structure, content and curriculum of the mentor experience, the majority of 51.1% or 23 of the survey participants reported that the mentoring was loosely structured with an overall plan. However, 8 participants or 17.8% of respondents reported a format of loosely structured without curriculum or written plan, and another 8 or 17.8% of the participants communicated that the format was free ranging. Only 2 individuals or 4.4% of the participants stated that their mentoring format was highly structured, and curriculum based. (See Figure 4.7.)

Fig. 4.7. Mentor experience format.

How would you describe the format of the mentor experience?

- Loosely structured with overall plan
- Loosely structured without curriculum or written plan
- Free ranging
- Highly structured curriculum based
- spirit lead based on various topics of interest
- Mentee sends questions he would like to discuss
- Broad structure with content/subject determined by mentee
- A mentoring template is filled out ahead of each meeting by mentee

Table 4.8. Mentor Progress Assessment

How is progress assessed by?

Category	Value
Combination of the assessment tools	1
A combination of Mentor, Mentee, Assessment Tools	1
Collaboration between the two - how is this helpful/not helpful, what do you need, etc	1
No formal assessment	1
By both mentor and mentee, assess as regular as needed	1
Mentor and Mentee assess	1
Both	1
By a combination of the Mentors investment and recognition of the Mentees growth and development	1
Informal impartation of experience/wisdom	1
Both mentor and mentee/Mentees continues asses	1
Informal affirming communication	1
Progress toward identified goals or objectives	1
Assessment Tool(s)	2
Course Completion	7
Mentor	12
Mentee	12

Regarding assessment of the mentoring process, survey findings reported that the mentoring progress is equally assessed by the mentee and mentor. A total of 12 participants or 26.7% of those surveyed said the mentor assessed the progress, and another 12 participants or 26.7% of the survey participants said mentee. Course completion was the assessment tool used by another 7 participants or 15.6% of the survey

respondents. Other individuals' responses regarding various methods to measure the

mentees' progress included a combination of mentioned factors, no assessment, certain

identified goals or objectives, informal affirming communication, and informal

impartation of experience or wisdom. (See Figure 4.8.)
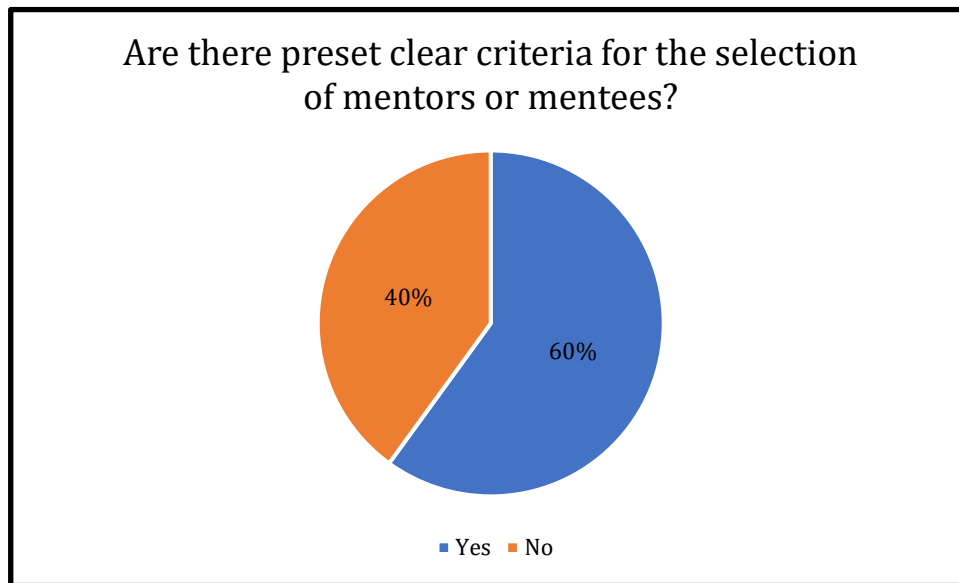
Fig. 4.9. Selection criteria for mentor or mentees.

The majority of survey participants reported that there was a clear preset criteria

for the selection of mentors and mentees. A total of 60% there was a clear criterion while

40% said there was no clear criteria. (See Figure 4.9) The survey reported that additional

preset criteria for the selection of mentors or mentees included the mentor being a

Christian, the mentee's sincere desire to be mentored by the mentor, an older mentor with

alike stories, multiple generations within mentoring groups, as well as similar calling and

previous experience. Other criteria included an assessment of the mentor, including their

character, spiritual and emotional maturity, their high commitment to a kingdom calling,

and their life fruit in the areas in which the mentees desired to be mentored. Other

desired qualities for the mentor included one who is an accepted part of the ministry, one

who is safe but not soft, one who can be present for others, prayerful and discerning, a question asker, a good listener, resourcer, encourager, and one who has wisdom. Participants indicated that the following qualities were desired for the mentee: dependable, teachable, flexible, and available while having healthy relationships in their immediate environment, so that toxicity would not detract from the mentoring experience. Also, the mentee should have a willingness to be involved in a collaborative think tank environment to learn from others while exhibiting at least the same intentionality as the mentor in the process. The top three to five consistent criteria that are displayed for the selection of mentors and mentees include a genuine desire to be mentored by the mentee, reciprocal buy in from both the mentee and the mentor and observable fruit in the life of the mentor that is witnessed and desired by the mentee. However, not everyone operated with preset criteria when choosing mentees and mentors.

In this survey mentors communicated their best mentoring practices that they have discerned which have produced the greatest results for maturity in Christ in the life of their mentee. These best practices included sharing life and exploring faith with the mentee while also dealing with the real time issues and needs the mentee faces. Other best practices included regularly scheduled open ended set periods of time creating an environment where honesty, vulnerability, and authenticity are established and when needed, using tools such as spiritual life maps, and rhythms for life that are geared toward meeting mentee's self-discovery and perceived and future needs. Practices also included leaving room for God to work while accomplishing diverse activities together to grow authentic community. These events ranged from casual recreation such as fishing, to

shared ministry projects or internships with coaching, reflecting, and debriefing, to highly

organized set curriculum with a defined time frame. Clarifying what the mentee is

seeking while getting the pulse of the mentee's worldview and allowing them to

understand the mentor's perspective was also noted as effective practices.

