

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY  
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

IMPACT OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT ON SPIRITUAL VITALITY  
IN EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CHURCHES:  
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Nicholas Jared Curtis

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2024

IMPACT OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT ON SPIRITUAL VITALITY IN  
EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CHURCHES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

By Nicholas Jared Curtis

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

February 23, 2024

APPROVED BY:

---

Thomas Davis, Ed.D., Dissertation Supervisor

---

John Beck, Ed.D., Second Reader

### **ABSTRACT**

The need for a biblical worldview is important in the church since only ten percent of Americans (17% in the church) have a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017, paragraph one; Barna, 2017, paragraph twenty). This is directly connected with one's spiritual growth in the church as relationships help form one's worldview which in turn will form one's values and actions (McDowell and Wallace, 2019). The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the perceived impact of biblical worldview development on spiritual development in the church for pastors who oversee discipleship at doctrinally conservative, Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas. At this stage in the research, biblical worldview development will be generally defined as helping people develop their faith and view of their world through Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008). Spiritual development is developing people according to the Word of God and Christ for holiness and a solid faith (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). The theory guiding this study is Hiebert's (2008) holistic development with a biblical worldview since all truth is in Christ and Christians should be Christ-centered in everything they do. The methodology and results will be based on an interview assessing the spiritual vitality of the church based on the vision, mission, spiritual foundation, and training of those in leadership and in the congregation.

*Keywords:* Worldview, spiritual growth, evangelism, discipleship, leadership, next generation.

**Copyright © 2024. Nicholas Jared Curtis. All Rights Reserved.**

Liberty University has permission to reproduce and disseminate this document in any form by any means for purposes chosen by the University, including, without limitation, preservation or instruction.

## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .....	3
Copyright .....	4
List of Tables .....	8
List of Abbreviations .....	9
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN .....	10
Introduction.....	10
Background to the Problem .....	11
Statement of the Problem.....	17
Purpose Statement.....	18
Research Questions .....	19
Assumptions and Delimitations .....	20
Research Assumptions .....	20
Delimitations of the Research Design.....	21
Definition of Terms.....	22
Significance of the Study .....	23
Summary of the Design .....	25
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	27
Theological Framework of the Study .....	27
Theoretical Framework of the Study .....	39
Related Literature.....	56
Rationale for Study and Gap in Literature .....	78
Profile of the Current Study .....	81

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	83
Research Design Synopsis .....	83
The Problem.....	83
Purpose Statement.....	84
Research Questions.....	84
Research Design and Methodology .....	85
Setting .....	87
Participants.....	94
Role of the Researcher .....	97
Ethical Considerations .....	99
Data Collection Methods and Instruments.....	101
Collection Methods.....	102
Instruments and Protocols.....	102
Procedures.....	109
Data Analysis .....	113
Analysis Methods.....	113
Trustworthiness.....	118
Chapter Summary .....	121
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.....	123
Compilation Protocol and Measures .....	123
Collection of Data.....	123
Demographic and Sample Data .....	127
Data Analysis and Findings .....	128

Evaluation of the Research Design .....	168
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS .....	172
Overview .....	172
Research Purpose .....	172
Research Questions .....	172
Research Conclusions, Implications and Applications .....	173
Research Limitations .....	214
Further Research .....	215
Summary .....	216
REFERENCES .....	218
APPENDIX A .....	227
APPENDIX B .....	229
APPENDIX C .....	230
APPENDIX D .....	232
APPENDIX E .....	235
APPENDIX F .....	238

### **List of Tables**

Table 3.1 List of Potential Church Demographics.....	94
Table 3.2 Screening Survey and Research Question Comparison.....	105
Table 3.3 Main Interview Questions and Research Question Comparison.....	109
Table 3.4 Data Organization: Themes and Categories.....	118
Table 4.1 Participation and Response.....	127
Table 4.2 Survey of Data Analysis.....	167
Table 4.3 Statistical Analysis of Main Codes and Themes Generated by AI.....	168



## **List of Abbreviations**

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Experiential, Participatory, Image driven, and Connected (EPIC)

Institute Review Board (IRB)

King James Bible, 1769/2017 (KJV)

Research Question (s) (RQ)

## CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

### Introduction

The main goal of the local church according to Jesus is to reach the lost and help people follow Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). According to a 2009 Barna study, the church does not have a clear focus when it comes to defining spiritual growth since half of the church is unclear on what spiritual maturity looks like in the church (2009, paragraph five). Although recent Barna (2017) research show a greater interest in spiritual growth and the Bible, Lifeway (2017, paragraph sixteen) research shows a subsequent lack of interest in it altogether due to a lack of execution since 27 percent fail to prioritize reading the scriptures. Although people have positive views of reading the scriptures (including its take on morality), over half of the people have read little of the Bible (2017, paragraphs eight and fourteen), which links the lack of execution (application) to spiritual growth.

One of the main reasons for a lack of spiritual execution is a lack of worldview development since one in ten Americans have a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017, paragraph one) and the number decreases to four percent for Generation Z according to Morrow (2018, paragraph three). The culture also has an effect since fewer Christians are believing in absolute truth due to post-modernism and other secular worldviews (Barna, 2017, Morrow, 2018; Knight, 2006). 17 percent of Christians polled in a 2017 Barna study have a biblical worldview, thus showing how the culture is impacting their faith (Barna, 2017, paragraph twenty). According to a 2018 study by Barna, only 35 percent of believers believe in absolute truth which means that 44-65 percent of believers do not hold the Bible to be absolute truth (Barna 2017, p. 119). This explains the reasoning why only 17 percent of Christians in America have a biblical worldview

(Barna, 2017, paragraph twenty) since they fail to believe in absolute truth, or be engaged in spiritual growth or vitality.

From this research, the heart of the issue surrounding spiritual growth is the lack of a biblical worldview among all generations present (Foley, 2017). This is due to a lack of a biblical foundation in Christians since many do not see the Bible as absolute (Knight, 2006, Foley, 2017, Barna, 2017). When a Christian foundation is in place, then people will begin to grow and Christians will have a solid faith in Christ and participate in the great commission (Knight, 2006). This study will further investigate worldview development in the body of Christ by evaluating how the church is discipling people through a biblical worldview in order to reach the culture for Christ. The need for a biblical worldview or foundation in Christians is important so Christians can grow in their faith and reach the world for Christ despite the post-modern culture around them (Knight, 2006).

In the following pages, this chapter will address the basic components of this researcher's research plan, including the background to the problem, purpose statement, research questions, delimitations of research and summary of design. All these sections comprise the research concern for the dissertation since they outline the underlining problem of this research and they help outline the different aspects of the phenomenon being studied through a unified purpose. The chapter will close with the summary of the design, which helps provide an introduction to the overall design of the research. The delimitations and assumptions mentioned early in the chapter provide the boundaries of the study.

### **Background to the Problem**

As Barna (2017) states, there is a growing need for spiritual growth among Christians, and the majority of Christians polled believed that the Bible is important to them. However,

according to a previous Barna stat (2015), a lack of execution when it comes to spiritual growth is present. Other Barna stats (2017, 2018) mentioned earlier show a lack of belief in absolute truth which partially explains how most people do not have a biblical worldview or even see the Bible as truth (Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018). According to Barna stats mentioned earlier, many people do not read the Bible so they do not have a foundation on which to stand (Foley, 2017). Thus, the issue is a developmental issue since one needs to know how to grow spiritually and develop a biblical worldview through a biblical foundation (Knight, 2006). The moving away from absolute truth would hinder people from reading the scriptures so a solid foundation is needed in order to develop Christians for the kingdom of God (2006).

The issue of discipleship in the church is deeper than most people realize since it takes being solid in Christ through a biblical worldview in order to grow spiritually and even reproduce disciples (Knight, 2006). Since post-modern culture emphasizes self instead of God, it is not surprising that many developing Christians have fallen prey to the lies of the culture and rejected a Christian foundation by focusing on self instead of God (2006). This is perhaps one of the big reasons why there is a lack of spiritual growth and worldview development in the church since the culture seems to be winning the battle against the church (Barna, 2017; Foley, 2017). If the church is affected by the culture, then they cannot reach the culture for Christ. Thus, there needs to be a strong Christian foundation amongst Christians in order to protect them from the influences of the culture and help them fulfill the great commission (Knight, 2006; Toth, 2015).

Lastly, the issue of spiritual growth in a church stems from the leadership down to the congregation since according to Chipao (2016) and Linhart (2016), leaders are to live by example for others to follow (Hebrews 13:7). This includes training the current and next generations to follow Christ. While Barna (2016) states that much of the older generations

practice their faith, a similar study by Lifeway (2017) concludes that people are fond (have a positive attitude/outlook) of the Bible and the Christian faith but few invest in it on a daily basis (Smietana, 2017). Even in both 2015 and 2018 studies on the church, the church lacks a clear focus on going about spiritual growth, including fulfilling the great commission. Therefore, from both studies, the issue of spiritual growth in the church stems from the leadership since even the pastors believe that the church is not as effective as it needs to be in this area (Barna, 2015, 2018). It is only through strong leadership that spiritual growth can happen in the church (Linhart, 2016).

### **Historical**

When it comes to having a biblical worldview, Erickson (2013), Gonzalez (2013) and Nee (2014) lay out the historical, theological, and sociological framework when it comes to the phenomenon of spiritual growth in a church setting. Gonzalez (2012, 2013) in both of his volumes of *The Story of Christianity* takes the reader from a Catholic worldview to a Protestant worldview based on differing reformers. According to Gonzalez (2013), the Catholic church from the first century relied on tradition and papal decrees as being authoritative with the Bible, and the position continued to evolve until the reformation. According to Woodbridge and James (2013), the reformation brought a whole new worldview, which has its basis on the Bible rather than tradition.

The historical aspects of a biblical worldview stem from the protestant solas, which include sola fide (faith alone), sola gratia (Christ alone) and sola scriptura (Bible alone) (Woodbridge and James, 2013, Gonzalez, 2013). This helps the disciple live out the Christian life through Christ and the Bible since the Catholic church at the time did not allow access to the Bible (Woodbridge and James, 2013, Gonzalez, 2013, Knight, 2006). The Protestant

Reformation in turn helped people rely on the Bible through biblical literacy and faith in Christ (Gonzalez, 2013; Woodbridge and James, 2013). This includes reliance on Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and the empowerment for service since two of the tenets of Luther's theology was the priesthood of all believers and faith alone in Christ alone (Gonzalez, 2013; Woodbridge and James, 2013).

### **Sociological**

In terms of sociological formation, Nee (2014) explains that human beings in general are self-driven apart from Christ and need transformation. Fay (2015) in his dissertation explains the rise of postmodernism and liberalism in the culture today. Knight (2006) and Hiebert (2008) explain how post-modernism focuses on self and the lack of an absolute truth and that the trend started with the enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of modernism, which rejected God in favor of science. The culture since the rise of modernism and post-modernism is moving further and further away from God and this is why younger people seem less interested in Christianity or in adopting a biblical worldview (Morrow, 2018; Seemiller and Grace, 2018; White, 2017). Nee (2014) states that unbelievers are self-driven so this plays into the hands of the post-modern culture (Knight, 2006).

Erickson (2015) in his introductory book on Christian theology explains how salvation is not just about being justified before God but growing and maturing as a Christian. This requires self-denial as Nee (2014) and Jesus (Mark 8:34) put it so one can live in their new nature in Christ (Ephesians 4:22-24). Nee (2014) further explains that spiritual formation is holistic, which includes mind, heart, spirit, and soul. Having a biblical worldview that is centered on Christ is essential to walking by faith since Knight (2006) explains that faith in Christ through God's

Word leads to a life of spiritual development. Therefore, it does matter what people think and believe since the principles and knowledge of Christianity is what shapes people for Christ.

In the end, Knight's (2006) and Hiebert's (2008) holistic approach to Christian education will work well in the church since people need to have a consistent biblical worldview in order to have a biblical faith. This will help them deal with the societal issues related to post-modernism and modernism since many Christians still struggle to die to themselves and follow Christ (Mark 8:34) (2006). Since a person's worldview involves one's relationships, values, and actions (Wallace and McDowell, 2019), it is essential that one has the right relationships with God and others (through being Christ-centered) so their values and actions can potentially change. This is an integral part of a Christian's maturity (Erickson, 2013).

### **Theological**

In terms of theology, a biblical worldview consists of the basics of Christian faith that is centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:8-10) (Knight, 2006; Hiebert, 2008; Dockery and Wax, 2016). It is not just knowing theology in the head but putting one's faith in Christ since a worldview according to Setran (2018) determines one's course of action (James 2:10-12). According to Knight (2006) and Hiebert (2013), the Christian faith is Christ-Centered so all of the truth of God's Word comes through the Lordship of Christ. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (KJV, John 8:31-32).

Having a biblical worldview means being Christ-Centered in doctrine, theology, and practice (Knight, 2006). This is in sharp contrast to secular worldviews like post-modernism since everything is relative and humanistic (2006). According to 2 Corinthians 10:5, a person is to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (KJV, 2 Corinthians 10:5). This

includes surrendering everything to being Christ-like in everything one does. When it comes to pastors, pastors have to “study to show themselves approved” (KJV, 2 Timothy 2:15) so they can lead by example when it comes to God’s Word (Linhart, 2016). When pastors are Christ-centered and Bible-centered in everything they do, they can in turn help their congregation do the same (Knight, 2006; Linhart, 2016).

### **Theoretical**

Since the issue with spiritual growth in a church involves both the culture and the church, it is essential that the church gets a handle on how to engage the current and past generations in order for the church to follow Jesus through the great commission. First, Ogundiran (2013) in his dissertation actually calls for the need for the church to be more active in terms of evangelism and discipleship. According to Samples (2016) and Ackerman (1994), this is best done through relationships since the leaders help facilitate spiritual growth in their flock even though everyone is responsible for their own spiritual growth. When the leaders lead well and create a positive church culture and community, then the church overall can empower people to evangelize, grow spiritually, and make disciples (Ackerman, 1994; Samples, 2016; Van Der Walt, 2017).

Second, the leadership according to Linhart (2016) needs to be qualified and have solid character so that people underneath their care can follow their example of godliness and holiness. Since pastors cannot force people to grow up spiritually, all they can do is influence others to grow and equip them with the right resources (Linhart, 2016; Van Der Walt, 2017). Having a solid worldview and character as a leader will win respect from others. People will be willing to follow the leader in evangelism and discipleship (Van Der Walt, 2017; Pettit, 2008; Toth, 2015).

Third, Jones (2006) in his dissertation on spiritual growth did a model for his church to address the issues of discipleship in his church. He had several small groups and life groups and



had some success improving spiritual growth (2006). However, his research revealed the lack of spiritual growth in his church due to human nature (2006). The promising factor in his research is that small groups and Bible reading ranked high among people in his church (2006).

Therefore, having small groups where people are encouraged to read and study the word for their spiritual development may be good for helping Christians develop a solid biblical worldview and a faith that stands apart from the culture (Jones, 2006; Knight, 2006).

Lastly, Knight (2006) and Toth (2015) in their works explain that spiritual formation in terms of education and the church has to do with helping people be Christ-centered or more like Christ in their development. Toth (2015) explains that Christians are to develop spiritually so they can in turn help reproduce disciples of Christ. Since the practice of making disciples was evident in Jesus's day, it is essential that the church helps people follow Christ so they can in turn make disciples. This takes training in the whole person according to both Knight (2006) and Nee (2014) so that people can be able to help others find and follow Jesus. This is through grasping all the principles of Christianity (Knight, 2006). Spiritual formation in the church according to Toth (2015) happens through community, teaching, and education. Therefore, it is essential that the church in America incorporates these elements in order to alleviate the lack of spiritual growth in America and to avoid losing ground to the current post-modern culture (Knight, 2006; White, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The lack of spiritual growth and discipleship is an epidemic in the church today. The same can be said about a lack of worldview and understanding of the Bible since four to ten percent do not have a biblical worldview, even in the church (Foley, 2017, paragraphs one and four; Morrow, 2018, paragraph three). While many want to follow Jesus and help people find

and follow Jesus (Barna, 2015, p. 3; Barna, 2017, church section), the lack of execution, or application when it comes to spiritual growth (Barna, 2015, p. 3) and worldview development (Foley, 2017) is present in the church. Therefore, the problems that can come in this research is a lack of understanding and connectivity concerning this issue in the church (Hebrews 5:12-16) (Barna, 2015, 2017). The issue boils down to the moving away from truth and the lack of execution of spiritual growth and worldview development in the church (Barna, 2015; Foley, 2017). For the purpose of this research, it is important to examine how the church today is going about developing its flock for Christ in terms of spiritual and worldview development so the church can better be established in Christ. It is also important to study the perceived relationship between having a solid worldview and spiritual growth in the church in order to see how having a worldview impacts the church's overall spiritual growth and service to the world (Knight, 2006; Toth, 2015).