Additional practices included establishing trust by attentive listening with no

questions off limits, growing empathy, problem solving, and patiently exploring faith and

scripture in a Christ centered environment. These challenging questions could also

involve pushing against inadequate but accepted paradigms while incorporating Biblical

interpretation and study. Survey data also communicated that best practices of mentoring

spiritual leaders orbit around God's Biblical purpose for the mentee. Best practices

further included embracing Christian precepts of the Bible and Christian life involving a

strong focus on prayer, as well as worship, Christian living, discipleship, doctrine, and

body ministry including spiritual gifts outlined in Ephesians 4:15-16. Other dynamics of

effective mentoring included coaching, communicating a clear understanding of the

mentor's role which was not heavy handed or judgmental, as well as a wholistic approach

for life counsel. Best practices also included asking high yield open-ended questions,

journaling, skill and knowledge acquisition, and creating a safe relational space for a

long-term approach to mentoring. The nurture of this confidential safe space may involve

empowering the mentee to effectively dismantle walls of self-preservation and unhealthy

spiritual and relational baggage so that they are able to live into the identity God created

them for while developing a Spirit led life. Other best practices that were communicated

included dedicated consistency to the process, a model of action from listening, follow

up, accountability, assessments and providing resources in the mentoring relationship.

Also noted was preparation before meetings, compilation of growth goals or a clear development plan with clear objectives, cross pollination with other mentees and mentors, opportunities for feedback, and mutual respect for the mentor and mentee.

Tier One Quantitative Data Statistical Analysis

Although each of the research questions regarding best practices, barriers and additional factors of mentoring collected significant qualitative data, the first tier survey also had quantitative data to analyze. The qualitative nature of the responses from open ended questions related to the three research questions noted above were designed this way qualitatively to not limit responses but rather gather as much information as possible.

Three key survey questions that were analyzed quantitatively for trends resulting from statistical analyses included describing the environment where the mentoring takes place—in person, virtual or combination of environments, identifying who directed the mentor sessions—mentor or mentee, and discovering if there were preset criteria for the selection of mentors and mentees. Each of these three questions' data was demographically analyzed statistically through the filters of gender, age and if the mentor relationship was international or domestic in the United States. It should be noted again that of the 45 participants for this portion of the data collection 9 were female and 36 were male.

Regarding statistical trends and analysis based on gender concerning the environment of the mentoring relationship there appears to be a much higher likelihood of females leaning toward virtual or a combination of in person and virtual with a mean of 2.33 and males leaning toward in person mentoring environments with a mean of 1.44. See Table 4.1. below with bold face notable numerical data.

Table 4.1. Gender Related to Mentoring Environment

Gender Related to Mentoring Environment	Female	Male
Mean	2.333333333	1.444444444
Variance	0.75	0.53968254
Observations	9	36
Pooled Variance	0.57881137	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	3.135055251	
P(T<=t) one-tail	**0.001547092**	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	**0.003094185**	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked if the mentor-mentee relationship should be directed or navigated by the mentor or the mentee, the responses of the male and female participants showed no statistical difference on the basis of gender (Mean 1.33 in each). Both genders indicated that it is twice as likely for the relationship to be mentor driven than mentee driven. Thus, no statistical difference was found between the responses of the male and female research participants. See Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Gender Related to Navigator

Gender Related to Navigator	Females	Males
Mean	1.333333333	1.333333333
Variance	0.25	0.228571429
Observations	9	36
Pooled Variance	0.23255814	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	0	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.5	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked if there should be preset criteria for the selection of mentors and

mentees, there was no significant distinction between the responses of male and female

research participants. Both genders leaned more towards having a preset criteria for

mentor and mentee selection, but females leaned more heavily toward preset criteria for

mentor or mentee selection than the male participants. The male mean was 1.416, but the

female mean was 1.333. See Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Gender Related to Preset Selection

Gender Related to Preset Selection	Females	Males
Mean	1.333333333	1.416666667
Variance	0.25	0.25
Observations	9	36
Pooled Variance	0.25	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	-0.447213595	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.328482758	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.656965515	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

Regarding statistical trends and analysis based on age concerning the environment

of the mentoring relationship, there is a higher likelihood for participants under 50 to

prefer in person mentoring sessions. All participants under 50 noted a preference for in

person sessions with a mean score of 1. Participants 50 and over communicated a

preference for primarily in person sessions, but also a combination of in person and other

environments with a mean score of 1.7. See Table 4.4. It should be noted again that of the

45 participants for this portion of the data collection five were under 50.

Table 4.4. Age Related to Environment

Age Related to Environment	Under 50	Over 50
Mean	1	1.7
Variance	0	0.728205128
Observations	5	40
Pooled Variance	0.660465116	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	-1.815857812	
P(T<=t) one-tail	**0.038184473**	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.076368945	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

Regarding statistical analysis based on age concerning who primarily directs or navigates the mentoring relationship, there appears to be no significant statistical difference between participants under 50 and those over 50 as to the mentor primarily navigating the sessions However, the under 50 cohort did prefer mentor driven a little more than the over 50 participants. The under 50 mean score was 1.2, while the over 50 mean score was 1.35. See Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Age Related to Navigator

Age Related to Navigator	Under 50	Over 50
Mean	1.2	1.35
Variance	0.2	0.233333333
Observations	5	40
Pooled Variance	0.230232558	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	-0.659047369	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.256689684	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.513379369	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked if the research participants preferred preset criteria for the selection of mentors and mentees, the statistical analysis based on age showed a slight difference. Those under 50 leaned slightly toward not having a preset criterion, but those over 50 leaned slightly towards having a preset criterion. However, the difference is minimal and is not significant. The mean score for those under 50 was 1.6, but the mean score for those over 50 was 1.375. See Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Age Related to Preset Selection

Age Related to Preset Selection	*Under 50*	*Over 50*
Mean	1.6	1.375
Variance	0.3	0.240384615
Observations	5	40
Pooled Variance	0.245930233	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	0.956500715	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.172083155	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.34416631	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked about the preferred environment for mentoring sessions, whether the mentor was located internationally or domestically in the United States made a difference in the statistical analysis. Participants in domestic mentoring environments preferred in person face to face mentoring or an equal combination of in person and virtual mentoring over just virtual mentoring. Whereas the responses of international mentors were divided evenly among in-person, virtual, and a combination of in-person and virtual sessions. In other words, the method of delivery did not appear to matter as much to the international mentors. See Table 4.7. Of the forty-five participants for this portion of the data collection twelve were designated as participating in international mentoring.

Table 4.7. Mentee Location Related to Environment

Mentee Location Related to Environment	Domestic	International
Mean	1.515151515	1.916666667
Variance	0.695075758	0.628787879
Observations	33	12
Pooled Variance	0.678118393	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	-1.446406991	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.077656763	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.155313527	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked if the if the mentor or the mentee navigates or primarily directs the mentoring relationship, the analysis based on the respondents' international or domestic locations revealed a slight statistical difference. Participants with a domestic location in the United States preferred a mentor-driven relationship with a mean score of 1.27. Those from international locations were divided evenly with 6 participants saying it was mentor driven, and the other 6 saying it was mentee driven with a mean score of 1.5. See Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Mentee Location Related to Navigator

Mentee Location Related to Navigator	Domestic	International
Mean	1.272727273	1.5
Variance	0.204545455	0.272727273
Observations	33	12
Pooled Variance	0.221987315	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	-1.4309504	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.079836112	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.159672223	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

When asked if the participants preferred preset criteria for the selection of mentors and mentees, the domestic or international location of the mentors did affect the statistical analysis. The responses of the domestic mentors from the United States were fairly evenly split between those who do prefer preset criteria and those who do not with a mean score of 1.42%. On the other hand, international mentoring participants favored preset criteria for the selection of mentor and mentees with a mean score of 1.33. Both domestic and international mentoring participants prefer preset criteria, with international mentoring desiring it much more so. See Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. Mentee Location Related to Preset Selection

Mentee Location Related to Preset Selection	Domestic	International
Mean	1.424242424	1.333333333
Variance	0.251893939	0.242424242
Observations	33	12
Pooled Variance	0.249471459	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	0.539930943	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.296015053	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.592030106	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

Second Tier Mentor Interviews

The second tier of research involved 12 mentors who were interviewed individually via Zoom who further expounded on their initial survey answers. Regarding best practices, this research cohort of 12 unanimously reported that a Christ centered collaborative relationship between mentee and mentor was the primary vehicle and practice through which mentoring spiritual leaders effectively occurred. This catalyst of

quality, trusted relationship is an essential seedbed and first step for spiritual mentoring to occur. Participants reported that the primary goals of these best practices found in mentoring relationships focused on producing spiritual maturity in Christ which impacted the individual wholistically, advancing the Kingdom of Christ, and producing godly fruit in the life of the mentee. Each of these mentoring endeavors reported by the 12 participants required at least minimal structure in their mentoring program. Minimal structure included initial informal or formal assessment of the mentee to get the pulse of the mentee, adopted criteria such as meeting together consistently, regular quality transparent conversations, and equal investment by mentor and mentee in the mentoring process. Most of the mentoring relationships that were reported by these 12 mentors implemented higher structures such as clearly defined requirements for completion, standard curriculum, and assessments of mentee progress. Every participant reported that regardless of the degree of the individual structure used when mentoring, they each also embraced a hybrid design of structure and freedom to redirect goals and direction based on the Holy Spirit's direction, mentee's needs, goals for the process, or other variables. Best practices also included actively doing life together side by side, such as ministry internships, which allowed the mentors to assess, provide direction, and nurture the mentees in their context in real time while mentees dealt with the stresses of life, failure, disequilibrium, and success.

Third Tier Mentee Focus Groups

The third tier of research involved two focus groups of 6-8 mentees each who were interviewed simultaneously virtually via Zoom and in person. The best practice reported by the first focus group for effective spiritual mentoring was a committed

relationship between mentor and mentee with reciprocal commitment and investment. Other best practices included approachability of the mentor, success by the mentor in the field the mentee is pursuing, authenticity, brutal honesty, and mutual respect. Also noted as best practices was the mentor asking the right questions while allowing the mentee room for self-discovery without giving the answers to them out right and a long haul approach to mentoring that develops relational roots between the two.

The second focus group of mentees reported that the majority of best practices revolved around an organic relationship that occurred face to face, that was not highly structured but rather flowed out of doing life together with a mentor who asked genuine questions and showed life instead of just telling the mentee how to do life. The mentoring bond would occur out of this evolution of relationship and allow the mentee to replicate sought after life skills seen in the mentor.

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Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

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RQ #2. What do recognized mentors of effective spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are barriers to mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

First Tier Mentor Surveys

The first tier of research comprised of the initial survey also collected data regarding barriers that were identified in effectively mentoring spiritual leaders. The most noted barriers to effective mentoring included busyness, availability, distraction, and time constraints. Other barriers included not understanding the concept of mentoring, organizational environmental barriers, fear of asking for help or rejection, and lack of proximity. Unrelinquished sin or unhealthy attitudes and activities could be barriers to the mentoring relationship, as well as mentors exhibiting judgmental attitudes or

unknown unhealthy motivations, mentees lacking humility or willingness to be challenged, spiritual immaturity, spousal interference with the process, lack of buy in, and breach of confidentiality. Additional barriers involved making the mentee a project instead of a person to be nurtured, differing cultural perspectives and understandings of authority, age biases, generational barriers and the need for active listening, laziness, lack of clear goals, and lack of preparation and engagement. Mentees' embracing false beliefs, mentees' unrealistic expectations about progress or results, lack of honesty and lack of devoted spiritual disciplines were also noted as barriers in the survey.

Second Tier Mentor Interviews

Barriers to effective spiritual mentoring were also reported by the 12 participants in the second tier interviews of data collection. Most of these participants noted that the primary barrier was busyness, availability, and time investment of the mentees. Other barriers that the participants noted included lack of coachability; an absence of spiritual fathers or mothers who had been mentors; lack of buy in by the mentee; a lack of a clear mentoring process; cultural barriers such as the mentee embracing the world's cultural instead of Christ's counterculture; lack of proximity to the mentor that made preferable face to face mentoring difficult; unchecked personal agendas; institutional authority over nurturing relational authority; lack of trust or vulnerability; and conflicting external dynamics such as a spouse not being on board with the mentoring process.

Third Tier Mentee Focus Groups

The third tier of research involved two focus groups of 6-8 mentees each who were interviewed simultaneously virtually via Zoom and in person. The primary barrier reported by the first focus group for effective spiritual mentoring was a lack of genuine

investment in the relationship by the mentor or information without intentionality, relational nurture, and commitment to the same goal. Other barriers communicated by the group included presumptions on behalf of the mentor, theological incongruence, the mentor's lack of teachability or unwillingness to see things differently, and a lack of proximity.

The second focus group of mentees who were interviewed to discern barriers to effective mentoring reported the greatest barrier was time and time management. Half of the participants in this focus group commented about time and time management. A primary additional barrier was the lack of commitment by either mentor or mentee. Secondary barriers included lack of humility, vulnerability or trust in the relationship, unrealistic expectations, lack of follow up, and the mentor not being open to new ideas.

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Research Question #3: Description of Evidence

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RQ #3. According to recognized mentors of leaders and their mentees, what other factors should be considered when mentoring effective church leaders?

First Tier Mentor Surveys

The survey also collected data about additional factors to be considered in effectively mentoring spiritual leaders. These additional factors included experience; communicational and generational compatibilities; goal congruence between mentor and mentee; cultural awareness regarding ecclesiastical, age related, ethnicity and other issues; and not underestimating the safe space you are cultivating as mentor through trust, empathy, and nonjudgmental awareness. Additional factors to be considered in the mentoring process included being aware of the capacity, skills, and abilities of the mentee; mutual respect; regular honest assessment of the process including when to end

the relationship due to lack of chemistry; diversity of theological backgrounds; gender issues; and boundaries. The survey research also denoted that it is important for the mentor to understand systems theory and how relationships impact other structures wholistically.