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceived impact of biblical worldview development on spiritual development in the church for pastors who oversee discipleship at a doctrinally conservative, Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas. At this stage in the research, biblical worldview development will be generally defined as helping people develop their faith and view of their world through Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008). Spiritual development is developing people according to the Word of God and Christ for holiness and a solid faith (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). The theory guiding this study is Hiebert's (2008) holistic development with a biblical worldview since all truth is in Christ and Christians should be Christ-centered in everything they do.

## Research Questions

**RQ1.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development to its overall mission in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ2.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of how they incorporate the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ3.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of leaders in the church?

**RQ4.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of those in the congregation?

**RQ5.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of the younger generations?

RQ1 begins the framework for how each church goes about discipleship and evangelism. The connection between discipleship and evangelism and the mission of the church is what is being evaluated here since the phenomenon begins with the mission and vision of the church (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Niemandt, 2016). In terms of RQ2, the Bible is extremely important when it comes to worldview development since one's own interpretation of the Bible will determine the foundation and practice in which one goes about their worldview (Hiebert, 2008). Thus, the choice of Evangelical Protestant (where the Bible is central) helps with establishing the Bible as authoritative when it comes to establishing a biblical worldview that is based on God's Word (National Association of Evangelicals, 2021).

In terms of RQ3, as stated in this dissertation, the spiritual formation of any church begins with the leaders so it is important to see how leader formation works in a church in terms of worldview and faith development in the church (Linhart, 2016). This involves the qualifications of a leader, which includes holiness and a strong faith in Christ (able to live by example) (1 Timothy 3:1-9; Linhart, 2016). It is important to see how their worldview impacts

spiritual growth in their church through the leaders (Chester and Timmis, 2008)

Since the leaders are covered in RQ3, the spiritual development of those in the congregation are in view here in RQ4 since it is important for any church to assess how a person's worldview development impacts spiritual growth in the church (Chester and Timmis, 2008). This involves how their faith in Christ enables them to see the world and interpret reality through the eyes of Christ since they are daily "putting off the old and putting on the new" (Pettit, 2008, p. 112; Wax, 2016). Since the younger generations are moving further and further away from God, it is important to see how worldview development impacts the spiritual development of the younger generations in the church. The youth are the future of the church so it is important for this study to cover the youth so that the church can flourish (Seemiller and Grace, 2008; White, 2017).

### **Assumptions and Delimitations**

#### **Research Assumptions**

Six main assumptions are given in the study. One, it is a reality for many pastors that spiritual growth is challenging to implement in the church due to the spiritual laziness of many Christians. The lack of execution (application) (Lifeway, 2017) may make it difficult for pastors to equip people with a biblical worldview since Christians tend to struggle with their faith (Barna, 2017). Two, a biblical worldview is based on the foundation of God's Word and living one's life through a holistic faith in Christ. This is foundational for spiritual growth and health in Christians (Knight, 2006). Three, a continuous gap exists between the church, truth and the younger generation according to Barna (2017) and the church must face this challenge in order to reach the next generation since many are trained to have a secular worldview in school already and have been shaped by the culture. Four, as the great commission is considered a major part of

the believer's spiritual growth (Toth, 2015), it is assumed that doctrinally conservative churches have incorporated to some degree the Great Commission as part of their discipleship plan (Sweeney, 2013). Five, a person's biblical worldview will differ based on denomination or sect so while the truth will be the same, one's views of the Bible may differ on other secondary matters. This is also true of spiritual maturity and development. This is important to know since no two Christians are alike.

Lastly, spiritual formation in a church starts with the leaders and when the leaders are spiritual healthy, then the church has an opportunity to be spiritually healthy as a result (Linhart, 2016). Spiritual formation is first and foremost the responsibility of a Christian and not just the leadership of the church. This explains why pastors do all they can but have few results (Lifeway, 2017). However, God holds leaders responsible for how they lead and guide their flock (Hebrews 13:17) so it is important that Christians grow spiritually in their walk with the Lord.

### **Delimitations of the Research Design**

One, the research is delimited first and foremost to churches that are theologically sound to protect the doctrinal purity of the research. No church that does not believe in biblical inerrancy and authority will be studied. This research is delimited to Evangelical Protestant Churches that are conservative in doctrine (believe in biblical inerrancy and authority as well as Christ) since having a solid worldview that is Bible-based is essential for the study and most of them believe in the authority of the Bible and Christ (Sweeney, 2013; National Association of Evangelicals, 2021). This is to protect the study from having unbiblical worldviews.

Two, this research is delimited to the churches in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. This is in part due to the researcher's ability to access sites but also to access a larger network of

Evangelical Protestant churches since many are in that area as well as around the country. No one outside of the Dallas-Fort Worth area or Evangelical Protestant description of churches will be studied.

Three, this research is delimited mainly to churches that are missional and have a plan in place to help people grow spiritually through a biblical worldview. The research will select mostly churches that have a strategy in dealing with the youth since young people are at the forefront of spiritual growth and worldview development. Churches that do not have a strategy for worldview development in all ages will be studied.

Lastly, the research is delimited to pastors who oversee discipleship that has two or more years of experience and that are above the age of eighteen (no pastor under eighteen or no experience). This is to interview pastors who can give evidence of how worldview development is impacting their church and that will not encroach on ethical guidelines.

### **Definition of Terms**

1. *Biblical Worldview*: The view of reality and truth that is centered in Christ and the Bible (Knight, 2006).
2. *Community*: Being under a pastor and with other believers in a group-like setting (Samples, 2016).
3. *Discipleship*: The practice of becoming more and more like Christ, or “Following Jesus” (Pettit, 2008, p. 104).
4. *Evangelism*: “Offering an invitation for others to come into the light” (Pettit, 2008, p. 115)
5. *Faith*: One’s overall trust in the Lord, that produces “spiritual vitality in the believer” (Erickson, 2015, p. 355).
6. *Holiness*: Having an inward heart transformation and character that leads to Christlikeness. “Putting off the old and putting on the new” (Petit, 2008, p. 112).

7. *Pastor*: The under shepherd or ruler in a local church who looks after the sheep (Tripp, 2012).
8. *Post-Modernism*: The worldview that rejected modernism and absolute truth and claims that “all truth is changing and relative” (Ridenour, 2001, p. 197).
9. *Spiritual Development*: Being developed according to “Christ’s likeness” through holiness and a strong faith (Petit, 2008, p. 105).
10. *Truth*: What is considered “faithful” or “genuine” when it comes to the standard of reality, which is Christ (Erickson, 2015, p. 100-101; Knight, 2016).
11. *Worldview*: One’s construction of reality and truth concerning the world around them (Knight, 2006).
12. *Worldview Development*: Christ-like development through one’s mind that encompasses one’s actions (Knight, 2006; Toth, 2015).
13. *Younger Generation*: Anyone who is considered a Millennial or younger (Smietana, 2017).

### **Significance of the Study**

This research is designed to evaluate the current condition of the church in the world to see how the church is helping everyone have a strong faith in Christ through a biblical worldview in a post-modern world. Since many pastors lament the fact that not many people take the initiative to grow spiritually or develop a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017), this study will hope to produce answers that will help the church combat the issues of spiritual growth, worldview development, and discipleship in a post-modern culture. This includes the 65 percent of believers who do not believe in absolute truth (Barna 2017, p. 119), the half of Americans who have little understanding of the Bible (Lifeway, 2017, paragraph eight) and only ten percent of Americans from all generations possessing a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017, paragraph one).

In terms of the background to the problem, this study brings a worldview model based on Hiebert (2013) and Knight (2006) that puts Christ at the center and God’s Word as the standard. The model for the church is based on community as Samples (2016), Ackerman (1994) and

Chester and Timmis (2008) state since relationships help people grow spiritually and develop their biblical worldview (Knight, 2006). The pastor must be qualified to teach and lead (Linhart, 2016; Tripp, 2012), and through proper relationships, people can have a faith and a worldview that sticks (Powell and Clark, 2011).

Since worldview development and spiritual vitality are essential for the growth of a Christian and the health of a church (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Knight, 2006; Samples, 2016), having a biblical worldview will help shape one's faith, which will transform how churches operate (since they are going by the Bible in all areas) and help them see the world around them with the lens of Christ (Hiebert, 2013). This will in fact empower the church to reach more people for Christ and help disciple people according to Christ and the Word of God through healthy relationships (Hiebert, 2013; Knight, 2006; Powell and Clark, 2011). They can develop spiritually and die to self as Nee (2014) indicates in order to live a Christian life in a post-modern world, which is all about self (Knight, 2006).

Lastly, the purpose of this research was to evaluate how the church is responding to the culture and to spiritual growth in developing people with a biblical worldview that lasts. This includes helping people grow in community so they can form their biblical worldview and be under leadership that help maintain their worldview (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Knight, 2006). With all the recent statistics concerning a lack of spiritual growth, worldview, and discipleship in Christians' lives, this study will help the church and the academic community get a better handle on where the church is currently and how the church can improve in a post-modern culture through worldview and spiritual formation. Furthermore, Long (2014) in her dissertation helped people see the importance of spiritual stamina in education so the idea of a worldview and faith that lasts is common in the academic world. The study will further evaluate how worldview



development impacts spiritual development and vitality in eight different Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas. Hiebert's (2008) holistic model of worldview development in terms of Christ and the Bible will be used as the main theory in the research.

### **Summary of the Design**

The goal of this study was to see how churches today go about spiritual growth through a biblical worldview and whether or not it makes an impact spiritually in the world. It will be a phenomenological study that seeks to explore the essence of how worldview development impacts spiritual growth and vitality in a church. This study will utilize a purposive sampling method where churches will be given a brief screening survey. Each pastor will be surveyed to see if their church can apply for the study. The top eight churches will be from Evangelical Protestant churches in order to be bible-based and Christ-focused since this study is only interested in how Bible-believing churches approach discipleship.

The eight churches that do make it past the screen will be interviewed online based on the research questions listed. Each pastor, who oversees discipleship in the church, will take part in an interview based on the research questions to get a better understanding of how they go about spiritual growth and how it has impacted their congregation. This will be documented in research questions one through five. All the transcripts of interviews will then be coded by hand and through Atlas.ti Software to review the findings through data analysis. This is achieved through a systematic process of establishing codes and describing corresponding themes which will emerge from these findings. Each church will eventually have its own data based on the information given and will be compared with the other churches. All information will be kept confidential in order for the study to follow the ethical guidelines presented at Liberty University. The results

from the study will indicate how the church is helping people, especially the younger generation, through a biblical worldview.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Overview**

Worldview development in a church is important to its health and spiritual vitality since a person's worldview is directly connected to one's faith in Christ (Gibson, 2004; Setran, 2018). If the church is going to be fully on mission and practicing discipleship, the church needs to be rooted and grounded in Christ and develop their worldview based on God's Word (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Hiebert, 2008). Without a solid biblical worldview, one will be easily swayed by the different secular worldviews which compromise the truth claims of Christ and his word (Dunn, 2001; Hiebert, 2008). Eventually, one's faith will shipwreck since it was not rooted in the truth of Christ and his word (Hiebert, 2008; Sweeney, 2013) (1 Timothy 1:9).

Therefore, this literature review will establish a theological and theoretical foundation for worldview development in the church and will factor in related literature that backs up the importance of worldview development and spiritual formation in the church. Since worldview development is essential for the spiritual vitality of the church in a post-modern world (Dunn, 2001; Setran, 2018), it is important for the local church to have a proper understanding of God's Word so people can have a biblical worldview and a faith that sticks despite the culture around them (Powell and Clark, 2011).

### **Theological Framework of the Study**

According to John 14:6, Jesus said that "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh to the father but by me" (KJV, John 14:6). From this verse, Jesus is the foundation in which all truth and life exists since Christ and truth go hand in hand (Sweeney, 2013). According to Erickson (2013) and Wax (2016), a biblical worldview is based on the Word of God and is centered on Christ. The worldview is not just intellectual but has a call to action, which is based

on spiritual formation and reaching the world for Christ (Wax, 2016; Sweeney, 2013). In the end, possessing a biblical worldview may not only help one be theologically sound, but may help one grow spiritually and be equipped for the great commission in the church (Wax, 2016).

Since the center of the biblical worldview is Christ, then one can possibly expect Christians to grow in Him and follow the great commission due to Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Mulholland and Mulholland, 2013). This is the theological essence of the biblical worldview since one is to view the world based on God and the Bible, which contains the theological basis for Christ's death, burial and resurrection and the great commission of Christians (Knight, 2006). Since the essence of the Bible is in Christ according to John 1:1, it is essential to lay a theological framework based on Christ and the Bible, including the Great Commission, so that one has a theological foundation for a biblical worldview (Sweeney, 2013).

### **Worldviews, the Biblical Worldview and Worldview Formation**

According to both Griffioen (2012) and Wax (2016), a worldview is how one views the world. According to Anderson et. al. (2017), the concept of a worldview stems from the German word *weltanschauung* which means "one's view of the world" (p. 9). Both Anderson et al. (2017) and Johns (1995) call it a disposition to reality since a worldview is a list of assumptions or beliefs about reality and truth. Griffioen (2012) further contends that a worldview involves a course of action since it involves people to express their view of the world. Thus, the biblical worldview leads one to life transformation and being set apart from the world (Anderson et.al., 2017; Wax, 2016). As Romans 12:2 states, "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (KJV, Romans 12:2).

A worldview according to Griffioen (2012) is supposed to be integrated so there is a distinct structure associated with a person's worldview. Thus, according to Knight (2006) and Johns (1995), a biblical worldview for example is centered on the Word of God and Christ, which holds all their beliefs together and provides a course of action to follow Christ. When one's view of the world (including themselves) and truth is based on scripture (Johns, 1995; Knight, 2006), then the foundation can be laid not just for knowledge purposes but for spiritual growth as well (Wax, 2016).

### ***The Foundation for a Biblical Worldview***

Theologically speaking, everything in a biblical worldview hinges on the Word of God since this is God's revelation to man (Erickson, 2013; Knight, 2006). Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:17 that "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (KJV, 1 Corinthians 15:17). Thus, according to Knight (2006), the Christian faith revolves around the Word of God since the Word of God testifies of Jesus Christ, especially his death, burial and resurrection (Luke 16). Without the Bible being the source of truth for a Christian (Psalms 119:160), the biblical worldview has no basis. Thus, the Word of God serves as the basis for the biblical worldview since it reveals God as the creator and source of all truth (Knight, 2006).

Since a biblical worldview is based on the Word of God, it is important to note that many different biblical worldviews exist based on different denominational practices (Anderson et.al., 2017). For the sake of this review, Sweeney's (2013) six fundamentals of the evangelical church will serve as a foundation for a standard biblical worldview, even though other denominations may differ on certain angles when it comes to biblical truth. These fundamentals include "1) The supreme authority of scripture in Christ, 2) The majesty of Jesus, Lord and Savior, 3) the Lordship of the Holy Spirit, 4) The need for personal conversion, 5) the piety of evangelism and

6) the need for the Christian community” (Sweeney, 2013, pp. 18-19). Erickson (2013) in *Christian Theology* gives a more comprehensive foundation of Christianity which includes the basic doctrines of Christ, the church, salvation, sin, the Holy Spirit, human nature and the roles of believers in the church. All of these answer the four basic worldview questions that Anderson et. al. (2017) points out, which are: “What is our nature? What is our world? What is our problem? And what is our end?” (p. 3).

Lastly, Sweeney (2013), Knight (2006), Meyers (2018) and Erickson (2013) lay out the theological foundation for a biblical worldview, which answers the four different questions. The first three questions have to do with nature, world and problem. According to the Bible and Knight (2006) and Meyers (2018), humans were born into sin due to Adam and Eve eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree (Genesis 3:1-16). They inherited a sinful nature even though they are created in the image of God (Romans 5:12) (2006). According to Erickson (2013), humans were created for God’s purposes, to worship Him and give Him glory. Yet, sin separated mankind from God, who is a perfect being and caused humanity and the world to fall into sin (Genesis 3:16-20) (Erickson, 2013; Knight, 2006). The problem with humanity and the world is indeed a sin problem and its only solution is found in Christ (Knight, 2006; Meyers, 2018, as cited in Maxwell, 2018; Sweeney, 2013). Eventually, according to Meyers (2018) and Revelation 21, Christ will deal with sin once and for all in the end through a new heaven and a new earth.

The last worldview question has to do with ends. According to Kilner (2015), humans who are believers are being restored to the image of Christ on a daily basis and Erickson (2013) points out this process as the process of sanctification. The chief end of mankind according to Romans 8:29 is to be conformed to the image of Christ since this was the original design (Kilner,

2015). Thus, man's purpose in the image of God is to worship or radiate God so they can become more like Christ on a daily basis (2015).