Second Tier Mentor Interviews

Other factors to be considered for effective mentoring that were reported in the second tier interviews of the data collection by the 12 mentors included chemistry between mentors and mentees, a lack of effective mentor processes, tensions or divergent goals within an organization, lack of mentee mental health, lack of mentor credibility, and lack of self-awareness.

Third Tier Mentee Focus Groups

The third tier of research involved two focus groups of 6-8 mentees each who were interviewed simultaneously virtually via Zoom and in person. The primary additional factors that the first focus group considered for effective spiritual mentoring were relational buy in and a reemphasis of the importance of investment in the mentoring relationship. Other factors included embracing the realization that failure is a positive and the mutual respect between mentor and mentee that values every relationship as an opportunity to grow.

The second focus group communicated other factors to be considered in effective mentoring. These included providing healthy processing of life between mentor and mentee, embracing failure together, realizing that different mentors can meet different needs in a mentees' life, and not being fixated on just one individual to meet all your needs.

Summary of Major Findings

The findings from this research are related to the best practices in a mentoring

relationship, barriers that hinder effective mentoring, and factors that affect the mentor-

mentee relationship. The major findings include the following:

1. Intentionally establishing and nurturing a relational environment of trust for the

   purpose of maturity in Christ is the best practice of effective spiritual mentoring.

   Secondary best practices include the role of process assessment, relational

   transparency, and accountability.

2. Primary barriers to developing effective spiritual leaders through mentoring

   included busyness, which was the number one barrier mentioned, and time

   constraints; lack of coachability or teachable spirit; incongruent investment

   between mentee and mentor; and trust issues.

3. Other factors to be considered when effectively mentoring spiritual leaders

   included chemistry, compatibilities, capacity and goal congruence between

   mentee and mentor, cultural awareness related to ecclesiastical, age, ethnicity, and

   other issues, healthy parameters, theological divergence, and systems theory.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The research for this study seeks to discern best practices and primary barriers of effective spiritual mentoring. Spiritual leadership development through mentoring is crucial to expand Christ's biblical directives of globally making disciples, thus revealing God's kingdom on earth as in heaven (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 6:10). For this kingdom to come, as Christ prayed, God requires a human component to be faithful on earth. Godly leaders, developed through effective mentoring and discipleship, are essential to this task. These leaders cannot emerge without proper development.

Without strong godly leadership the kingdom of God on earth will stall. This dilemma is evident throughout scriptural history and showcased today in our modern culture of post-Christendom. To partner with God in accomplishing a divine work, believers must develop godly leadership to fulfill God's will on earth. I want to know the most effective way and method of developing godly leaders for ministry in their sphere of influence. Therefore, the primary purpose of this research was to discern the best practices for mentoring effective spiritual leaders while also identifying barriers and other factors related to effective mentoring.

Chapter 5 communicates the three major findings of this research study from the personal observation and perspective of the researcher, from the viewpoint of the literature review, and from a biblical and theological framework. This chapter reports the ministry implications of this research, communicating how this work can be used to further spiritual leadership development and the work of the church. Furthermore, this

chapter details what limitations existed for this research, and unexpected observations that were attained. The chapter also communicates how this work has affected me, my present journey, future applications, and also my personal reflections. Finally, this chapter addresses recommendations for changes in mentoring spiritual leaders and future research.

Major Findings

First Finding: Best Practices for Effective Spiritual Mentoring

Intentionally establishing and nurturing a relational environment of trust for the purpose of maturity in Christ is the best practice of effective spiritual mentoring. Secondary best practices include the role of process assessment, relational transparency, and accountability.

Every participant involved in each of the three tiers of research in this study indicated that this intentional Christ centered relationship was the single best practice and bedrock of effective spiritual mentoring. Human transformation requires relational imprinting which necessitates quality relationship.

According to a biblical and theological framework, through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, God offers humanity this transformation using the supernatural and natural organism called the Church that was birthed at Pentecost. Spiritual mentoring builds the bridge between these relationships for transformation of the believer for the goal of maturity in Christ which impacts the believer wholistically.

God initiated the first mentoring relationship in Eden as the Creator literally walked with humanity to express love and divine guidance that would shape their destiny (Gen. 3:8). This biblical DNA of walking life out together for the purpose of spiritual

transformation would continue through the lens of both the Old and New Testaments. Mentoring was showcased perfectly in the ministry of Christ as he called, nurtured, equipped, and lived alongside twelve mentees with a subset of three of these, who would become the first Apostles. These Christ followers would further continue God's vision of shaping lives wholistically through relational and spiritual transformation by following the two greatest commandments which fueled these relationships with love. In a systems context, the environment of godly relationship, propelled by God's love and the Holy Spirit's work creates the catalyst for practical transformation through the impact of spiritual mentoring.

Christ's example demonstrates a divine and practical intentionality of choosing and developing a subset of spiritual leaders that led to a greater intimacy with these emerging leaders and a greater investment for Kingdom impact after Jesus ascended. Although Jesus Christ made it vividly clear that God loved the entire world and that His nail pierced hands and teachings were big enough to reach everyone who followed Him as a disciple, Jesus made a special effort and investment to nurture select followers. As Köstenberger points out, "Terms like 'adherent,' 'student,' or 'pupil,' do not reflect the personal attachment and commitment that was inherent and expected in Jesus' advanced conception of 'discipling' with the twelve, as presented in John 6:66" (Köstenberger, Belsterling 78). Therefore, intentional biblical mentoring led to greater life exchange and gospel impact. Jesus' precedent, as well as the practices of the Old Testament reveal the unique selection and grooming of spiritual leaders for God's work. The highly relational nature of Jesus' interaction and contiguity with these twelve men reinforced Christ's mentoring prowess and purpose for their mission of spreading the Kingdom proclamation

as recorded in Mark 3:14 "And he appointed twelve, that he might be with them, and that he might send them out to preach." Early church fathers ranging from Paul to Augustine, to Jerome to Wesley to more modern contemporaries embraced mentoring through sustained relational imprinting as the primary practical method of developing spiritual leaders and disciples as encapsulated in Paul's words "Follow my example as I follow Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1).

As research in this project denotes, this mentoring relationship, modeled by God beginning in Genesis, and passed on to humanity throughout scripture, was implemented in a fluid method of delivery containing both a more structured approach of mentoring and an organic hybrid implementation between people with the goal of godly maturity. The structured or less structured techniques of mentoring depended on variables such as the mentor's or ministry's prerogative, active listening to the Holy Spirit and the mentee, and the Holy Spirit's discerned guidance which was based in scripture. Also considered in this mentoring relationship and its structure is the mentees' needs and predetermined goal outcomes.

Secondary best practices and further dynamics of mentoring included assessment of the mentoring process, transparency, and accountability. These specific methods are also derived from Biblical directives contained in scripture, which have been followed for millennia as humanity has been commissioned to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). The call and example for transparency in Christian community, formation, and discipleship can be witnessed throughout scripture. For example, Ephesians 4:25 states "Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another" as well as

Colossians 3:9 which states, "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the

old self with its practices".

The reported review of relevant literature on spiritual mentoring seems to verify

this truth of the first finding. McCann points out that for schools of thought that filtered

from the Greco-Roman epistolary custom adopted by fathers like Augustine, Jerome, and

the Pelagians, who were embraced more by early bishops and priests who followed Pope

Gregory the Great, mentoring focused on more connection through a "loving trust" than

strict obedience which the early Egyptian fathers seemingly espoused (McCann 37-38).

Nonetheless, in the teachings of the early Church fathers, ranging from Jerome, who was

an ardent disciple of St. Gregory of Nazianzus; to Augustine, whom Bishop Ambrose

among others mentored; to Pope Gregory, who grew up within an ecclesial heritage, the

practice of spiritual mentoring held great importance in the life of the Church and the

development of the believer (Burghardt; McCann 33). This "loving trust" that McCann

speaks of lends itself to an understanding of intentional relationship being a fertile

seedbed for Christian maturity to germinate from in the life of mentees.

As the literature review in this project communicates, Christian history is

abundant with examples of spiritual mentoring through godly relationships. One prime

example viewed through the lens of the Old Testament involves Moses mentoring of

Joshua. Joshua's life paralleled Moses' because of intentionality on the part of Moses.

God commanded Moses to fulfil this intentional relationship through mentoring and

laying hands on him (Num. 27:18-20). Freeks notes:

> According to Numbers 27,18-23, Joshua was commissioned to succeed Moses. At
>
> that point in time he was referred to as someone in whom the spirit was. Joshua is

further described as one who "stood before" Moses. So God commanded Moses to strengthen Joshua because Joshua would cause Israel to inherit the land (cf. Deuteronomy 3,2 8). God spoke through Moses to tell Joshua to be strong and courageous (Joshua 31, 23) and according to Deuteronomy 34, 9 the spirit of wisdom filled Joshua when Moses laid his hands on him. These events demonstrated that Joshua's leadership was based upon God's instructions to Moses to appoint him. (Freeks 242).

This laying on of hands by Moses in this context is symbolic but also a practical application of a spiritual and literal transference of God's Spirit and wisdom as well as Moses' authority. On one hand it symbolizes "the handing on of Moses' office to Joshua", but this act also denotes other meanings including a solemn blessing, consecration as well as succession to office and authority to teach and lead (Ellicott 23). In a similar respect, this laying on of hands-on Joshua from Moses was the official sign of the practice of intentional mentoring of Moses to another. Afterall it was by following Moses and Moses teaching Joshua, intentionally pulling him alongside himself, that Joshua learned about God, life, and leadership. As Freeks points out

> Joshua was Moses' servant because he was the only person permitted to go up with Moses on the mountain of God (Exod. 24, 13) (R.D. Moore: 2007, 158-159). It was here that Joshua observed everything that Moses did and how he approached God.
>
> . . . Moses mentored Joshua, at first his servant, to become one of the best trained and qualified leaders for the people of Israel to lead them into the promised land (Deut. 31,1-8; 34,9). (Freeks 243)

God directed Moses to train Joshua through mentoring to mold and lead a nation. Joshua observed Moses in action in all things and therefore the man and mantle of Moses permeated who Joshua was to others. God's Spirit lived in and through Moses, and in turn, through mentoring and life exchange, Moses would live through Joshua as God's Spirit continued the legacy.

Furthermore, Doriani describes this divine mentoring collaborative that transpires through relationship and involves the practices of "helpful presence and self-disclosure" as tenets in this "God centered model for friendship" (Doriani 16). The friendship and mentoring relationship between God and Abraham is clear as James 2:23 notes. Beginning in Genesis, the scriptural narrative builds, revealing the mechanics of this mentoring relationship. The relationship displays the best practice of effective spiritual mentoring which includes the roles of helpful presence and self-disclosure and a secondary best practice of assessment, transparency and accountability as two early ear marks of effective spiritual mentoring (Doriani, pg.16). According to Doriani these spiritual mentoring practices and qualities have persisted through the ages, manifesting in church leaders including Calvin, Farel and Bucer (Doriani 17,19).

My personal observation regarding the first major finding is that it is congruent and consistent with what I have found in mentoring. Without the intentional development and nurturing of the incubator of relationship there can be no effective spiritual mentoring. It would appear to me that, after initially establishing and defining this quality relationship, the structural integrity of the mentoring relationship must be assessed regularly through open honest communication, observation, accountability, and tools to ensure its sustained potency and effectiveness. Relationships of this caliber that will

potentially establish the future health of Christ's church require compassionate intentionality, work and nurture while abiding by Christ's biblical examples and directives.

Second Finding: Barriers to Developing Effective Spiritual Leaders

Whereas there are best practices of spiritual mentoring, barriers to effectiveness also exist. Primary barriers to developing effective spiritual leaders through mentoring included busyness, which was the number one barrier mentioned, and time constraints; lack of coachability or teachable spirit; incongruent investment between mentee and mentor; and trust issues.

Through the lens of a biblical and theological framework, in the present journey towards maturity in Christ there will be pitfalls, hindrances, and distractions to address and avoid. Hebrews 12:1-2a states, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." Furthermore, scripture contains examples of believers, like Demas, who deserted their calling, even after being in the company of faithful servants of Christ like Paul, Luke, Epaphras, Mark and Aristarchus (II Tim. 4:10; Phil. 23, 24; Col. 4:14).

The danger of distractions that divide hearts for Christ including the competition of priorities is mentioned in scripture as something to avoid. Christ challenged Martha to choose the most important thing when faced with tempting substitutes (Matt. 10:38-42). Lot's choice was based on worldly appearances, and his decision came back to cause him and his family suffering (Genesis 19). Along these lines, scripture warns of unproductive

busyness (II Thess. 3:11), the need for humility in life and learning (Matt 11:29, I Peter

5:5), avoiding laziness (Col. 3:23), the danger of lukewarmness or half-heartedness that

results in being unequally yoked to a mentor in investment (Rev. 3:16), avoiding doubt

by trusting (Jas. 1:6; Prov. 3:5-6), and harboring a heart that receives the work of God (I

John 2:27). Lack of proper time and priority management, laziness, pride, mistrust, and

doubt effects the stewardship of a Christian worker and is noted by participants in this

study as well as biblical teachers to be barriers for effective Christ development and

spiritual maturity.