### ***The Christ-Centeredness of a Biblical Worldview***

As Sweeney (2013) mentions, one of the founding biblical truths of an evangelical biblical worldview is the majestic nature of Christ, being both Lord and Savior. Therefore, according to Sweeney (2013) and Wax (2016), Christ is at the center of Christianity, and thus a biblical worldview. The Bible expounds on how by and through Christ, everything was created (Colossians 1:15-16) and Geisler (2013) mentions how Christ through his death and resurrection paves the way for Him to be the only true way to the father (since every other religious leader is dead). Even though Anderson et al. (2017) provided four basic questions of a worldview, Knight (2006) adds a fifth question which is based on the solution of Christ to the ongoing problem of sin in the world.

Since Jesus came to alleviate the sin problem by going to the cross (Knight, 2006), people can be slowly restored back to God's image through Christ through what Erickson (2013) calls the process of sanctification (Kilner, 2015). According to Geisler (2013), Kilner (2015) and Erickson (2013), only through Christ can one be reconciled back to God and be sanctified on a daily basis. Thus, Christ through the Holy Spirit is the one doing the work of sanctification in a believer's life in order to make one holy and more like Christ (2013). While all three members of the trinity are at work in both justification and sanctification, everything is patterned after Jesus, which makes Him the cornerstone of a biblical worldview according to Geisler (2013) and Wax (2016).

### ***Imago Dei and the Biblical Worldview***

Another important facet of the Biblical worldview is the image of God in man. According to Anderson et al. (2017), one of the basic worldview questions has to do with the nature of mankind. God created everyone in his image and likeness and he gives two facets of God's image: the image of Christ in man, and the image that God put in mankind (Kilner, 2015). This serves as the basis for how mankind is to be viewed and treated since many different people throughout history have not seen certain categories of mankind as fully in the image of God (2015). Thus, to distinguish the biblical worldview from other worldviews, it is important to note that all of mankind was created in God's image and according to 1 Peter 2:17 and James 3:9, they should be treated with honor and respect (2015).

Kilner (2015) also argues that mankind is being recreated into the image of God through the process of salvation. This image is the image of Christ in man which Christians are being conformed into being like Christ. Mulholland and Mulholland (2013) see this as an important part of spiritual formation since people are being conformed into the image of Christ. Since the image of God in man is an important factor according to the biblical worldview, it helps those with the biblical worldview take action concerning their beliefs and reach the world for Christ (2013). It also helps Christians see others the way God sees them so they can properly follow Christ (2013).

### ***Truth and the Biblical Worldview***

According to Samples (2017) and Knight (2006), all truth is seen as God's truth since God gave his revelation through his word and through all of reality. God according to Samples (2017) is seen as "the metaphysical foundation for all that is true" (p. 76). According to St.



Augustine, Christ is seen as the source of all truth (Pusey, 2002). In Colossians 1:15, all things were created by Christ and for Christ so Christ is the foundation for all of truth (2002).

In terms of revelation, Erickson (2013) details that God's general revelation factors in all of reality, including creation. Thus, according to Romans 1:20, people are without excuse since God has shown them evidence of his existence. God's special revelation according to Erickson (2013) is found in his word and even in Psalms 138:2, God magnifies his word even over his own name. Therefore, God's truth is found in God's Word and in God's world since God reveals his truth through his word and through reality (2013).

Lastly, Geisler (2013), Samples (2017) and Sproul (2003) discuss the law of non-contradiction where one cannot be both "a" and "non-a" in the same way. This is seen as the fundamental law when it comes to reality and truth since people of other worldviews tend to see two opposing viewpoints at the same time to be true (Geisler, 2003; Samples, 2013; Sproul, 2017). Since this is not the case, one can conclude that truth is either one or the other since it cannot contradict each other (Sproul, 2003). This law is essential to the formation of the biblical worldview since this is the order in which God assembled truth (Geisler, 2003; Samples, 2013; Sproul, 2017). Thus, it is essential to mention it in order to lay a better theological foundation for a biblical worldview.

### ***Other Important Christian Theology in Relation to a Biblical Worldview***

As Samples (2017) states in his book, theology is one of the aspects of a biblical worldview. Therefore, it is important to lay a foundation for Christian theology in relation to a worldview. Since the nature of God and Christ and truth is already discussed, it is important to understand the theological aspects of church, salvation and spiritual formation. According to

Knight (2006), these make up the big picture concerning the biblical aspect of the biblical worldview.

First, Averbeck (2008) discusses the concepts of salvation, spiritual formation and the church and Erickson (2013) goes into more detail on the theological aspects of each. Both Erickson (2013) and Averbeck (2008) agree that it is Christ through the Holy Spirit doing the work inside of the believer and that believers are justified before God and sanctified on a daily basis. The Holy Spirit works in them to do his good pleasure as Paul points out in Philippians 2:13. According to Erickson (2013), People are justified when they put their faith in Christ. People continue the process by putting their faith in Christ and being separate from the world by obedience to God's Word (Colossians 2:6) (2013). Then, God completes the process in the future when they meet Jesus face to face (1 John 3:2) (2013).

Second, when it comes to the church, Averbeck (2008) takes a simple approach by explaining that the church's job is to help with spiritual formation through the presence of God and corporate ministering and serving. Erickson (2013) discusses the salvation process and how overall, the church is supposed to evangelize, edify, worship together and serve the world. Thus, Erickson (2013) states that the church has a role in growing up believers and helping them be the church in the world. This disproves the 21<sup>st</sup> century misconception that the church is a building since it is an organism of people who serve each other and the world with the love of Christ (2013).

Lastly, since spiritual formation happens in the church, both Averbeck (2008) and Erickson (2013) contend that it is the Holy Spirit's job in helping Christians navigate the salvation process, even outside church walls. Since Erickson (2013) identifies salvation as justification, sanctification and glorification, it is essential that believers know how to walk in the

Spirit as Galatians 5:16 points out so that they can grow in their faith and complete the process. Since salvation according to Knight (2006) is part of reality, it is essential that one understands the nature of salvation and the church so they can live out their biblical worldview. Therefore, when believers have a healthy theological understanding of salvation and church, they can function with a proper biblical worldview through spiritual formation and the great commission (Averbeck, 2008; Erickson, 2013; MacArthur, 2011).

### ***Biblical Worldview and Ethics***

According to Dreyer (2016), ethics involves integrity, something that the Bible teaches in Proverbs 21:3. The source of all ethics in the biblical worldview is God since his commandments are the foundation for ethical behavior and practices (Knight, 2006, Kim et. al., 2009). Thus, when it comes to arenas such as business, ethics have always been rooted in the ten commandments and following God's law (Kim et. al., 2009). The Bible in Proverbs 11:1 says that "a false balance is an abomination to the lord" (KJV, Proverbs 11:1) so God wants people to be honest in everything they do with people. This is true in personal relationships since Romans 12:17 says to "provide things honest in the sight of all men" (KJV, Romans 12:17). Thus, from a careful reading of scripture and an evaluation of sources, one can see how ethical practices are based on the commandments of God. This is what Knight (2006) is saying regarding humanity since humanity was created to follow God's laws and make their own decisions.

Lastly, from reading Knight (2006)'s book, one can see how ethics involve relationships with God and other people. Dreyer (2016) in his work states the need for the church to walk in integrity and even gives a bad example of the Corinthian church which did not follow that pattern. Dreyer (2016) stresses the importance of a church to walk in integrity and this includes being mission focused and being inclusive to others. This is what Jesus did throughout his

ministry since his mission was to “seek and save that which was lost” (KJV, Luke 19:10). Since ethics according to Knight (2006) involve loving God and loving other people (Matthew 22:37-39), they serve as part of the foundation for a biblical worldview since these serves as the two greatest commandments. Thus, it is important in the development of a biblical worldview to have a theological sense of morality since it governs everything one does (2006).

### ***Biblical Worldview and Spiritual Growth***

As stated by Griffioen (2012), a person’s worldview is lived out by his or her actions. Thus, since much of a person’s worldview is based on knowing God and following him (Knight, 2006), a theological connection can be made concerning worldview and spiritual formation. Wax (2016) in his book believes that a biblical worldview is a call to spiritual formation since it deals with the heart of the matter, which is being set apart for God’s glory and service. Gibson (2004) outlines how having a biblical worldview is connected to having a relationship with God. This includes moral development since in his model, a person goes from just obeying God’s law to living solely for the kingdom without compulsion (2004). Paul states in Romans 12:1-2 to renew one’s mind or entire being with the Word of God so that they can prove the ultimate and perfect will of God. Thus, having a biblical worldview according to Wax (2016) and Gibson (2004) goes beyond the facts and propositions. It includes being set apart for God’s glory and kingdom so that one can advance the gospel of Christ while growing in one’s relationship with God (Gibson, 2004; Wax, 2016).

### ***Biblical Worldview and the Mission of the Church***

According to Mulholland (2013), Christian spiritual formation is not complete without mission. In Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15, Jesus commands his followers to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone while making disciples of all nations. Since one of the

worldview elements involves the solution to the problem (Wallace and McDowell, 2019), the mission of the church, including discipleship and evangelism plays a central role in the development of a Christian worldview. Since a Christian worldview according to Hiebert (2008) centers on Christ and the Bible, having discipleship and evangelism that is based on Christ and the gospel helps the believer see the world based on God's eyes. This is crucial to how the Christian goes about discipleship, evangelism and engaging the world (Knight, 2006).

According to MacArthur (2011) and Bonhoeffer (2015), following Jesus is considered "costly grace" because it is the ultimate sacrifice since it requires denial of self and taking up one's cross daily, which is different compared to other worldviews (like hedonism) that are self-centered (2015, p. 5, Hiebert, 2008). Discipleship involves following Jesus since it cost Jesus his life (2015). Martin Luther is a good example of discipleship in action since he placed his life in total obedience to God (2015). MacArthur (2011) asserts this same point since denying oneself through crucifying one's carnal desires is part of the pathway of discipleship. The cross invites the person to see only Christ since according to Galatians 2:20, one is crucified with Christ (Bonhoeffer, 2015). Thus, discipleship involves seeing who one is in Christ and living in obedience to God's commandments (2015).

Discipleship according to a biblical worldview is mixed with evangelism, since both are part of the mission of God (Matthew 28:18-20). According to MacArthur (2011), evangelism must be taught from the pulpit and by every Christian since it involves spreading God's glory to the world for the purpose of saving the world. MacArthur (2011) mentions how evangelism is linked to the human heart in terms of the parable of the Sower since some fall by the wayside, fall away from God, choked by the cares of life and some are successfully converted. Despite

how people receive God's Word, the Sower must continue to sow the word in hopes that it falls on good soil and one is successfully converted to Christ (2011).

Lastly, discipleship according to Averbeck (2008) happens through the church, including ministering and serving. This according to 1 Peter 5:2 happens with the pastor and his leaders since they are to feed the flock and help people develop a personal relationship with God, which is the basis of a biblical worldview according to Gibson (2004). When the church according to Averbeck (2008) does its job in helping people grow in Christ, then people can be discipled and trained to help become fishers of men as Matthew 4:19 points out. They can grow in their faith and be Holy Spirit led in everything they do (2008).

### **Summary of Theological Framework**

From this theological foundation related to worldview formation and spiritual growth, one can conclude that having a biblical worldview helps one grow in Christ and fulfill the great commission (Wax, 2016; Gibson, 2004; MacArthur, 2011). According to Knight (2006), it is not just about knowing the theological facts but knowing Christ and living obedient lives to him. A biblical worldview enables people to see the world through the lens of Christ and the Word of God and interpret reality based on those same factors (2006). When one interprets all reality based on the Word of God, then they will be able to pattern their lives based on the Word of God through spiritual formation in the church as well as in their devotional life (John 8:31-32). As John 8:31-32 says, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (KJV, John 8:31-32). Thus, a biblical worldview can be developed through knowing the truth that is found in God's Word and in Jesus Christ (Averbeck, 2008; Sweeney, 2013).

## **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

When it comes to worldview development and spiritual growth in general, many different theories concerning worldview development, the church and spiritual formation bring evidence for the inclusion of a biblical worldview for faith development. Since in the last section, one sees the connection between worldview development and spiritual growth, it is important to lay out the different theories that bridge that connection in a church setting. According to Foley (2017, paragraph one), roughly one in ten people have a biblical worldview and according to Barna (2017), 17 percent of Christians in the church have a biblical worldview. Thus, through the different theories presented, one can see the importance of worldview development in a church setting since theology, truth and the great commission all play a role in the spiritual development of a believer in Christ.

### **Hiebert's (2008) Theory Base of Worldview Development**

As the main theory base for this research, Hiebert (2008) in his work further discusses the formation of a biblical worldview into a believer's life and the different components of that particular worldview. According to Hiebert (2008), a person's worldview consists of their beliefs, feelings and values which influence how one behaves. De Oliveira (2006) in his dissertation applies this theory to the different value and thinking systems that each culture has since he uses Hiebert's (2008) model of worldview formation in order to explain how a person's feelings, thoughts and values contribute directly to a person's behaviors or actions. According to Hiebert (2008), a person's decision-making reflects the thinking and feeling processes of one's culture which explains the many cultures and thought processes that exist on earth. This leads to the different components of a worldview which includes knowledge, depth, moral and causal

connections that connect with the different systems, including culture, biological, personal, social and physical (2008).

Each of the characteristics of that culture reflect the overall worldview, or beliefs, feelings and values of a culture (Hiebert, 2008). Furthermore, a person's biblical worldview is to be Christ-centered including being Bible-based (2008). This means that pastors and the church community are to help people align their beliefs, feelings and values with the Word of God, which includes walk in love, joy and peace with other people so they can practice the great commission (Hiebert, 2008; Chester and Timmis, 2008; Powell and Clark 2001). Hiebert (2008) notes that worldviews tend to be transformed over time based on cultural, people and other shifts so it is important to allow God to do his transformational work in a believer's life through the Bible. Since human's identity and culture is based in cultural and worldview formation, it is essential that Christians maintain and keep a biblical worldview (2008).

### **Smith's (2009) Worldview and Worship**

Smith (2009) had many of the same ideas that Hiebert (2008) did in his book since he mainly focused on the identity formation aspect of Christian education. However, according to Davis (2019) in his thesis, he deviates from Hiebert (2008) in the sense that human beings are creatures of desire, not just beliefs (even though beliefs are included). Smith (2009) starts off by stating that human beings are thinkers, believers and then lovers since human beings are involved with the world and crave what their heart longs for in the world. Thus, the religious nature of human beings revolves around rituals, habits, and aims so they can target what they believe the kingdom to be like (2009). The rituals, practices and liturgies help form one's identity surrounding the beliefs and the values in one's heart, which culminates in one's desires



(2009). This is why people consume at the mall and participate in the university in order to be satisfied and get a sense of identity (2009).

Smith (2009) transfers his thinking from worldview to worship by simply discussing the earthly nature of Christian worship and how God is in the midst of true Christian worship. Smith (2009) goes into the different practices of biblical worldview formation, which includes prayer, discipleship, evangelism, baptism, scripture and sermon, and the law. Each of those practices helps one become better thinkers, believers and lovers since God fulfills those desires (2009). Pastors and leaders can help pave the way through sermons, prayer time, and equipping people to follow Christ (2009). When people love God and love others by obeying the law, they are finding a new sense of identity in Christ and create new desires (2009). When people turn from sin and to Christ, they partake of a new nature, which in turn gives them a new set of rituals and habits so they can aim at the kingdom of God (2009). This, according to Davis (2019), affirms them to be creatures of desire as Smith (2009) mentions since their desire is to please God through liturgy, worship and other means.

### **Basic Theological and Philosophical Theories on Worldview Development**

Besides the main theories covered earlier, it is important to cover the theological and philosophical underpinnings of worldviews in order to understand the nature of worldviews and the purpose of worldview development in the church. Each theory below will cover the philosophy or theology behind worldview development and expound on how that relates to a biblical worldview. Items such as the different topics, elements and questions that relate to a biblical worldview will be discussed in the theories below. Each theory will stress the theological and philosophical importance behind a biblical worldview.

### ***Knight's (2006) Theory***

Knight (2006) takes a theoretical approach and mainly discusses the biblical worldview in terms of the different branches of philosophy. In his section concerning Christian philosophy and education, Knight (2006) goes over the contours of how Christian philosophy is to look like in terms of a biblical worldview. For instance, Knight (2006) states how metaphysics, epistemology, axiology and aesthetics rely on the existence of God and the supremacy of God and forms the basis of a biblical worldview. Since God created the world and set the world in motion based on his laws, beauty and knowledge, God is the source of all reality, knowledge, aesthetics and ethics and is to be sought after through reason and devotion (2006).

Besides philosophy, Knight (2006) goes over his theory on education by establishing the purpose of Christian education, which is to evangelize people and make disciples. This is also true of leadership in the church, since they are also to evangelize and make disciples (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Linhart, 2016). Since students are created in the image of God, they are to be developed into the image of Christ through a proper teaching of God's Word so they can be like Jesus (2006). Teachers, like pastors, are to exemplify this lifestyle so they can model Christ to their students (2006).