Literature as well as biblical directives reinforce the fact that barriers do exist in

the relational imprinting of mentoring and can vary. These dynamics, including barriers,

do not occur in a vacuum but rather manifest through behavior and implementation that

may produce pitfalls as circumstances such as organizational issues and individual needs

change (Alayoğlu 163) Biblically and in practice these barriers may affect the Christian

witness that has been integral for the people of faith as the world around them observes

Christians. Both the Old and New Testaments as well as early Christendom valued the

significance of global and public witness espoused by Christ in Acts 1:8 "But you will

receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in

Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Augustine's

writings demonstrate an outward trend from monastic life to the general public as he

sought to expand the Gospel and promote maturity in Christ through lifestyle and witness

while being present and centrally located in town with his witnesses such as Hippo while

there also existed a tension to withdraw from areas of metropolis and embrace excessive

isolationism (Augnet). Barriers to this Christian witness not only negatively impact

Christians' witness to the world around them, but the barriers impede the progress of spiritual development which is a goal of effective mentoring.

My personal observations of these barriers to effective mentoring ranging from perceived busyness, competing priorities, lack of a teachable spirit, laziness, trust issues, and other hindrances related to poor stewardship confirm that these issues are a reality and must be addressed for effective mentoring to occur. Based on the research, communicating these potential pitfalls proactively may ensure that they do not become an imposing issue and this awareness may contribute to greater effectiveness in the process.

Third Finding: Other Factors to Consider when Mentoring Spiritual Leaders

Other factors to be considered when effectively mentoring spiritual leaders included chemistry, compatibilities, capacity and goal congruence between mentee and mentor, as well as cultural awareness related to ecclesiastical and age related issues. Additional factors included ethnicity, healthy parameters, theological divergence, and systems theory.

The field of mentoring is expansive because at its core it deals with the dynamic and relational life transference of diverse people who are individually unique yet remarkably multifaceted. This relational reality lends itself to there being a myriad of factors to consider in the practice of mentoring effectively.

Scriptural and theological framework communicates that Christians must be equally yoked for forward spiritual progress (II Cor. 6:14) with Jesus encapsulating the mentoring process by encouraging his followers to "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me" (Matt. 11:29). Just as a yoke of two different oxen would need to be of the same size proportionately to plow a straight line for a good work, so Christians are called

to congruently work alongside each other, even valuing their healthy differences, for the work God has called them to. This harmony and unity are reflected in chemistry, compatibilities, capacity, and goal congruence between mentee and mentor, and should be considered in the initial or assessment phase of mentee selection. Additional considerations in the mentoring process include being aware of relational systems that impact mentoring as well as foster awareness allowing mentor and mentee to be sensitive to potentially divergent ecclesiology or theology, and age related or ethnicity issues that could be a distraction to effectiveness. For example, if an individual from the United States is mentoring a mentee in Africa via Zoom, to build from a clear understanding for a common goal, ethnic expectations, cultural mores, societal norms, or even Biblical interpretations may exist that both need to consider when communicating with each other. Other factors to be aware of include healthy parameters in order to avoid pitfalls of ministry. Scripture communicates that Christians, "as God's stewards, must be above reproach", and that they must "abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). Parameters based on scripture are there to protect Christians from moral failures and preserve the godly witness they are entrusted to showcase that reflects the Lord.

My personal observations regarding these additional factors have led me to remain interpersonally vigilante to put myself in others' proverbial shoes. Ethnocentrism, egocentricity, and pride make Christians blind to pitfalls, insensitivity, assumptions, and even appropriate systems to utilize when relating to others.

The literature review confirmed the longstanding reality of diverse factors to be considered in spiritual mentoring. For example, as previously pointed out, whereas the primary purpose of spiritual mentoring, seeking maturity in Christ because of one's

stewardship of the Gospel, remained intact, there were differences in the implementation of mentoring in early Christian communities. For instance, diverse understandings and theology of whether spiritual perfection, and thus full maturity in Christ, could be attained prior to glory impacted the role of mentoring depending on the strength of the role of someone's will in the transformation paradigm (McCann 33). Additionally, issues of status between mentor and mentee arose (McCann 13). Hermeneutics also impacted mentoring practices and discipleship as spiritual mentoring relationships, at differing levels, abounded. For example, the term "spiritual friendship" or *"custos animi,"* first discovered "in the writings of Gregory the Great, defines a friend as "the guardian of one's soul." Whereas this certainly plays a role in one's spiritual development, this term (and others) was too broad for more intentional mentoring (McGuire xiv-xv).

Also, there were some, such as one Pelagian, who publicly taught that a woman may mentor a man (McCann pg. 33). There also existed differing views of obedience between mentor and mentee. For schools of thought that filtered from the Greco- Roman epistolary custom adopted by fathers like Augustine, Jerome, and the Pelagians, who were embraced more by early bishops and priests who followed Pope Gregory the Great, mentoring focused on more connection through a "loving trust" than strict obedience that the early Egyptian fathers seemingly espoused (McCann, pg. 37-38). Nonetheless, it was clear that it was the teaching of the early Church fathers, ranging from Jerome, who was an ardent disciple of St. Gregory of Nazianzus, to Augustine who Bishop Ambrose and others mentored, to Pope Gregory who grew up within an ecclesial heritage that the practice of spiritual mentoring held great importance in the life of the Church and the development of the believer (Burghardt; McCann 33). It would empower mentors and

mentees alike today to be aware of the diverse factors that contribute and detract from effective spiritual mentoring so they may be proactively aware and bring this into their practice and process.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

Proverbs 11:14 says that in the abundance of counselors there is success. The goal of this study is to glean from the seasoned counsel of practitioners in the field of mentoring to discern best practices, barriers, and additional factors to be aware of for the goal of growing spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity impacts all areas of a believer's life and this wholistic overflow influences others in their wake as the Holy Spirit networks divine strategy. As mentors and mentees apply best practices, navigate barriers, and consider these additional factors, they have a greater opportunity to expand effective leadership development for the future health of the church. Likewise, this ecclesial health will further reveal God's Kingdom on earth as Christ prayed.

The use of this study on effective mentoring practices can serve as a catalyst for an understanding of relational spiritual development, ministry and church practitioner health, spiritual leadership dynamics, and similar church systems. This research also contributes to a greater awareness of factors to consider in the diverse field of mentoring as well as a validation to pursue mentoring through varied processes. While processing the various components of mentoring in this study through the lens of both mentors and mentees, individuals and ministries can see how multidimensional mentoring can be accomplished which may stimulate a greater comprehensive vision and approach to relational imprinting to further ignite academic longevity in this field.

Another implication of this research is its impact on the local community level through practice and principle. Individuals shape communities, both spiritual and secular. Effective mentoring practices seek to improve individuals through sharing life, thus eventually improving the DNA of their community. Healthy DNA empowers healthy communities through the lowest common denominator of sharing. This is God's process of improvement as the divine shared life with us, showcased through Jesus.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is its scope. Mentoring is universal in range and expansive across many diverse cultures. Although research sought for a more global reach in the study, and it is true that there is international mentoring represented in this study, the majority of the participants are from the United States. Since the outset of the study, I understood this may be a limitation of the study. Had this study been expanded to more mentors and mentees outside of the United States the research may have provided more diverse information or findings that validated or confirmed content to increase efficacy.

The second limitation was the gender ratio represented in the study. Twenty percent of participants were female. More females were invited to participate. Had this research included more female participation the outcomes may have been dissimilar or could have yielded different results.

The third limitation was the number of participants represented in the study. A greater quantity of respondents would increase representation of mentors and mentees in the general population. Furthermore, more contributors to the study could potentially add

a greater wealth of data to be collected, processed, and contributed to the knowledge base of effective mentoring.

The last limitation of the study was the age of mentors and mentees who participated in the research. A significant population was left out of this study: youth and individuals under 18. Furthermore, there were only 5 participants under 50. Young people are the future of our civilization and the rising pillars who will eventually determine the outcomes of what humanity will face. This study was limited to adults and therefore only represented a certain percentage of the population. Incorporating youth into the findings would galvanize more accurate data and communicate a greater demonstration of reality that impacts the field of mentoring.

Unexpected Observations

I anticipated uniformity across the board on major findings although there were unexpected observations. For example, the five participants who were under the age of fifty and took the initial mentor survey, all communicated that they preferred a face to face setting. It could have been assumed or inferred that this relatively younger population compared to the larger, older population participating in this survey would prefer a virtual setting but statistically speaking this observation reveals a solid conclusive finding that points to a greater desire for face to face mentoring. Additionally, as I looked for demographic trends relating to age and gender, I was surprised there did not to appear to be any traceable trends, perhaps because the population pool was so limited.

For example, of the forty-five participants who responded to the initial survey, nine were female. Four of the nine communicated that their mentees initiated the

mentoring relationship, and other responses related to initiation of the relationship were not pronounced enough to see trends.

I was also surprised to find the value that mentees placed on the mentors themselves learning in the process, and the mentees' role of impacting the ones who mentored them. Responses from the mentees in the focus groups also communicated a strong desire for mutual respect from their mentors and a buy in from their mentors as much as the mentors communicated it was a priority of theirs in the lives of mentees. This value of reciprocity between both mentors and mentees was a key part of data that needs to be assimilated into the larger knowledge base of mentoring. I was also surprised that the environment of the intentional relationship, that creates and fosters the mentoring process, appeared to be assumed, yet it was the nexus of all things related to effective mentoring and the human system that determined the health, progress, and longevity of mentoring itself. Therefore, effective mentoring is impossible without this quality relationship.

I was further surprised that according to quantitative data analysis, a finding related to mentor environment was that females lean toward virtual mentoring and males more in person while those under fifty exclusively desired in person mentoring and those over fifty were open to a combination of in person and virtual. I would have thought that participants under fifty who may be more screen prone or virtual friendly would have preferred more mentor screen time than such a strong leaning towards in person mentoring. Also, I would have thought females would have preferred more in person mentor connection than the lean toward virtual mentoring that the data reflected.

Recommendations

This study or similar research may be expanded to represent more populations and demographics for greater representation and implementation. Furthermore, this framework of best practices, identified barriers and additional factors of effective mentoring could be utilized to create relational networks of mentoring to strengthen the DNA of Christian communities. These networks could build interpersonal bridges from potential to progress, needs to resources, and ability to achievement. Building lives through relational imprinting is a universal goal global humanity embraces; history validates this truth. For this reason, divinity was inserted into human brokenness for the purpose of human transformation. The Creator manifested this life exchange as Christ impacted culture through mentoring relationships to show his followers a new way to be human.

Postscript

Personally, the research and compilation of this journey has awakened a conviction that mentoring truly impacts lasting change in our world. The validity of this truth has been preserved in the divine time capsule of scripture; this same scripture that communicates God's heart to the world. This practical truth has been methodically expressed through the same divine word, affirmed by history and humanity's practice, and proven right by its actions. I am convinced that biblical spiritual mentoring is the relational system that God ordained to shape his followers into the image humans were created to bear.

I am further convinced that relational atrophy of our current culture has eroded this biblical conviction across the global church, resulting in far too few future leaders.

This failure will shape the church of tomorrow, as she is needed more than ever. This spiritual epidemic is the worldly pandemic Paul laments, "Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers…" (I Cor. 4:15). My prayer is that the church urgently realizes the solution Christ gave us as he turned the world upside down, for His Father's glory, using a handful of believers who were mentored intimately and intentionally for a calling beyond their reach by reaching each other.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

THREE TIER DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Research Purpose: Mentoring Spiritual Leaders: Discerning Effective Practices

Dissertation data collection components:

1. *First Tier: Survey 1 (sent via email to 50 Mentors in Google Survey format)*
2. *Second Tier: Semi-structured Interview 1 for Mentors* via Zoom
3. *Third Tier: Semi-structured Interview 2 for Mentees (in 2 Focus Groups via Zoom and in person)*

Data collection process:

Step 1: **First Tier Mentor Survey: Survey 1** (which is compiled of the questions 1 – 18 below) will be sent to 50 mentors via mail or email.

Step 2: **Second Tier Interviews:** then out of those 50 mailed out surveys' responses, I will choose and conduct 10 - 15 semi-structured interviews over the phone or via Zoom individually with those mentors to gather data on best practices/barriers/additional factors of mentoring from a mentor's perspective

Step 3: **Third Tier Focus Groups (2):** then invite those 10 – 15 mentors to select mentees to comprise 2 focus groups of mentees (if each mentor can recruit 1 mentee person, there will be 2 focus groups of 5-8 participants each). The researcher will then lead 2 mentee focus groups based on semi-structured interview questions to facilitate discussion to gather data on best practices of mentoring from a mentee's perspective

each participant will receive and agree to an IRB approved informed consent form that explains the survey and communicates all pertinent information before proceeding with the research.