According to Karhoff's dissertation (2003), teachers are to fulfill the role of faith and help reach their full potential according to Knight's (2006) theory. This is part of the perennialist view of education as Karhoff (2003) and Knight (2006) discuss in their works since one is rejecting the liberal child-centered curriculum in favor of truth-centered curriculum. When students develop their character through a proper worldview and knowledge, then they can become proper citizens of both the earth and the kingdom (Knight, 2006). They can better

grapple the challenges that culture and other worldviews possess through a biblical curriculum (2006).

### ***MacArthur's (2009) Theory***

Knight (2006) and MacArthur's (2009) theories apply to two different audiences even though both of them rely on a Christian-based curriculum for either education or the church. MacArthur's (2009) stance on worldview development stems from the Bible being absolute truth and that a person's worldview is a reflection of that truth. MacArthur (2009) explains how many pastors and Christians are turning to other alternative forms of truth (such as modernism or post-modernism) since they do not believe that the Bible is enough to help lead them and guide them in everything. He further explains that having the mind of Christ and living according to God's truth is what helps Christians formulate their biblical worldview (2009).

Worldview development according to Knight (2006) and MacArthur (2009) go beyond the theological aspect. It extends into five different categories, including epistemology, metaphysics, axiology and anthropology (Knight, 2006; MacArthur, 2009), and covers many different subjects, including the arts, government, science, education and economics (Knight, 2006; MacArthur, 2009; Dockery and Wax, 2016). MacArthur (2009)'s theory mainly goes over the different theological issues and presents a biblical case in dealing with each issue. This includes evolution, naturalism and creationism since he mentions how Genesis 1-3 holds up to the weight of evolutionary scrutiny (2009).

All in all, MacArthur (2009) in terms of worldview formation reveals that God's truth is the standard when it comes to formulating a worldview. Craft (2019) goes further by stating from Akin (2019) and MacArthur (2009) that God and his Word is the center of all truth and thus absolute. Therefore, from reading MacArthur (2009)'s trade paper on worldview formation, one

can see how to apply God's truth to different aspects of reality, including the arts, government and history since it is absolute in nature. Even pastors and leaders who do not deviate from absolute truth can help people (including the younger generations) put their trust in God and interpret all of reality through the Bible (Wax, 2016; Chester and Timmis, 2008).

### *Shultz's (2013) Theory*

Shultz (2013) in her study presents a three-dimensional model of worldview development that incorporates sources from different scholars on the subject of worldviews. The first dimension deals with propositional truth and how it relates to the Christian faith. Shultz (2013) outlines the different truths that make up Christianity and how Christians should be doctrinally sound in everything they do. This is an element of pastoral leadership since they help defend the truth from error (Titus 1:9). However, Shultz (2013) views it as incomplete since truth requires behavior, or obedience to be a result of living according to the truth.

The heart-orientation dimension also comes into play here since a person's worldview is centered in the heart through the propositional truth and through this truth in the heart, one lives according to their worldview (Sire, 2004, as cited in Schultz, 2013). Morales (2013) mentions in her dissertation that the heart-orientation factor according to Shultz (2013) explains the discrepancy of beliefs and behavior, which is part what her study covered in terms of education. Thus, pastors and leaders should take that into account since the heart does not always line up when it comes to beliefs and behavior (Morales, 2013). From all of this, one can see Shultz's (2013) three-dimensional model for worldviews in education. It is closely related to Smith's (2009) worship and worldview theory since it involves human desire, which explains human behavior and truth (Shultz, 2013).

### *Sire's (2004) Theory*

Lastly, Sire (2004) in his book *Naming the Elephant*, gives a preliminary definition for worldview from one of his earlier works. He defines worldview as a set of propositions that govern reality (2004). However, after exhaustive study and mentioning of the different definitions of worldview as well as the different concepts a worldview has, he has reshaped his worldview definition later in his book (2004). His new worldview definition is more than just propositions but a commitment based in the heart that underlies a series of presuppositions concerning the way one lives (2004). Thus, according to Horrell's (2004) review and application concerning Sire's (2004) book, a worldview is more ontological since it involves one's being over one's intellect. Pastors should relate to one's own being in order to fully equip them with the truth of God's Word since one needs to love the next generation in order to reach them (Wallace and McDowell, 2019).

According to Sire (2004), a biblical worldview is a commitment to God in the heart since in the heart all thoughts and behaviors originate. Since it is based in the heart, it involves propositions or stories, either correct or incorrect, that are based on the reality of the world that they live in (2004). Sire (2004) framed this definition based on exhaustive research and gives seven basic questions which are as follows:

What is prime reality? What is external reality? What is a human being? What happens to a person at death? Why is it possible to know anything at all? How do we know what is right and what is wrong? And what is the meaning of human history? (p. 20-21)

When these questions are answered based on the Bible, then one can begin to frame their view of the world based on God and his word since they are grasping the prime reality of the worldview (2004).

### **Ruthven's Gospel-Centered Mission and Church Integrity**

In terms of gospel-centered mission, Ruthven (2016) laid out a critique of Karl Barth's theology of the Spirit with a Pentecostal basis. Ruthven (2016) mainly focused on building a gospel-centered mission around the power of the gospel and intimacy with Christ through the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. This includes the ratification and vindication of the new covenant through Jesus's blood and resurrection (2016). Ruthven (2016) mainly wanted to usher in the Kingdom through evangelism and discipleship through the church and help equip people to live according to the kingdom of God in power and intimacy with Christ. This is something that happens through relationships in the church since pastors and the church help equip people for the kingdom of God (Powell and Clark, 2011). All in all, his theory based on Barth's theology of the Spirit helps one to see the need of proclaiming the gospel of Christ through power in order to evangelize and disciple the world (2016). According to Knight (2006) and Hiebert (2008), this is essential for the development of a worldview.

In terms of integrity, Dreyer (2014) mentions that a church should live according to Christ since the church is dead to sin and alive in Christ. Barth mentions how the church is to be universal, apostolic and holy in true unity in Christ so they can be effective in being the church to a lost world (2014). This involves the whole church emulating Christ through high standards of ethical conduct (2014). Since the church is to emulate the life of Jesus on earth, it is essential that they avoid institutionalism, be mission orientated, listen to the word weekly, be inclusive with others and articulate a language concerning living the gospel with others (2014). When the church knows who they are in Christ and strives to emulate Christ, then they can walk in the integrity that God wants for them and further emulate a biblical worldview (2014).

## **Developmental Theories**

Since the biblical and philosophical foundation was laid in the earlier theories, these three theories will cover how humans develop when it comes to their faith and morality. This helps provide a foundation in which one can develop a biblical worldview since moral development (as seen in Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995) and Gibson (2004)) go hand in hand with the ethics philosophical aspect of a biblical worldview (Knight, 2006). The faith theory as designed by Fowler (1987) helps one see how people grow and develop over time. All of the theories can be used to help one develop one's worldview based on one's faith in Christ (Fowler, 1987; Hiebert, 2008).

### ***Kohlberg's theory of moral development and the Christian alternative***

Now it is important to transition from general theories to developmental theories since much of spiritual formation in a church setting deals with development. Thus, it is important to start with Kohlberg and end with Fowler. According to Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995), Lawrence Kohlberg believed in the development of moral reasoning inside of people. His model helped one see the maturity when it comes to moral reasoning and his stages help shape one's worldview when it comes to moral development (1995). According to Long (2014) in her dissertation, Kohlberg differentiated between moral behaviors and moral judgement since moral judgements are stable and not situational like behavior is. Thus, to add to Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995), Kohlberg's system is based on moral judgment which can explain the behaviors in each stage.

In Kohlberg's model, the first stage of his moral developmental theory is the pre-conventional theory (1995). This stage consists of people (mainly children) basing moral decisions on consequences and punishment rather than on doing the right thing (1995). This

gives kids a structure in which they can follow the rules and make decisions based on the consequences (1995). Some adults still live in this stage since they base their moral decisions off of the consequences associated with it (1995). Thus, this stage makes minimal moral decisions only based on the consequences (1995).

The second stage is the conventional stage and, in this stage, people move from just avoiding consequences to wanting to be a productive member of society (1995). They want to maintain good relationships with people and do what they can to follow the law in order to justify the importance of living in society (1995). People start taking responsibility for their actions and they start developing a sense of maturity concerning the moral ethics of society (1995). This stage moves from not wanting to break the law to wanting to do the right thing for society and their role model's sake (1995).

The last stage is the post-conventional stage, which people move from obeying for the sake of society to internalizing the principle behind the law (1995). People in this stage believe that laws by themselves are not enough since the principles behind it is the rationale for why laws exist in the first place (1995). Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995) gives the biblical principles of justice and loving one another as the basis for why the law of God exists since God is love. According to the Bible, this is the goal in which pastors should move their congregation to, since people should obey God because God loves them and is holy (1 John 4:19; Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995). People are to obey based on the principles found in God's Word so they can continue to mature in their morality and in their worldview (Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995). It is through knowing how much God loves a person that one will follow God's law (Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995).



Lastly, according to Gibson (2004), the Christian alternative to Kohlberg's moral development involves a similar structure but with an additional stage. The first two stages are similar to Kohlberg's first two stages since Gibson (2004) explains how people learn morality based on the boundaries or the consequences of God's law. Then as they grow spiritually, they want to obey in order to please God and serve others (2004). The third stage like Kohlberg's stages deal with principles since one is embracing a biblical worldview based on a personal relationship with Christ (2004). Since one is living according to Christ based on the principles of God's Word, they are not just wanting to please God but doing so because God loves them (2004). This is the goal in which pastors should help people follow God because God loves them (Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995) (1 John 4:18-19). This concludes with the final stage since this stage has to do with living for the kingdom since one's worldview enables them to live for the kingdom and to minister to others (2004). From Gibson (2004)'s theory on moral development, one can see how moral development relates to the creation and maintenance of a biblical worldview since it goes hand in hand with the process of Christian maturity. The next theory will in part explain the process through both a physical and spiritual lens.

### ***Fowler's faith development theory***

According to both Fowler (1987), Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995), Fowler goes through the different stages of faith which is based on both psychological and spiritual aspects. These stages include: Primal faith, Intuitive/Subjective Faith, Mythic/Literal faith, Synthetic/Conventional faith, Institutional faith, Conjunctive faith and Universalizing faith (Fowler, 1987; Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995). According to Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995) and Fowler (1987), faith is seen as a contributing factor to developing a worldview so this landmark theory helps one see the reality of faith concerning the self, or entire being, in terms of faith or worldview development.

To summarize the stages of faith, it is essential to see how the stages of faith relate to faith development throughout a person's physical life and eventually a person's spiritual life. The primal stage according to Fowler (1987) initiates a total trust and loyalty to the environments. There is a conflict between total trust and detachment from people and objects but at this stage, the infant or baby within a couple years can totally trust his or her mother even though he or she is out of the room (1987). Second, the Intuitive/Subjective stage brings the child to a more imaginative/imagery creative faith development to where they form their reality based on imaginative/imagery constructs (1987). They flourish when it comes to stories, especially ones related to good and evil so this begins their moral development (1987). They are also impulsive at this stage so they fit within the pre-conventional stage of Kohlberg's moral development due to self-control issues (Fowler, 1987; Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995).

Third, the mythic/literal faith development according to Fowler (1987) goes a step further concerning the imagery and bases its conception of the world around needs, wishes and interests. Children at this stage are good story tellers and they begin to develop their conceptualization of God as a God of morality (1987). They begin to think for themselves and base their conclusions on their own thoughts (1987). The Synthetic/Conventional stage moves the child from simple logic to social perspective taking since one bases his or her identity and perceptions of reality on the selves that other people mirror to them (1987). A child or teen's identity is based on the relationships they have and their faith is based on interpersonal connections or ties (1987). This is where the church can come in since pastors can help teens foster relationships that will help their faith stick (Powell and Clark, 2011). Teens in this stage tend to fall in the conventional stage of morality since they look up to people for their moral direction (1987). Since their faith is interpersonal, they shape their morality based on their relationships with others (1987).

Fourth, the final three stages deal with basic identity issues related to faith and worldview development. The institutional stage deals with a movement from being interpersonal in identity to possessing one's own identity (1987). One begins to own their identity and decide for themselves what is good and what is bad when it comes to what they believe (1987). They rely less on the interpersonal relationships and more on finding and owning their true self (1987). The conjunctive self moves back to an interdependence since it invites new perspectives to challenge their old perspectives and they begin to see their own beliefs and the paradoxes of faith claims (1987). In this stage, the interdependence is between selfhood and experience, the younger self and the older self, and other polar opposites and the adult must continue to make connections between newer and older ideas as they relate to God and themselves (1987).

The last stage completes the stages of faith since one's self moves from being integrated in the polar opposites to being rooted and grounded in Christ (Fowler, 1987). Their whole identity is completely in Christ and they have a newfound freedom in self and in others (1987). While these people still have flaws in their faith, they do not operate based on egoism anymore since their identity is in God (1987). Thus, they live according to their faith and worldview in Christ since they are mature in their faith (1987).

Lastly, when it comes to the stages of faith, Parker (2010) states that the stages of faith are more wholistically in nature and have a complex system of components. Parker (2010) conducted a study that evaluated the different structural hypothesis of the different stages of faith. While the evidence is mixed, the sequential stages showed evidence for the continuity of the different stages, especially the age-stage relationships in early years (2010). Thus, Fowler's faith stages have some congruence and validity when it comes to interpreting other's faith based on the age and season one is in (2010).

## **Theories on Church and Home Discipleship and Evangelism**

In *Total Church*, Chester and Timmis (2008) emphasizes the totality of a church through the gospel and community. In this model, the church is seen as accountable to one another not just for the direction of the church but spiritually as well since spirituality and discipleship is at the heart of community (2008). Chester and Timmis (2008) emphasizes strongly that the church is to be word-centered in terms of mission involvement so that the church can go out and spread the love of God to the world and also inside church walls.

Since Christians according to Chester and Timmis (2008) are lovers by nature, they are to show their love in and the church through 1) caring for one another spiritually, 2) caring for the youth, 3) be socially involved through meeting other people's needs, 4) embrace pastoral care through caring about others needs and 5) practice church discipline. When people plant churches for the sake of reaching the world and other Christians through the lenses of community and the gospel, then the church can be effective in discipling the saved through a biblical worldview and reaching the lost in the community around them (2008). Bancroft (2014) in his thesis further agrees with Chester and Timmis (2008) concerning their own work that a church should follow these same theological aspects and commitments.

In *Sticky Faith*, Powell and Clark (2011) deliver researchable findings on how to build faith into kids that will last them a lifetime. This includes being gospel-centered and Christ-centered with the children and showing them how to trust God and not have legalistic, or sin-management type of faith (2011). Bradbury (2013) in her article agrees with Powell and Clark (2011) about being Christ-centered but takes it a step further by allowing pastors to use the Bible to connect people with Jesus and enable them to be real followers. When pastors use the word

and connect it with the youth, then the youth have a better chance of their faith to stick throughout high school (2013).

Powell and Clark (2011) when it comes to worldview formation encourages parents to help children establish their identity through community, love and avenues such as extra-curricular activity. Since identities are formed over time, it is important for parents to model their relationship with God and help their children grow through hardship so that their children can have a better chance of their faith sticking (2011). This includes having conversations with children and teens about faith and participating in social justice work in order to further the gospel (2011). When parents walk by the word and teach it to their children, they have a better chance of having sticky faith since discipleship begins at the home (2011). This is what Bradbury (2013) argues in her article since the Word of God brings results.

Lastly, Powell and Clark (2011) emphasize the need for community since community is a high factor in a teen's faith sticking so Powell and Clark (2011) encourage the church to further connect the teenagers with both the teens and the adults so they can have a support structure (This includes pastors and leaders (2011)). This helps when the teen goes off to college since parents as well as their support system can help ease the transition from high school to college (2011). In the end, this approach by Powell and Clark (2011) does not guarantee sticky faith but when children and teens own their faith and parents model Christ with their children, there is a higher likelihood of one's faith sticking. This study is essentially important for worldview development since one needs to have a faith that sticks in order for ones to keep their worldview (2011).

Lastly, Wallace and McDowell (2019) in their book, *So the Next Generation Will Know*, presents a comprehensive strategy on how to win the next generation for Christ. This is through

life-giving relationships, developing young people with a biblical worldview, and connecting with young people through sincere love and relevant training so that pastors can better equip the next generation for Christ (2019). Both Wallace and McDowell (2019) explain that how one views the world determines how they will live in the world. Thus, they follow the common worldview triangle that has its core basis in relationships, which shape one's worldview, which shape one's values and thus shape one's actions (2019).

Like Powell and Clark (2011) and Chester and Timmis (2008), relationships within the church are important since through that community, people can be discipled and evangelize and build their biblical worldview and faith through effective leadership and fellowship. This explains why Wallace and McDowell (2019) lands the point home that people (especially young people) need healthy relationships with their pastors and Christian friends so they can develop a faith that lasts through agape love and proper biblical training.