APPENDIX B

THREE TIER DATA COLLECTION TOOL: TIER 1

Step 1: Google First Tier Mentor Survey 1: *constitutes the questions 1 – 18 below in a survey to be mailed to **mentors***:

> *Questions 1 – 11 pertain to my RQ1:* **RQ #1. What do recognized mentors of spiritual leaders and their mentees indicate are the best practices (ways/methods/attributes) to mentor effective spiritual leaders?**

> These are the questions provided to compile the Google survey and emailed to mentors:

1. Mentor Demographic Information (Please check one):
   Age Range 20 – 35, 35 – 50, 50 – 65, 65 or older

2. Mentor Demographic Information: Male or female (Please check one):
   Male ___ Female ___

3. How would you describe the environment where the majority of the mentoring takes place? (Please check one):
   a. Virtual one on one setting (such as via Zoom or Face Time)
   b. In person one on one setting _____
   c. Multiple persons in person during mentoring sessions _____
   d. Virtual multiple persons together during mentoring sessions _____
   e. Other (Please describe if Other in the space below)

4. Is the number of the mentoring sessions open ended or when you begin the mentoring process is there an agreed upon number to be completed?
   (Please check one):

   Open ended   _____
   Agreed upon number   _____

5. Are the mentor sessions primarily directed by the mentor or mentee?
   (Please check one):

   Mentor   _____
   Mentee   _____

6. Who initiates the mentor relationship?

Mentor _____
Mentee _____
Referral _____
Other   _____

7. How would you describe the format of the mentor experience?
    (Please check one):

    Highly structured curriculum based   _____

    Loosely structured with overall plan   _____

    Loosely structured without curriculum or written plan   _____

    Free ranging   _____

    If other, please describe if Other in the space below

8. How is progress assessed?
    (Please check one):

    By mentor   _____
    By Mentee   _____
    By assessment tool(s) _____
    By course completion   _____
    Other   _____

    Please describe if Other in the space below

9. Are there preset clear criteria for the selection of mentors or mentees?

    (Please check one):

    Yes _____
    No _____

10. If yes, what criteria are used to select mentors/mentees, e.g., age, desire to be mentored, intentionality by mentee, prerequisites to be met, referral, curriculum to be completed beforehand, etc.?

   Please answer in the box below:

11. Please list in the box below the best mentoring practices you have discerned that have produced the greatest results for maturity in Christ in the life of your mentee.

   Please answer in the box below:

   *Questions 12-16 pertain to RQ2: **RQ #2. What do recognized mentors of**

leaders and their mentees indicate are barriers to mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

These next 5 interview questions are used to assess barriers identified by the mentors in

their mentoring.

12. What barriers to mentoring do you observe that negatively impact effective spiritual mentoring?

13. In your experience are their cultural differences that impact the mentoring relationship? If so, please explain.

14. Research denotes that there are varying expectations when it comes to the role of spiritual authority in a mentoring relationship. How is spiritual authority understood in your practice of the mentoring relationship and do you see diverse expectations of spiritual authority as a barrier?

15. In your experience are their generational barriers that impact the mentoring relationship? If so, please explain.

16. Some research communicates that the various roles in mentoring may change and that unclear mentoring roles or transitioning roles may create relational turbulence for the mentoring relationship. In the mentor/mentee relationship how do you clarify the role(s) and expectations that each party plays in the mentoring process? If so, please explain.

Questions 17-18 pertain to RQ3: **RQ #3. According to recognized mentors of leaders, what other factors should be considered when mentoring effective spiritual leaders?** *The last 2 interview questions are used to assess additional factors that mentors have identified that should be considered in this process.*

17. What other relational factors should be considered when mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

    Please answer in the box below:

18. As we plan for the future of effective spiritual mentoring, in your opinion what are best practices moving forward for mentoring effective church leaders? What are some emerging trends in mentoring?

    Please answer in the box below:

APPENDIX C

THREE TIER DATA COLLECTION TOOL: TIER 2

Step 2: Second Tier Mentor Interviews: Semi-structured Zoom Interview for Mentors:
During interview affirm their completion of the initial questionnaire, but now
state if we could please revisit some of these mentoring themes by going into
greater detail in these answers together…

Questions for Zoom Interview with 15 Mentors:

1. Thank you for your time and investment in this research. What would you describe as your primary goal for mentoring Christian spiritual leaders? What best practices of mentoring have you found in making effective spiritual leaders?

2. Briefly describe the process through which mentors and mentees are selected in your program or ministry?

3. Briefly describe a typical mentoring experience in your program or ministry. (Please include resources/curriculum used if any, duration and consistency of regular meetings and entire length of process if there is one, structure, setting, format of each meeting, etc.)

4. If you use curriculum, what curriculum do you use?

5. What specific mentoring outcomes or targets do you seek in your mentee (life fruit, practical traits, characteristics, behaviors, etc.)? Are there specific maturity markers, or developing milestones you are looking for to gauge the next steps with your mentee or completion? If so, what do these look like?

6. What are common challenges or barriers you have experienced in the process of mentoring that hindered the process?

7. What are the biggest threats you see to the current and future effectiveness of mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

8. In your experience are their cultural barriers that seek to undermine the mentoring relationship? If so, please explain.

9. How is spiritual authority understood in your practice of the mentoring relationship and do you see diverse expectations of spiritual authority that you manage as a mentor?

10. Do you observe generational differences in the mentoring relationship? If so, how do they impact the mentoring relationship?

11. Some research communicates that the various roles in mentoring may change and that unclear mentoring roles or transitioning roles may create relational turbulence for the mentoring relationship. In the mentor/mentee relationship how do you clarify diverse expectations in the mentoring process?

APPENDIX D

THREE TIER DATA COLLECTION TOOL: TIER 3

Step 3: Semi-structured Interview questions for Mentees' 2 focus groups:

1. Thank you for your time and investment in this research. What would you describe as your primary goal for being mentored as a Christian spiritual leader?

2. Briefly describe the process through which mentors and mentees are selected in your program or ministry?

3. Briefly describe a typical mentoring experience in your program or ministry. (Please include resources used if any, duration and consistency of regular meetings and entire length of process if there is one, structure, setting, format of each meeting, etc.) Include here: what do you feel are the best practices of mentoring?

4. Do you follow a specific curriculum, if so, what is it?

5. What specific mentoring outcomes or targets do you seek in your life as a mentee (life fruit, practical traits, characteristics, or behaviors, etc.)? Are there specific maturity markers, or developing milestones in your mentoring relationship that help you gauge your progress or completion? If so, what do these look like?

6. What are common challenges or barriers you have experienced in the process of mentoring that hindered the process?

7. What are the biggest threats you see to the current and future effectiveness of mentoring effective spiritual leaders?

8. In your experience are their cultural barriers that seek to undermine the mentoring relationship? If so, please explain.

9. How is spiritual authority understood in your practice of the mentoring relationship and do you see diverse understandings of such core issues as a barrier?

10. Along these lines, do you experience generational barriers between mentors and mentees? If so, how?

11. Some research communicates that the various roles in mentoring may change and that unclear mentoring roles or transitioning roles may create relational turbulence for the mentoring relationship. In the mentor/mentee relationship how do you clarify the incongruence that may exist between similar expectations, perceptions, and goals in the mentoring process?

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