### **Theories on Pastoral Ministry**

In terms of pastoral ministry, both Spurgeon (2005) and Tripp (2012) give an exhaustive overview of what it means to be a pastor. Tripp (2012) in his book *Dangerous Calling* outlines the different challenges a pastor faces, including self-glory, secret sin and lack of community that surrounds and supports him. Tripp (2012) outlines many different stories that illustrate how pastors fall into trouble with their churches and with their families due to the demands of ministry and the lack of devotion to God. He mentions how pastoral ministry is more than just skill and having a theological brain since it revolves around the heart of a pastor. When the heart is right, the ministry is right, but when the heart is wrong, then the direction of the church goes wrong.

Both Tripp (2012) and Spurgeon (2005) discuss the need for the heart to be right since the whole ministry rises and falls because of it and this impacts worldview development in a believer's life. Since preaching is to be transformational to meet the evils of this age, it is essential for pastors to have a good heart so they can have proper preaching (2005). Spurgeon (2005) mentions that a pastor is to have a strong faith in Christ so they can meet the challenges of the ministry and incorporate faith into the hearers. Furthermore, Lewis (2012) in his doctoral thesis explains that Spurgeon (2005) wanted people to be Christ-centered in everything to do in order to meet the evils of the age with the right heart.

Sanchez (2012) in his critique and application of Tripp (2012) further explains the heart of the pastor since it is important for pastors to avoid a sense of arrival and not lose their fear of God for their lives. This means that the gap between their personal and public lives must be closed since they need to exhibit the same character on and off the platform (Sanchez, 2012). Sanchez (2012) states that Tripp (2012) does not want pastors to have an academic and compartmentalized faith since seminary professors cannot take the place of God in their lives. Instead, Tripp (2012) wants pastors to have a vibrant faith so they will not lose their awe when it comes to the things of God.

Lastly, Spurgeon (2005) and Tripp (2012) state that one should recognize their fears and deal with them so they can continue to be productive in the ministry. Tripp (2012) warns that pastors have a tendency to think they have arrived so humility is essential for a pastor. Since pastors should operate in the power of God, they must live as an example for Christ to everyone in their sphere of influence so others can see their need for Christ and follow Christ (Spurgeon, 2005). Thus, from looking at Tripp (2012) and Spurgeon's (2005) work, pastoral ministry is fought in the heart since the heart is the battleground for a pastor. Having solid faith in Christ

and awareness according to Tripp (2012) should help pastors stay the course in their ministry while helping people have a solid worldview.

### **Summary of Theoretical Framework**

From these different authors, one can see the need for worldview development in the church since it focuses on the identity and spiritual development of people and the overall purpose of the church (which is to model Christ and disciple and evangelize the world, including the people in the church (Chester and Timmis, 2008). Since Christ is at the center of a biblical worldview (Hiebert, 2008), one must conclude that believers are to be developed in the truth so they can in turn grow spiritually and reach a place where their identity is in Christ as Fowler (1987) points out. In order for a church to develop Christians through a biblical worldview, they must walk in integrity according to Dreyer (2014) and be healthy from the outside-in (Spurgeon, 2005; Chester and Timmis, 2008). This means that pastors and leaders must do their part in presenting a healthy church for people to develop spiritually (Spurgeon, 2005; Chester and Timmis, 2008). When one understands all the components of worldview and faith formation in a church setting from a theoretical perspective, one can learn the basics on how to develop Christians through a biblical worldview.

### **Related Literature**

From laying the theological and theoretical frameworks for worldview development and spiritual growth in a church setting, it is important to lay out the related literature associated with the topic. The literature will be divided based on the important variables concerning the study, which are worldview development and spiritual growth, with a focus on great commission and church vitality. The concepts of worldviews will be explored along with the different elements of culture, including the current generation. The concept of world missions and reaching the culture



will also be outlined along with how one can help others grow and develop spiritually in a church through a biblical worldview. When one through the literature learns the importance of worldview formation and spiritual growth in a church setting, then one can learn how the church can be well equipped through a biblical worldview, especially from the field of education.

### **Need of a Biblical Worldview**

As stated before, a biblical, or Christian worldview according to Hiebert (2008) is based on Christ and the Bible. Since there are many different types of biblical worldviews as there are denominations, it is important to take a conservative approach to doctrine since Sweeney (2013), Knight (2006) and Geisler (2013) posit that the Bible is inerrant, Jesus is who He says he is, salvation is by faith in Christ alone, and that all truth is found in Christ. This is why doctrinally conservative Evangelical Protestant churches are chosen for the study since the theological basis for a Christian worldview is there and they do not deviate from the truth (Sweeney, 2013).

According to McDowell (2019), worldviews answer three questions (who created the world? how the problem got started? And who remedied the problem?). According to Knight (2006) and Meyers (2018), the biblical worldview focuses on God creating the heavens and the earth, man falling into sin distorting the order of things and God sending his son Jesus into the world to save mankind and bring everything back. Since Christ is the center of a biblical worldview, how one views and interprets the world in different genres centers on Christ and the Bible himself (Hiebert 2008; Wax, 2016). Thus, everything about Christ and Christianity is rooted in a biblical worldview, which helps people see, interpret and act in the world around them (Griffioen, 2012; Hiebert, 2008).

## **Worldviews, Post-Modernism and Generation Z**

Since the basics to worldviews has already been covered in the last section on theological and theoretical frameworks, it is important to expand on the different worldviews that the church is facing today and see how they relate to a biblical worldview. Some of the sociological basics to worldviews, including culture and generations will be covered in more detail in order to get a picture of how Christ relates to the culture according to Carson (2008). For this review, it is essential to continue to look at the different worldviews, even in the church, and look at the current generations and worldviews and how they think and operate. In doing so, one will see the authentic biblical worldview from scripture as compared to the different systems and the current climate that people without a biblical worldview are living in.

### ***Introduction to Post-Christian Culture***

According to Barna (2017), a slim minority of American's and roughly 41 percent of Americans believe that truth is only truth that is right for them (p. 117). This includes about 74 percent of millennials (2017, p. 117). Barna (2017) confirms that 44 percent of American's believe in absolute truth and that biblical skepticism has been on the rise due to a distrust in authority (p. 117). This means that people usually believe stories that conform to what they want to believe rather than how they believe (2017, p. 117). This leads to a form of tribalism where people associate with people of like truth while having some differences (2017, p. 117).

According to Knight (2006) and Parr (2023), this falls within the framework of post-modernism since post-modernism rejects the idea of knowing absolute truth. Therefore, knowledge is seen as powerful and the school serves as the guide for that knowledge (2006; 2023). Johnston (2001) in his book holds to similar views of the current society but takes a step further by stating that the former ways of knowing truth have been done away with. This means

that truth is up for discussion when it comes to individuality and that one is on a quest for truth and community (2001). According to Johnston (2001), the current society is pessimistic since they live in the ideology of total vanity. Since truth is relative according to post-modernism, the new world lives in a community where everything is done for both the individual and for the community at large (2001).

### ***Types of Culture and Worldviews***

When it comes to Culture and Worldviews, Hiebert (2008), Wax (2016), and Carson (2008) lay out the different aspects of culture and worldviews. Since there are so many different aspects of culture and worldviews, only a handful will be discussed in order to get a more present-day picture of how culture and worldviews shape the present world. Therefore, this section will begin with an introduction and analysis of Christ and culture and will close with a connection of culture to worldviews.

First, when it comes to culture, Hiebert (2008) stresses the systems and material view of culture since culture has its implicit, explicit and sensory aspects. Each culture has its signs, rituals, patterns of behavior, and products that is interwoven into beliefs, worldviews, and other philosophical aspects (2008). This includes the physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects as well (2008). Carson (2008) in his assessment of Niebuhr's Christ and Culture paradigm gives five different paradigms of how Christ relates to culture. The five paradigms according to Niebuhr and Carson (2008) are as follows: Christ against culture, Christ of culture, Christ, transformer of culture, Christ above culture, and Christ and culture in paradox (2008).

The first two paradigms are non-related since the Christ against culture paradigm pits Christ against the world due to sin and Him creating a new race apart from the world (Carson, 2008). The Christ of culture paradigm Christ in relation to the culture in terms of a society based

on Christ being a mere philosophic guide rather than an atonement for sin (2008). This view is considered part of the so-called Christian civilization back in Constantine's day since it followed the moral teachings of Christ (2008).

The final three paradigms focus on different theological aspects of Christ when it comes to culture. The Christ above culture paradigm puts Jesus above the culture since his redemptive act helps potentially save the culture (Carson, 2008). This is in contrast to the Christ, transformer of culture paradigm since Christ came to transform the culture through his gospel (2008). The Christ and culture in paradox sees the redemptive acts of Christ and his judgement on the sinful aspects of culture as one in complete paradox (2008). This view judges Christ and culture based on this paradox since Christ came to both save and judge the world (2008). The majority of churches fall within these five different paradigms but for the sake of this research, the Christ, transformer of culture paradigm will be the one held by this researcher since the focus of a Christian is to transform the world through the gospel of Christ (2008).

Lastly, many different worldviews, like cultures exist and Wax (2016) and Geisler (2013) covers all the different world worldviews that govern the world such as theism, deism, atheism, pantheism, postmodernism, and modernism. From these worldviews, many different cultures and religions are formed and even some in the church have differing worldviews (Wax, 2016; Anderson, 2017; Hiebert, 2008). For the sake of this research, the two different worldviews of modernity and postmodernity will be explored along with the biblical worldview. According to Hiebert (2008), both are based on the idea of the search for truth and community in the world.

### **Modernism, Post-Modernism vs. Biblical Worldview**

When it comes to understanding the Biblical worldview more in depth, it is important to understand how it relates to modernism and post-modernism since the younger generations are

heavily influenced by each of these worldviews (Hiebert, 2008; White, 2017; Seemiller and Grace, 2011). This section will expound on each of these worldviews and relate it back to a biblical worldview. This includes how the younger generations are moving away from a biblical worldview and foundation (Morrow, 2018). In closing, this section will stress the importance of having a biblical worldview in terms of the culture since the culture has had success with the younger generations (White, 2017). This is one of the major foundations of this research since it seeks to establish how worldview development impacts the spiritual vitality of the church overall.

### ***Synopsis of the Modern and Post-Modern Worldviews***

In terms of the modern and post-modern worldviews, the idea of modernity according to Hiebert (2008) is a revolution against religion in general to more of a natural and scientific foundation. Self is seen as based on the natural and scientific aspects of truth (2008). Thus, all truth is defined based on human reason and logic since humans are the final authority when it comes to truth and all humans are equal (2008). As stated before, the post-modernism takes a pessimistic turn by rejecting all absolutes all-together and forming global tribes based on similar constructs (2008). Even though truth cannot be fully known according to post-modernism as compared to modernism, modernism and postmodernism believe in the autonomy of the individual as compared to God in the biblical worldview (2008). Thus, the post-modern and modern worldviews reject God in favor of man being in authority (2008).

### ***Review of the Biblical Worldview***

In terms of a Biblical worldview, an overall biblical worldview is based on Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008). Since each Christian and church has a different worldview according to Anderson (2017), it is important to formulate the basis for an authentic biblical worldview that

can transcend all the other competing worldviews. According to Sweeney (2013), Hiebert (2008) and Knight (2006), the two basic cornerstones to a biblical worldview are Christ and the Bible since everything in a biblical worldview hinge on the testimony of Christ and the reliability of the scriptures (Geisler, 2013). This includes morality, values, science, history, metaphysics, epistemology and other aspects of a biblical worldview according to Knight (2006).

In terms of denominational differences, Both Johns (1995) and Sweeney (2013) give the theological aspects of their denominational creeds and gives Jesus and the Bible as the core foundation of what they believe. Thus, while there are differences in doctrinal and theological opinions, the majority of evangelical denominations base their foundation on Christ and the word (Johns, 1995; Sweeney, 2013). Since God is the center of all truth, morality and knowledge throughout the denominations, one can tell the difference between the biblical worldview and the other viewpoints since both are a rejection of God and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). The final subsection will further explore these differences as well as similarities between the two competing systems.

### ***Comparison between Biblical and Modern/Post-Modern worldviews***

When it comes to both modernism and post-modernism, the biggest similarity between those two worldviews and the biblical worldview is the pursuit of truth and community (Hiebert, 2008; Johnston, 2001). Even though conservative Christians base their foundation on the Bible and Christ, they still pursue what is true in scripture and continue to pursue the Christian truth in the Bible (Sweeney, 2013). Modernism according to Hiebert (2008) pursues the truth based on human reason and human authority. Post-Modernism according to Johnston (2001) and Knight (2006) takes it a step further by stating that only individuals by themselves have authority when

it comes to matters of truth. This takes God out of the equation and according to Barna (2017), many professing Christians are starting to have doubts concerning absolute truth.

Lastly, when it comes to pursuing community, modernism and post-modernism wants to pursue a community based on the truth, or communities based on relative truth (Hiebert, 2008) (Johnston, 2001). Even post-modernism according to Knight (2006) and Johnston (2001) majors in the arena of linguistics in order to safeguard their relative truth due to meaning in language. Christians, according to Chester and Timmis (2008), use a community approach to Christianity since all Christians are a part of the body and they grow in the Word of God. They are God-centered in their approach to the Word of God and use their language to edify and build each other up in the truth (2008). Thus, when it comes to truth and community, these are the major differences between modernism, postmodernism and Christianity since it depends on whether God or man is at the center of truth and community (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Hiebert, 2008).

### ***Generations and the Biblical Worldview***

According to Morrow (2018, paragraph three) and Foley (2017, paragraph four), only four percent of Millennials and Generation Z has a biblical worldview. The trend only goes slightly (7-17%) upward to the adult people groups (Foley, 2017, paragraph eight). According to White (2017), Generation Z makes up 25% of the entire American population and they are moving further and further away from having a biblical worldview (p. 29). In terms of the millennials, 33% of older millennials and 36% of younger millennials are among those who do not believe in God or organized religion (2017, p. 18). Even those in the 89% of Christians in America are wavering their belief thus partially explaining the rise of the none's and the lack of a biblical worldview (2017, p. 17). Thus, Generation Z is the first post-Christian generation and they heavily are influenced on modern secularism (White, 2017). Even atheism is on the rise in

Generation Z since many of them are confused about the reality of truth and which worldview to form (Morrow, 2018). Thus, the need for a biblical worldview is essential for the younger generations as well as older generations so that Christianity can continue to be strong in the world (Dunn, 2001; Van Der Walt, 2017, White, 2017).

### ***Summary of Modern, Post-Modern and Biblical Worldview***

When it comes to the different cultures and worldviews in relation to a biblical worldview, there are marked similarities and differences. From Carson (2008)'s Christ and Culture paradigm analysis, one can see how Christian can have different worldviews as related to the culture around them. From the research done by Barna (2017), Morris (2018) and Foley (2017), one can see how very few people have a biblical worldview. Since a worldview impacts one's way of life, it is essential that one understands the biblical worldview and how the biblical worldview stacks up against culture, generations and other people's worldviews (Hiebert, 2008; Setran, 2018). This section serves as the pre-cursor to the following sections which will deal with the missional and church aspects of worldview formation. The following section will unpack how spiritual growth and world mission's ties into worldview development.

### **Evangelistic/Spiritual Developmental Aspects Relating to Worldview Development**

In order to help develop a biblical worldview into people, especially in a church setting, it is important to lay a foundation for spiritual formation and missional leadership and living since both are at the heart of the biblical worldview (Powell and Clark, 2011). According to White (2017), the culture is going further and further away from Christ. Therefore, it is important to understand the connection between spiritual formation and worldview development so that one can live and lead missionally and equip people for the work of the ministry (Dunn, 2001; Gibson, 2004; Setran, 2018; Van Der Walt, 2017). All three of those elements bridge a connection in the



spiritual development of a Christian since worldviews help develop one's way of living and acting, which is part of spiritual growth and the great commission (Dunn, 2001; Gibson, 2004; Van Der Walt, 2017; Setran, 2018).

### ***Missions, Great Commission and the Transformative Approach***

According to Hah (2019) and Niemandt (2016), the church is to be missional in nature and is to organize their efforts in helping reach the lost and make disciples. Hah (2019) outlines that the two major parts of missional leadership is baptism and discipleship since one enters into a relationship with God and is to be conformed into his image. Since the church is to be transformational according to Niemandt (2016), they are to be conformed into God's image and take dominion over the world through transforming the community for Christ (Hah, 2019).

Niemandt (2016) states that transformational leadership and theology is given through different values, such as transcendence, humanity, wisdom/knowledge, courage, justice and temperance. Hah (2019) cites three examples (Jesus, Moses, Paul) in how they lived missionally and reached the world through some or all of these values. Niemandt (2016) argues that a church must have these values if they are going to change the world. Much of these values falls into Setran's (2018) other-centered approach since one is to help others flourish.

The church according to Niemandt (2016) needs to have the courage to try new things in order to help further the gospel. This may mean getting criticism for being different but it is worth the investment (2016). Moses, Jesus and Paul according to Hah (2019) worked on relating to different cultures and while they used different methods, they still preached and proclaimed God's Word. Thus, according to the authors mentioned, the church in terms of missional leadership needs to establish a transformational culture so that the church can be effective in

reaching the world and helping them be transformed (2016). According to Hah (2019), this is accomplished through implementation of a biblical worldview based on God and his word.

### ***Spiritual Growth and Worldview Formation***

According to Rhea (2011) and Setran (2018), the connection between spiritual growth or formation and worldview formation is being God-centered so that one can experience the shalom of having good relationships with others and reaching the world for the gospel of Christ. Pettit (2008) calls it the goal of spiritual formation since one is to live a holy life and be on mission through community with others. Setran (2018) argues that Christian character is formed when one aims at the right goal and is trained in the strengths of character that is needed to attain that goal. Therefore, through integration of a biblical worldview based on the gospel of Christ (Powell and Clark, 2011) and community with others (Pettit, 2008), Christians can aim at the goal of spiritual formation by growing in their faith, being rooted in the truth of God's Word and be others-centered (Setran, 2018). This means helping others flourish in the kingdom of God by caring for the needy and reaching the world for the gospel of Christ (Setran, 2018; Powell and Clark, 2011).

### ***Reaching the Culture for Christ***

When it comes to post-modernism, millennials and Generation Z, two studies have been done in order to help reach the culture for Christ. First, Nelson (2008) in his model on *Borderland Churches*, stressed the need to be the church and go out and build effective connections with the people in the borderlands. The people of the borderlands according to Nelson (2008) consisted of the "churched, other faiths and unfaith" (p. 10) and the church was to be all things to all men in order to reach those who are not part of the Christian community. Since many approaches according to Nelson (2008) failed to combat the post-modern issue,

Nelson (2008) presented this approach of walking in love and truth and being the church by serving others in order to bring people to church. Since people in his hometown did not go to church, it was essential to bring the uncompromised gospel message from the leadership down in order to help people come to know Christ and follow Christ (2008). This is one of the approaches that have worked when it comes to post-modernism.

The last approach is by White (2017) when it comes to reaching Generation Z. White (2017) argues that Generation Z was raised on the declining morals and worldviews of the Millennial generation so the alternative is to walk in love while being counter-cultural in one's pursuit of reaching the lost, including those who fit the Generation Z profile. White (2017) believed in being firm, but loving, when it came to one's biblical worldview and presenting a living message where the Bible is uncompromised in word and action. It is not the what behind how one evangelizes and disciples Generation Z but the how since they tend to shut the door when one does not accept their viewpoints (2017). Thus, the best way according to White (2017) is to present the truth in a way that relates to their post-Christian culture and help them understand the gospel of Jesus so they can have an opportunity to be saved. Like Nelson (2008), everything needs to be related to how Generation Z operates in order to reach them for Christ and help them develop a consistent biblical worldview.

### ***Summary of Evangelistic/Spiritual Developmental Aspects***

As Setran (2018) states, it is important to be others-centered when it comes to helping other people flourish. This means doing what is best to engage in post-modern culture and reaching people of every generation, including Generation Z (Nelson, 2008; White, 2017). Through a biblical worldview, one can experience the shalom of knowing God and loving others and it involves helping other people flourish through spiritual growth, meeting their needs and

weeping when they weep (Setran, 2018). One can be transformational in everything they do so they can grow spiritually and other people can come to know Christ and follow Christ (Niemandt, 2016). From the literature, one can see the connection between spiritual formation, worldview development and missional living since one develops their worldview through Christ and his word (Hah, 2019; Niemandt, 2016). Through Christ and His word, one can learn to be transformed daily so they can go out and participate in the mission of God, through serving others and reaching the world for Christ (Setran, 2018; Niemandt, 2016).

### **Spiritual Growth and Worldview Development in the Church**

Since spiritual growth and worldview development is already discussed in the previous section, it is important to see how both can be put into practice in a local church. According to Tripp (2012) and Linhart (2016), it all starts with the leaders of the church since a healthy church cannot truly be healthy without healthy leadership. When the leaders walk in spiritual formation, then they can help those in their congregation, both young and old, mature in spiritual formation through positive relationships (Tripp, 2012; Linhart, 2016; Chester and Timmis, 2008). Since this age is characterized by post-modernism and younger generations (Dunn, 2001; Horan, 2017; White (2017), people need to experience an authentic encounter with Christ. This is through effective mentorship by the leaders through healthy leadership, preaching, and exhortation of the Word of God (Dunn, 2001; Van Der Walt, 2017).

### ***Healthy and Dynamic Church Leadership***

In terms of Church leadership, a leader according to Linhart (2016) needs to be one of solid character since a biblical worldview helps shape one's mind and character for discipleship (2016). Thus, a Christian leader must already be a disciple of Christ whose focus is on following Christ (2016). One of the hallmarks of a Christian teacher or leader is humility since a leader or

pastor does not think that they have arrived since they are currently following Christ (Linhart, 2016; Tripp, 2012). As Tripp (2012) states, a lot goes on behind closed doors in pastoral leadership so it is important for the pastor to be healthy in all areas and remain humble so he can fulfill his ministry. This means that he needs to have a healthy community and family around him so he can do his ministry well (2012).

As stated before, a church must be missional so according to Niemandt (2016), missional leaders must possess certain traits such as transcendence, humanity, wisdom/knowledge, courage, justice and temperance to be transformational. They must minister with gratitude, hope, compassion and kindness so they can help transform their church into the people God has called them to be (2016). This will take a lot of temperance, courage, wisdom and knowledge to do since one must learn to be a disciple (Niemandt, 2016; Linhart, 2016). When missional leaders have these traits according to the study, they can minister well to others and lead the church in mission according to a biblical worldview (Niemandt, 2016). This includes having integrity and holiness since, one's private life must match up well with their public life (Tripp, 2012).

### ***Development of Church Leaders***

As Niemandt (2016) states, church leaders are developed according to the different aspects of transformational leadership, which are transcendence, humanity, wisdom/knowledge, courage, justice and temperance. Linhart (2016) and Tripp (2012) recommend that pastors and teachers are regularly in tune with Christ so they can walk in humility and know what to teach to their classes and congregations. This involves discipleship which includes having or developing the attributes of a pastor or teacher, which includes being skillful, loving and approachable (Tripp, 2012; Linhart, 2016).

When it comes to the post-modern world, pastors according to Johnston (2001) are to be word-centered in everything they do and to not compromise the Word of God, even to post-moderns who do not believe in absolute truth. They are to be relational in terms of being relevant and connecting the Word of God to the post-modern culture through dialogue, storytelling and being a good listener (2001). Since post-modernists have a limited attention span (Hiebert, 2008), pastors are to continue to be familiar with the cultural surroundings so they can understand and relate to people in the culture (2001). They are to reach them based on the example of Christ to avoid pushing post-modernists out of the picture (2001). Since post-modernists tend to not understand the Bible or rationally go away from it, it is essential for the preacher to continue to learn how to rationally defend the Bible and the exclusivity of Christ (2001). This is so they can help them develop a biblical worldview (2001). When all of this comes into play, pastors can help reach the post-modern climate for Christ (2001).

Lastly, Akerlund (2016) describes Paul's parental nature in helping the church at Thessalonica grow in the Lord and become mature in the faith. The idea is to create a church where the pastors develop their leaders and the rest of the church through close-knit relationships (2016). Since the church according to Akerlund (2016) needed to maintain its influence in an overwhelming secular culture, it is important that relationships are formed between leaders and people in the congregation so that people can stand out in the midst of the world. This is the same strategy that Johnston (2001) uses with the post-modernists since a relational approach is the only way one can reach the culture for Christ. Thus, as Linhart (2016) mentions, a leader needs to continue to be developed in love so they can build relationships with their congregation and eventually develop their congregations in the Lord (Akerlund, 2016). This requires following Paul's example according to Akerlund (2016).

### *Development of the Congregation*

As stated before, Paul's Christlike example in the church helped the congregation work together to grow spiritually since this is one of the end goals of believers (Akerlund, 2016). Thus, the development of any congregation starts with the leader's example and teaching and spills over to the congregation living for Christ (Akerlund, 2016). The development of the congregation moves beyond reaching the post-modern world since it encompasses people from all generations (Akerlund, 2016; Johnston, 2001). Thus, all generations will be in view here in this section.

In *From Here to Maturity*, Bergler (2014) uses Dallas Willard's Vision, Intention and Meaning (VIM) plan as an implementation strategy for spiritual growth in a church. Bergler (2014) lays out the foundation for what a spiritual mature person is since a spiritual mature person is someone who has to a large degree, competency in the Christian disciplines. This includes being missional, being plugged into church community, having basic knowledge of the Christian life, applying those truths in their lives and walking in love (2014). Both Bergler (2014) and Parrett and Wang (2009) point out that it is through the Holy Spirit that spiritual formation happens. The church overall is to teach God's Word according to one's conformity to Christ, salvation and faith, hope, love so the Holy Spirit can do His job in the believer's life (Parrett and Wang, 2009; Bergler 2014). When the church is taught to conform to Christ, walk through salvation and build on their faith in God's love, then they can properly grow and mature in Christ (2009).

Lastly, in terms of spiritual growth in a church, both Bergler (2014) and Chandler (2016) give ways a church can strategize spiritual growth with adults. Both Bergler (2014) and Chandler (2016) mention how teaching the Word of God affects one spiritually, including emotions and

human will. People according to Chandler (2016) when taught the word can experience conversion when it comes to the will and the moral conscience so they can increasingly be willing to be formed spiritually and to serve others. In Willard's VIM process, people can cast a vision of where God wants them to be, set up an intention for the means of that goal and continue to pursue the goal when it comes to spiritual formation (Bergler, 2014). No one is perfect when it comes to spiritual formation but the church can continue to teach God's Word and help people be conformed to salvation, Christ and one's faith in God's love (2014). When the VIM process is carried out through small groups and mentoring in a local church, the church overall can continue to analyze its efforts in helping people grow spiritually (2014).

### ***Development of Younger People and Younger Generations in the Church***

According to Chiroma (2015), Dunn (2001) and Van Der Walt (2017), the key to developing young people and younger generations (Generations Y and Z) is through mentoring through worldview development, discipleship, and spiritual leading. This is similar to how adults in the church are to grow spiritually, without the emphasis on pacing (Bergler, 2014). Van Der Walt (2017) explains that a biblical worldview must be developed by mentors who are willing to listen and be trustworthy. They must have knowledge of the stages of life and generational differences in order to properly reach those at a certain stage or generation (2017). People in Generation Y tend to be distrustful, individualistic, pluralistic, lacking an identity and achievement-orientated (2017). This is similar to post-modernists since post-modernism believes in an individual path based on individual reality and pleasure due to the pluralistic nature of post-modernism (Dunn, 2001).

Since many adolescents in post-modern culture are looking for attachment of identity and something real, the church should provide them with a real encounter with Jesus Christ (Dunn,



2001; Chiroma, 2015). This is for the purpose of experiencing the attachment and satisfaction they need (Dunn, 2001; Chiroma, 2015). According to Dunn (2001), teenagers need to be paced, or shown empathy towards their own thoughts and feelings, before they can be led, or pointed in the right direction. Mentors in the church, such as pastors or leaders, need to help model their own worldview or faith and be understanding concerning where the adolescent is at so they can continue to grow in spiritual formation (Dunn, 2001; Chiroma, 2015). According to Van Der Walt (2017) and Dunn (2001), younger people are in need of a biblical worldview and of a faith that is real so they can get the acceptance and love they need. This is where successful mentoring through imitation, role modeling, discipleship and worldview formation comes into play (Chiroma, 2015).

### ***Summary of Spiritual and Worldview Development in the Church***

Spiritual formation and worldview development are connected since both are formed based on Christ and the Word of God (Dunn, 2001). Both are essential for a church in a post-modern era since the religious pluralism and distrust has made significant challenges for Christianity as a whole (Dunn, 2001; Van Der Walt, 2017). When the church is connected through relationships based on accountability and faith, then the church can effectively reach everyone, including the younger people and generations with the message of Christ (Dunn, 2001; Akerlund, 2016; Bergler, 2014). Effective mentorship can be done through love, trustworthiness and effectively reaching teenagers and young people where they are at (Dunn, 2001; Chiroma, 2015; Van Der Walt, 2017). When the church overall preaches the truth in love and presents an authentic experience for everyone to know God, then the church has a better chance of developing spiritually in a post-modern world (Dunn, 2001; Chiroma, 2015; Van Der Walt, 2017).

## **Educational Practices of Worldview Development**

When it comes to worldview development in education, the vast majority of scholarly resources are done in an academic context since this is where worldviews are formed in a younger to older audience. Knight's (2006) work on philosophy and education looks at the worldview curriculum in the school to see how it relates to a biblical worldview. Since certain elements of Christian education relate hand in hand with Christian leadership in the church (Linhart, 2016), it is important to look at how worldview development in the church is connected with worldview development in education. Thus, from all the findings, one can conclude that the main idea concerning worldview development in the school can go along with worldview development in the church through the shared need for education (2016). Since teaching is essential in the church, the educational aspect of worldview development can carry into the church (2016).

### ***Van Der Kooij et. al. (2013)'s Impact of Worldview on Religious Education***

In Van Der Kooij, J., De Rieter, D.J., and Miedema, S.'s (2013) article on the Impact of Worldview on Religious Education, Kooij et al. (2013) in a religious neutral way discuss how to properly help students develop their personal worldviews in relation to organized worldviews. In the article, the authors discuss the four elements of worldview formation (existential questions, believing and acting, morality and meaning of life) and how they can be applied to a person's worldview (2013). The issue related to forcing an organized worldview in light of personal worldviews is highlighted since people will have differing personal worldviews that may conflict or be in line with a worldview (2013). Thus, the authors suggested that teachers try to align one's personal worldviews with one specific organized worldview while not transmitting all the data from one particular organized worldview. The only exception to this would be the biblical

worldview that Knight (2006) posits in his work since the Bible and Christ need to be the organized worldview.

In light of this source, pastors in a church can use the biblical worldview in the Bible (Knight, 2006) in order to help shape people's personal worldviews. As Van Der Kooij et. al. (2013) states, worldview development is a lifelong process so it takes time for people to have the right answers to the right questions and develop their sense of morality and meaning of life through the lens of scripture. Since even pastors have their own personal worldview, people in the church can develop their own biblical worldview while not incorporating all the data from the pastor's organized worldview. As Spurgeon (2005) states, pastors have to preach the word in and out of season so that the congregation can receive God's word while filtering out the opinions through the Holy Spirit.

***Geiger's (2017) Worldview Formation, Reflexivity and Personhood***

While Van Der Kooij et. al. (2013) focuses on how to shape students' personal worldviews through an organized worldview, Geiger (2017) in his article take it a step further by explaining how a student's worldview is shaped through social interaction and reflexivity. Through his study at three Episcopal high schools, he establishes the need for self-expression, reflexivity and personhood since these are essential to worldview development (2017). Teachers are to actively listen to their students and help foster community with their students since a person's values and beliefs are translated through language, or interpersonal dialogue (2017). Further, students are to be trained to reflexively discern their morals, beliefs and values so they can take ownership of their personhood and establish their own values (2017).

In terms of biblical worldview development, Knight (2006) lays out the strategy for students and people in the church to be trained in terms of axiology, or values and beliefs. Knight

(2006) helps establish the foundation for a Christian worldview and gives pastors and educators the tools needed to help students choose Godly morals, values and beliefs and reflexively stand in those. McDowell and Wallace (2019) in their worldview pyramid explain how a person's values and actions are related to their worldview and their worldview is related to the relationships in their life. Thus, training up people with a biblical worldview means getting in community with others like Geiger (2017) points out which helps people stand in God's values, morals and beliefs.

### ***Kim's (2020) Critical Thinking Theory in Worldview Formation***

Kim (2020) in his work further established the need for community in terms of worldview development, but this time in the college academic setting. The results of Kim's (2020) study showed the positive correlation between critical thinking, faith integration and the perceived importance of worldview development. This includes a direct correlation between faculty inclusion and the importance of worldview development (2020). Faculty and Staff, according to the study, are to model a faith integration which would help students connect their faith and whole being with the academic world (2020). This will help them think critically about God and the Bible and be able to link up the rest of the knowledge that is learned in school (a correlation between religious practices and doing better in school is also noted in the research) (2020).

In the church, pastors according to Linhart (2016) and Spurgeon (2005) are to lead their congregations in the word of God so that their congregation can be well equipped in their biblical worldview and faith. This takes faith integration as Kim (2020) notes since a pastor is to integrate Christ and the Bible into the ministry of their church (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). One result of Kim's (2020) study is that the need for faculty inclusion raised the need for

worldview formation in the church. When the pastoral staff actively helps the congregation grow in their faith, then the congregation has a better chance of developing their worldview through their critical thinking skills since the community is there.

### ***Summary of Education Example of Worldview Development***

Much of these educational principles have a corresponding element to the church since the church needs to work on its spiritual formation while engaging the culture for Christ (Dunn, 2001). Since much of how the church should be going about spiritual formation is happening in the public education sphere, the church can follow their example (Dunn, 2001; Bergler, 2014; Chiroma, 2015). Churches should be preaching the uncompromising Word of God while helping foster community and pastoral inclusion (Geiger, 2017; Kim, 2020). In doing so, pastors should help their congregation through community discern Godly beliefs and values and reflexively help people stand in God's word (Geiger, 2017; Kim, 2020).

Since there are a myriad of personal worldviews, pastors and teachers should help develop people according to the biblical worldview so they can align their beliefs, morals and values according to God's word (Knight, 2006; Ver Der Kooij et. al., 2013). While this is a process, pastors and teachers should help foster community, since it is through community that worldview formation takes place (Geiger, 2017; McDowell and Wallace, 2019). Thus, from the research, one can bridge the connection between education and the church. Both are done for the glory of God, to see people form a biblical worldview and grow in their walk with God (Van Der Walt, 2017; Bergler, 2014).

## **Rationale for Study and Gap in Literature**

### **Rationale for Study**

The main purpose for this study was to see how worldview development in a church setting impacts the spiritual growth and vitality of the church overall from the leadership to the congregation. Since 17 percent of Christians have a biblical worldview (Barna, 2017, paragraph twenty), it is important that the church in general is doing what they can to develop its leaders and members in an authentic biblical worldview. Thus, this study will see how the church overall is going about implementing its biblical worldview in the leaders and in the congregation to further evaluate the spiritual vitality of the church in a post-Christian world. This includes how they help frame the younger generations in the Word of God.

This study furthers the literature base in the academic fields of worldview formation, faith development and church health since this study will address how the church is going about training its members and leaders in a biblical worldview. This includes the overall health of the church and how the church is reaching the post-modern world for Christ. Church health is an important topic within the church community and Tripp's (2012) book on pastoral leadership further underscores the importance of having healthy leadership in the church. This includes the church being on mission since according to both Chester and Timmis (2008) and Niemandt (2016), the church is to live its mission out in the world for the glory of Christ in order to transform the world.

In terms of faith development and worldview formation, the church itself is to help develop people for Christ and this includes having a biblical worldview since a biblical worldview according to Gibson (2004), Griffioen (2012) and Setran (2018) leads one to biblical action and to further spiritual development. Thus, one can see the importance of the church

having a vibrant biblical worldview so they can reach the culture for Christ and help others grow in their faith since all are connected (Gibson, 2004; Griffioen, 2012; Setran, 2018). Since roughly 17 percent of Christians (less than 5 percent of Generation Z and 10 percent of the population) have a biblical worldview (Barna, 2017, paragraph twenty; Foley, 2017, paragraph one; Morrow, 2018, paragraph three), it is important to assess how the church overall is combatting the problem of a lack of worldview in order to be healthy and strong spiritually as a unit. This is how this research will add to the literature on the subject since one's worldview helps determine one's faith and formation in Christ (Setran, 2018).

### **Gap in Literature**

From all the literature, the overall gap in the literature has to do with the lack of studies done in a local church setting on biblical worldview development and faith development. The vast majority of studies in the church have been based on faith development since Ogundiran (2013) in his dissertation focuses on discipleship in a local church context. In terms of worldview development, the vast majority of studies have either been case studies such as Erdvig's (2016) model on worldview development in emerging young adults or studies done in education such as Long's (2014) assessment of former students in a public school system or Barrow's (2014) model on helping students develop a biblical worldview. The only dissertation done of worldview in a church setting was Rutledge's (2013) educational context in a church and high school students. However, this was more educational than church transformational and this study will fill the gap by exploring the church overall in terms of health and how a church's worldview impacts the spiritual vitality of a church (2013).

The studies that have come close or resonate with this study are Erdvig's (2016) worldview development for emergent adults and Long's (2014) spiritual stamina in young adult

graduates of Christian schools. First, Erdvig's (2016) study focuses primarily on reaching emergent adults for Christ through a Christian or biblical worldview. The study reveals a lack of study on developing a biblical worldview and much of the material given in the literature review talks about the different aspects of the worldview (2016). His goal is to interview 20 people between the ages of 18-23 to evaluate their worldview stories and see how they are developing their worldview (2016). The results showed that mentorship, church, training in school, spiritual experience, friendships and maturation from the home has contributed to the development and maintenance of the Christian or biblical worldview (2016). The study also showed that apathy, trials, distractions and challenges can derail anyone from their biblical worldview since some have walked away from God and come back (2016). Thus, Erdvig (2016) built his theory around Sire (2004)'s worldview model since maturation takes place in the mind and heart which affects everything else one does.

Second, Long's (2014) dissertation focused on how graduates from Christian private schools reflect their spiritual stamina concerning their spiritual formation during their teenage years. The findings showed that the majority saw the home, school and church as important factors in worldview development and spiritual formation (2014). Personal spiritual experiences as well as serving through the great commission has helped many of the students maintain resilient faith (2014). When they were grounded in faith, most of them were able to use that as a resource when they hit a crisis (2014). Thus, from the findings, this is one of the results of spiritual stamina in the college world since according to some of the participants, college life can be a challenge (2014).

These studies have in some way focused on engaging the current post-modern culture (or emergent adults) with worldview development. Long (2014) revealed that the church has a major



role in research development but did not focus on how the church functions in that role. Thus, the study focuses on some of the key aspects of this study (reaching the culture, spiritual growth and worldview development) but not the whole study (2014). Erdvig's (2016) development focused on the same aspects and came to the same conclusion about church, but did not focus on how the church can mature people through a biblical worldview. Thus, the gap in the literature for worldview development is wide and this study will help close the gap when it comes to the literature.

### **Profile of the Current Study**

This phenomenological study aims to see how worldview development impacts spiritual growth and vitality in a church setting since many people in America do not possess a biblical worldview according to Foley (2017). Since many do not have a biblical worldview and struggle to grow spiritually (Barna, 2015; Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018), it is essential to see how the church overall is combatting the issue of worldview development and spiritual growth and how their worldview contributes to the spiritual development of their congregation. This study will be conducted through interviewing eight different Evangelical Protestant churches in order to see how the church overall is going about worldview development and spiritual growth. A screening survey (Appendix C) will be conducted in order to get permission from eight different churches and after interviewing each pastor, the data will be collected and analyzed based on the meaning and words of the participants (Englander, 2012).

The main elements of the study are worldview development and spiritual vitality and many authors, including Griffioen (2012), Knight (2006), Smith (2009), Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995) and Gibson (2004) assert the importance of growing spiritually through a biblical worldview. Since Chester and Timmis (2008) equate growing in the Bible with growing in

community, one can assume how having a biblical worldview helps one's relationship with God. Thus, this phenomenological study has its roots in the literature and will be conducted based on interviews in order to grasp the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will focus on the methodology being used to conduct the qualitative study concerning worldview development and spiritual growth in a church setting. Since this study is unique in its kind when it comes to worldview development in a church, the study will focus primarily on how having a biblical worldview or lack thereof impacts the spiritual growth and vitality of a church. Below, the problem, purpose statement, research questions and methodology will be discussed and more advanced elements such as setting, participants, role of the researcher and ethical considerations will be discussed as well. The chapter will close on how data will be collected and the trustworthiness of the data. The entire methodology will be summarized to summarize the methodology.

### **Research Design Synopsis**

#### **The Problem**

The research given in the problem explains that a lack of spiritual growth and discipleship is an epidemic, especially when it comes to worldview development (Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018). Since one in ten people in America have a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017, paragraph one), it is essential that the church overall is helping develop people spiritually and equip them with the tools needed to help them see the world through God's eyes (Chester and Timmis, 2008; Knight, 2006). According to Barna (2017), spiritual growth seems to be a high endeavor for Christians. However, further research shows that absolute truth, spiritual growth and biblical literacy is an exception to the norm to most Christians (Barna, 2017; Jones, 2006; Lifeway, 2006). This explains the lack of worldview development among Christians. Since a biblical worldview is based on the absolute truth of the Bible (Barna, 2015, 2018; Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). Thus, the crisis concerning worldview development and spiritual growth are

evident in the body of Christ, especially with the younger generations (Morrow, 2018). It is important for the church to help people have a faith that sticks and this starts with getting them grounded in Christ and the Bible, which is the foundation for any biblical worldview (Hiebert, 2008; Powell and Clark, 2011).

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceived impact of biblical worldview development on spiritual development in the church for pastors who oversee discipleship at eight doctrinally conservative, Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas. At this stage in the research, biblical worldview development will be generally defined as helping people develop their faith and view of their world through Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008). Spiritual development is developing people according to the Word of God and Christ for holiness and a solid faith (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). The theory guiding this study is Hiebert's (2008) holistic development with a biblical worldview since all truth is in Christ and Christians should be Christ-centered in everything they do.

### **Research Questions**

**RQ1.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development to its overall mission in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ2.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of how they incorporate the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ3.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of leaders in the church?

**RQ4.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of those in the congregation?

**RQ5.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of the younger generations?

## **Research Design and Methodology**

This study will be qualitative in nature and follow a phenomenology design that describes the phenomenon of worldview development in terms of spiritual growth and vitality in a church setting (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Unlike quantitative, qualitative studies seek to describe a phenomenon that relates to the problem of a lack of worldview development among Christians (2018). The study seeks to have an in-depth look at how pastors of different Evangelical Protestant churches are going about worldview development and spiritual growth in the church so that the reader can get a snapshot of how the church overall is combatting the issue of a lack of worldviews in society. This includes how the church is equipping people with a solid worldview and faith in light of the culture around them (2018). Thus, the study seeks to establish how each church is helping equip their congregation with a biblical worldview. Answers to how to combat the issues regarding a lack of worldview will bring clarity to the discussion when using the instrumentation (2018). This study is site-based (even though the interviews will be online) since the researcher will be interviewing pastors to gather a phenomenon, not to collect numerical data (2018). This study will help answer the five research questions through a phenomenological method since the questions help point to the phenomenon of how a church is implementing and equipping people (including leaders) for Christ using a biblical worldview (2018).

Qualitative research according to Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) describes human behavior and experience in their natural world. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research seeks to look at human experiences and interpret them based on their own world experience, which is similar to worldview development for people (2013). According to Bailey (2014), Qualitative Research began around the 20<sup>th</sup> century but became more cohesive in the 1920s

through the 1940s when Paul Felix Lazarsfeld became the father of modern qualitative research. He invented motivational research, group methods, depth interviewing and was able to interview people through agency which has not been done before (2014). The move from motivational research to qualitative research began in the 70s and the idea of focus groups and interviewing became more marketable throughout the 80s and 90s (2014). By the 90s, qualitative research had no shortage in texts and the debate over qualitative research and quantitative research in psychology became less tense since Lazarsfeld's techniques were now widely accepted (2014).

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), the nature and general use of qualitative research is for the researcher to be the key instrument in the study. The researcher is to be sure that the potential audience can participate in the study to avoid setbacks in the research (2018). The researcher goes into the natural setting, builds relationship, and connects with the setting in a way that helps bridge the gap when it comes to the phenomena being studied (2018). The way data is collected is through observations and interviews (in this researcher's case, it is through interviews), and the interview protocol (Appendix D) is based on what the researcher wants to get out of the research instead of using other people's documents (2018).

Qualitative researchers use data through triangulation and other means to gather and code the multiple sources of data (interviews, observations, and other forms of data) (2018). The data is interpreted from the participant's meaning instead of the researcher's and the data is interpreted by the researcher in an inductive and deductive manner to assess the data into themes and categories and help bridge the data when it comes to the research questions (2018). The idea is to get a holistic account of the data to assess the problem and gather the right findings concerning the data (2018).

Aside from qualitative research in general, phenomenological research involves exploring a phenomenon from the participant's point of view (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Groenewald, 2004). Unlike case study, ethnography and narrative studies where the attention is on a particular organization, individual, story or behavior, a phenomenological study seeks to understand a phenomenon based on how the participants view it and perceive it in daily life (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). All of the qualities of a qualitative study fit the phenomenological method since the researcher builds rapport with the participants and uses an interview protocol (Appendix D) to guide the interview (according to Creswell and Creswell (2018), interviews are the main form of data collection in phenomenological studies).

However, in phenomenological studies, data collection and analysis are based off of bracketing and the phenomenon itself since the researcher lays aside his presuppositions in order to fully interpret the data from the participants point of view (Alase, 2017; Groenewald, 2004). Thus, the interview is based on interpreting the phenomenon through the participant's eyes (Englander, 2012) and the data is collected, transcribed and broken down into themes, codes and categories in order to understand the data and bring it to a conclusion through description and narratives based on how the participants interpreted the phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

### **Setting**

For this study, this researcher has conducted qualitative research in eight Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas that are doctrinally conservative. The eight churches were selected based off of purposive sampling that happened over the course of a year. A screening survey (Appendix C) was given to twelve to twenty different random churches (at a time) in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in order to see if they fit for the study. Eventually, from the hundred-plus

screens that were sent out, nine responded with a yes, with eight eventually participating the study.

The eight different churches were general potential churches that this researcher wanted to study. The Evangelical churches was in this researcher's area since this researcher does not drive due to disability and the researcher wants to be sure that this study is doable. The main criteria this researcher has for the setting of the eight churches is that the churches are in the process of building and developing people according to a biblical worldview (Sweeney, 2013). Doctrinally conservative Evangelical Protestant Churches will be selected for the scope of this study as they seek to protect the authority and integrity of the Bible (National Association of Evangelicals, 2021; Sweeney, 2013). For a biblical worldview, this is an important factor to choose when it comes to the setting (Sweeney, 2013).

Since the eight different churches (described below) were listed in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area, it is important to lay out demographics before describing each potential church. While there are no statistics on the number of people in Dallas that have a biblical worldview, the numbers are probably the same as Foley (2017, paragraph one) posits since ten percent of Americans have a biblical worldview. According to Pew Forum (2021), the belief in God and spending time in prayer and the Bible are high on the list (paragraphs one through four). Yet, when it comes to corporate and private Bible reading and prayer, there is a good percentage of people who do not engage in Bible reading (2021, paragraph six). When it comes to right and wrong, the slim majority says it is absolute while many in Dallas say it is common sense (2021, paragraph ten). This is also the case when it comes to right and wrong since many take the post-modern approach and says it is dependent on the situation (Knight, 2006; Pew Forum, 2021, paragraph eleven). Therefore, the Dallas metro area is solid when it comes to its belief in God,



but is spiritually lazy and confused when it comes to the Bible and absolute truth (2021, paragraphs one through eleven). This is the case nationwide according to Barna (2015, 2017) since many do not possess a Christian worldview or believe in absolute truth, despite wanting to grow spiritually and failing to execute.

Lastly, the eight potential churches were divided up based off of this demographic material above along with the other demographic material that Pew Forum (2021) mentions. Since these churches are evangelical protestant that have conservative doctrine, all eight churches are of different denominations that are evangelical in nature and have a different culture to them. Each type of church will be discussed below in order to give an overall scope of what this researcher is looking for. The exact polling of the churches will be purposive in nature since this writer is looking for churches that will not doctrinally compromise the study.

The first Evangelical Protestant church for the purposes of this dissertation alone is Church A. It is a non-denominational church that is multi-site and has many campuses. The leadership follows a single pastor model with other pastors and staff under him. It follows a hierarchal form of government which works together for the good of the organization. The motto for the church is evangelistic and discipleship in nature since the church has a wide range of ministries that helps share the gospel to a world and build disciples using a numeric model. Ultimately, this church places a heavy emphasis on spiritual growth and biblical/worldview development through four points, which will add value to the study. The Bible serves as the primary guide for worldview development in the church. Since the church is bigger compared to the others, it can help add diversity to the study since it is multi-ethnic. The pressures that this pastor might face is if he really wants to be in the dissertation or not. Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The second Evangelical Protestant church for this dissertation is Church B. Of course, this Protestant church is like the first one, but part of the Southern Baptist Denomination. The leadership style is similar as the first with a senior pastor and pastors underneath him. However, it is congregationally driven with a pastoral team overseeing the church with deacons and a board of directors. This potential church is multi-ethnic and like the first is large in size, but not multi-site. Its spiritual development practices include Sunday School and other classes that help one develop a biblical worldview. The Bible serves as the guide for everything discipleship related in the church. The church chosen because of the criteria given, and it focuses on making disciples of Christ and helping people (including leaders) have a biblical worldview. The pressures this church may face is being part of the dissertation since not every church wants their church name to be affiliated with a dissertation. Also, being part of a study to see how worldview development impacts spiritual growth may expose the church so pseudonyms are used to protect the church and the participant. Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The third Evangelical Protestant church for this dissertation is a church that is unlike the first two, but conservative in doctrine, since it is a non-denominational church that is more Pentecostal in doctrine. This provides a different denominational spin which will make the study more diverse. For the purposes of this study, the church will be called Church C. This church has all the elements concerning the dissertation since it focuses on discipleship, mission/vision, great commission and leadership and congregation development. This church like others is multi-ethnic and uses a set of classes and programs to help people develop a biblical worldview. Concerning their organization and leadership, they are a pastor-led church with elders and they have several pastors that administer different areas of the church. They do emphasize both Spirit

and Word in their development of people in their church. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The fourth Evangelical Protestant Church is like the previous church, since it is Pentecostal in doctrine, but it is actually affiliated with the Assemblies of God, this making it a denominational church. For the purposes of this study, the church will be called Church D. The organizational structure is led by a senior pastor with pastors that serve under him. Like any church, it is a multi-ethnic church with all generations and all ethnic groups present. The spiritual development practices include programs such as REACH, Ignite and small groups that help people find Christ and develop a biblical worldview. The Bible serves as the guide for all of this. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The fifth Evangelical Protest Church is a smaller church that is non-denominational. For the purposes of the study, the church will be called Church E. Organizationally, it is pastor driven but it has trustees, elders and an external board of overseers, one of which is a presiding bishop. The overseers help in matters in church, especially if discipline is needed for the pastor. The trustees and elders both help in decisions in the church, even though the trustees' select elders. It is multi-ethnic, even though two thirds of the population is African American, and it has people of all age ranges in the church. The primary spiritual development practices are the culture code of the church (seven key statements) and small groups that help bring out

discipleship in the church. Through the Bible and these elements, the church exists to help people grow in their faith and have a comprehensive biblical worldview. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The sixth Evangelical Protestant Church for this study is a medium sized church that is part of the Southern Baptist Convention. For the purposes of this study, the church will be called Church F. The church is ethnically diverse since it has a Spanish service and ministry that represents twelve different countries. The leadership is diverse since many of the staff is bilingual and the church operates on a pastoral-team led hierarchy with the senior pastor over the church and teams of pastors that represent the different parts of the church. The church has a sizable middle-aged population with people of all ages and it has a vibrant college ministry as well. The spiritual developmental practices including partnering with other churches, leadership training, classes and small groups that help people develop a biblical worldview. The Bible serves as the foundation for spiritual development in the church. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

The seventh Evangelical Protestant Church for this study is a smaller church that is also Southern Baptist in affiliation. For the purposes of this study, the church will be called Church G. The leadership and organizational structure are congregational with a lead pastor that oversees several different pastors and deacons. The main ethnicity is a mixture of Caucasian, African

American and Hispanic with different age groups, mainly 50s and up with or without kids. The church's spiritual developmental practices are mainly Bible study groups along with Vacation Bible School and other activities to reach people for Christ. This church is great commission based since everything they do is to help equip people with a biblical worldview and the great commission. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

Lastly, the eight Evangelical Protestant Church is a non-denominational church that classifies itself as a Bible church. This church will be called Church H. The church is run by elders, the head pastor being an elder along with several other pastors. Four pastors on staff are not elders but the rest of the pastors serve on the elder board. There is one committee which helps serve to hire people to certain positions in leadership. Ethnicity wise, the church is multi-ethnic with English, Spanish and even other European speakers affiliated with Eastern Europe. The church is an older church, but they have some younger people as well. Spiritual Developmental practices include exegetical preaching from the Bible, small groups and classes that help people develop a Biblical Worldview. The pressures this church has is like the other churches since not every church wants to be a part of a dissertation or participate in a study that may expose them (why pseudonyms are being used). Thus, the pre-study interviews have helped weed out any churches that fear the exposure of bad ministry practices.

**Table 3.1***Church Demographics*

Church	Distinguishing Demographic Characteristics	Focus
A	Large, multi-ethnic, full of ministries and resources for everyone. Non-Denominational.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions
B	Large, multi-ethnic, full of ministries and resources for everyone. Baptist.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions.
C	Medium, Multi-ethnic. Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Non-Denominational (Pentecostal).	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions
D	Small, Multi-Ethnic, Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Assembly of God.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions
E	Small, Multi-Ethnic, Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Non-Denominational.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions.
F	Large, Multi-Ethnic, Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Baptist.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions.
G	Small, Multi-Ethnic, Older Church, Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Baptist.	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions.
H	Medium, Multi-Ethnic, Older Church, Full of ministries and resources for everyone. Non-Denominational (Bible Church).	Worldview Development, Biblical Training and Missions.

**Participants**

The participants for the study included pastors who oversee discipleship and worldview development from eight different Evangelical Protestant churches. Since each church has a

certain number of leaders, it is important for this research to purposively select the pastor that oversees discipleship within the church given the research questions. Thus, the sample selection and procedure like the setting will be purposive since the pastor or pastors being interviewed will be selected based on factors related to overseeing the church discipleship (including leaders), worldview development, physical and online proximity (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Also, experience will come into play since it is important for the pastor to have had at least two years of experience at the church to document worldview formation and spiritual growth (this is so that the pastor can be able to give the overall scope and not be too new to the church).

First, the pastors chosen for the study followed the criteria above since it is important to interview the right pastor that oversees the issues of worldview development in a church in terms of both leaders and congregation members. This was in the form of purposive sampling since he is recruiting the best pastor to the study in the church (who will be able to answer all research questions). All the preliminary information was gathered through the screening survey (Appendix C) in order to gather the right churches. Then, if the church approves of the study, they choose the right participant for the study in their church based on the parameters of the study (if they deny, they have the option to recommend other churches for the study through screen question six).

Second, the sample size, demographics, and inclusion criteria are based on the number of churches in the study since one pastor is being interviewed per church. In each of the churches listed, the pastor may be male or female and the criteria for including the pastor or staff member in the interview process is dependent on if they are over the teaching and worldview development of that church. Since this title may go to a lead pastor or a teaching/mission's pastor, the sample size will be the best person who fits the study (on the church's discretion) so it

could come from a wide range of people. The staff members can range from different ethnicities, theological backgrounds, and history with the church since the ethnic backgrounds in some churches may be different than others. Thus, when it comes to churches in general, the demographics will vary since each church is different.

Since all are Evangelical Protestant and are conservative in doctrine, each come from a conservative background, so each teach from an evangelical biblical worldview with some variations. Some have been at the church for a short time while others have been at the church for an extended period, so each participant varies. Thus, the main inclusion criteria for each sample size were whether or not they oversee the spiritual growth of the entire church in terms of leaders and congregation members (since the research questions call for this). In terms of pastors, someone who oversees discipleship of leaders and congregation members is most likely the pastor that will be chosen since they oversee how worldview development affects spiritual growth and vitality in the entire church.

Third, the reason a purposive sampling procedure is conducted in this study is because this researcher plans on interviewing multiple churches to get multiple perspectives on how worldview development affects spiritual growth and vitality in the church (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Since most people do not have a biblical worldview (Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018), it is essential to see how other churches are solving this problem as well. Since the sample selection is based on purposely finding the right people for the research and based on pastoral oversight, it is important that the participants in each church are selected based on the criteria described (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This is to be sure that the person (s) being interviewed are involved in each of the research questions mentioned (2018).



Last, a short email screening survey (Appendix C) went out to twelve to twenty random Evangelical Protestant churches and pastors (through purposive sampling) in Dallas-Fort Worth to see if the churches emphasize worldview development and spiritual growth. This is to narrow the scope of the study to be sure that the setting and participants go hand in hand with the direction of the research and to avoid potential bias in the research. It is important for this researcher to not have skewed data when it comes to churches that do not focus on developing one's faith and worldview (2018). Thus, the churches selected are based on whether they follow a biblical worldview. If eight churches have not approved based on the survey, snowball sampling will be used through the screening survey (Appendix C) to get the number of churches up to eight (If less than eight still say yes, then twelve to twenty (or how much is needed) screens will be sent to gather the correct number of participants). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2009), snowball sampling utilizes existing participants to refer other potential participants to the study. Thus, this will be accomplished by asking the pastor to refer this researcher to other churches that may want to do the study.

### **Role of the Researcher**

This researcher will be the primary instrument when it comes to interviewing the pastors through the semi-structured interview since the researcher will be in an intense study with the participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018) (Appendix D). Thus, the past experiences concerning the study and setting and how they help the researcher shape the study will compete with the true nature of the phenomena from the participant's point of view (2018). The potential bias (own strong beliefs about worldview development and way of going about spiritual growth) of this researcher will be put on the table in order to grasp the full phenomena of worldview development and spiritual growth in a church (2018). This is done through empathy in order to

make sure that the interviews are in the pastors' own context. This researcher has interviewed several pastors for various school assignments in the past, including undergraduate and graduate work at Liberty University. He has been able to collect data from a church before that was more assignment based than research based so this is his first time doing applied research at a church. This researcher used Zoom or Microsoft Teams with the participants to see how worldview development has shaped spiritual growth in these churches. He will build rapport with the pastor at the church through email and establish the interviews with the pastor that oversees discipleship (if they approve of the study) (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

During the interviews, any biases and assumptions will be laid on the table through bracketing (Groenewald, 2004) since this researcher is not trying to interpret the pastor's responses in terms of this researcher's worldview but interpret the pastor's responses in terms of his worldview so that the data can be accurate (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This research will organize all data according to each church and seek to interpret the data based on their own experiences since it is their church and worldview. Thus, in a private word document, this researcher will write down his worldview and perceptions (aside from Christ and the Bible being authoritative when it comes to a biblical worldview) and then mentally put them aside in order to grasp how each pastor is going about worldview development in the church. This involves some comparison and contrast since this researcher will interpret his worldview and each pastor's worldview in light of a biblical worldview. Then, as the data analysis commences, each data point (Table 3.4) will be interpreted based on how the pastor interpreted their own phenomena and synthesized based on the theory base of a biblical worldview covered in chapter two.

Overall, the study is not a comparison of this researcher's worldview versus the church's worldview, but rather how their worldview helps shape the spiritual growth of their church.

Since the pastors have a general idea of how this is happening, it is safe to go to them about the study since polling people in the church without a pastor's consent may cause problems since he is the main leader of that church (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). Thus, the pastor is the way to go when it comes to interpreting worldview development in their church.

Lastly, the potential bias this researcher has is his own biblical foundation and worldview since he was raised in a different theological background than most churches, which may cause conflict when it comes to dealing with data collection. This researcher through the bracketing process above will retain his beliefs in terms of hermeneutical phenomenological research but will use phenomenological reduction by putting his bias aside (through several word documents) in order to evaluate how worldview formation is impacting spiritual growth in different churches (Groenewald, 2004; Lopez and Willis, 2004). This is usually accomplished through empathy and bracketing as Groenewald (2004) states and this is the approach this researcher will take for the study. Since each Evangelical Protestant church believes differently on minor points, it is essential to take those beliefs into consideration and allow room for their beliefs in the study. This way, the data can be from their point of view and not from the researcher (Alase, 2017).

### **Ethical Considerations**

First and foremost, all ethical considerations are taken place through the IRB process. In the IRB process, applications must be submitted to the Cayuse IRB portal for a new study to be approved (Liberty Institutional Review Board, 2021, "Frequently Asked Questions"). The submission must be completed with the supervisor and the student's approval and the application is certified, pending the review process by the board (2021). Revisions may be required by the IRB and when they are submitted (in the case of no revisions, the IRB may issue an approval

latter), the IRB will issue an approval letter (2021). All consent forms (Appendix E), interview questions (Appendix D) and screening surveys (Appendix C) will be turned in upon submission (Liberty Institutional Review Board, 2021, "Application Checklist"). CITI training must be approved before there can be IRB approval on the study (Liberty Institutional Review Board, 2021, "Frequently Asked Questions").

Once the study passes IRB approval, this researcher plans on using consent forms and written permission (Appendix E) for each pastor in each church for to get their permission for the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). No one under 18 will be studied since it falls out of the scope of the study itself. Written permission will be retrieved from each pastor so that the study can fall within ethical guidelines (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). Thus, each pastor will be respected to prevent any unnecessary harm that Leedy and Ormrod (2019) brings up in his text, *Practical Research*.

When it comes to the pastors, their confidentiality will be respected as this researcher will carefully guard all data collected (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). Each pastor's name and the church name will be under pseudonyms in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). For instance, each pastor will go with each church so Pastor A-H will go with Church A-H. Extra effort for those churches that are a part of the study will be to help protect the privacy of each church. If they do not want to share an aspect of their ministry, then that aspect can be left unshared (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). All the coded data will be secured on a computer and will be password protected. Video recordings from the software (Microsoft Teams or Zoom) will be stored on the computer and will be kept safe through password protection, internet protection, and virus protection. Permission will be given through

the main consent form in order to gather permissions to collect the data and keep it for five years (as the Ed.D. handbook states).

The only ethical issues that may come up is if the pastors do not want to share about their ministry on a published dissertation. This is covered in the recruitment email and the consent form since they will know ahead of time their information will be confidential and it will be shared in a dissertation (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). Participants can back out of the study at any time so if any church does not want to be part of the study, then they are free to walk away from the study. This study does not exist to expose churches but to help see how worldview development affects spiritual growth so most churches should not mind being part of the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019). If this study would potentially expose a church's weaknesses to the world, then that will be taken into consideration before they could be allowed to be in the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Leedy and Ormrod, 2019).

### **Data Collection Methods and Instruments**

When it comes to data collection methods and instruments, it is important to note that qualitative research requires the researcher to interact with their participants in order to gain meaning concerning a phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This is especially true when it comes to phenomenological research since the researcher plans on studying a phenomenon through the eyes of the participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Englander, 2012). This section focuses on the overall scope of the study and how each instrument will be developed and implemented in the study. The procedures section will highlight how the study will be played out in a step-by-step fashion so that one knows how to replicate the study.

## **Collection Methods**

This researcher has interviewed eight different pastors from eight different Evangelical Protestant churches in order to evaluate the phenomenon of worldview formation and spiritual growth in the church. This research will first use a screening survey (Appendix C) in order to purposively get the right number of churches for the study. Once down to eight churches, this researcher will use a semi-structured interview with eight different pastors in order to grasp the phenomenon of worldview development and how it affects spiritual growth and vitality in the church. All the interview questions (Appendix D) will be based on the five research questions, which break down the phenomenon into the five different aspects, including the mission/vision of the church, the biblical foundation, and the equipping of leaders, equipping of those in congregation (including younger generations) and empowering everyone with the great commission through a biblical worldview. Follow up interviews may be given in order to member check information and expound on what is said in the main interview (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

## **Instruments and Protocols**

As stated in the data collection section, the two main instruments that are used are the screening survey (Appendix C) that is given out to the different churches and the semi-structured interview questions (Appendix D) which will be administered in the study itself. This section seeks to analyze and discuss how each instrument is developed and what protocol will be used when utilizing each instrument. The overall rationale will be given for each instrument and the implementation strategy of each instrument will be given in order to further explain how the interview and questionnaire will be accomplished. Lastly, the validity of each instrument will be discussed and how each instrument relates back to the research questions.

### *Screening Survey*

A questionnaire (or screening survey), according to Istat (2017), is geared towards eliciting information from participant. According to Istat (2017), a questionnaire needs to be field tested in order to prove the accuracy and validity of the instrument. This researcher plans on using a six-question screen (Appendix C) through email in order to elicit responses from pastors to see if they are applicable for the study. This researcher plans on field testing the survey through a pastor contact (not in the study) in order to see how a pastor would answer these questions (Creswell and Creswell, 2018) (Appendix B). This is to also make sure that these questions line up with the five research questions, which deal with the mission/vision of the church, the biblical foundation of the church, the training of leaders and congregation members through a biblical worldview and faith, and the training of the younger generations through a biblical worldview and faith.

Some churches do not major in discipleship (some are evangelism based) and some churches do not have programs that develop people with a biblical worldview since that is mainly faith based and they do not have anything to do with worldview formation. Therefore, the reason this screening survey (Appendix C) is done is to get an idea of where each potential church stands when it comes to doctrine, worldview formation, and if they are on mission when it comes to their churches. The questions and churches will eventually be selected through purposive and snowball sampling based on measuring how each potential church can contribute to the study and answer the research questions (unlike in the actual interview where the researcher will go in depth).

The screening survey questions (Appendix C) will be developed based on certain important aspects of the study and research questions, including the need for a worldview,

spiritual growth and solid spiritual formation (which all relate to the research questions). This covers the face and content validity of the interview questions (Appendix D) since the questions are focused on all aspects of the study and an expert opinion (pastor) will decide if the content is valid at face value (Setia, 2017). These items are crucial to church selection since this researcher wants the data to not be skewed based on totally different biblical foundations and worldviews. Since most Evangelical Protestant churches have a solid biblical foundation, these questions will be reviewed by an expert in order to cover both face and content validity (2017).

For instance, the question regarding worldview and spiritual formation may be intertwined in the strategy they use to develop people. Thus, the strategy they use must be solid so the questions regarding strategy should help point this researcher towards church selection. This researcher may tweak some of the six questions related to the study in order to make sure that the researcher gets the right information. This is to ensure validity by saying the same question three different times to make sure that the entire scope of the question is covered. It is easy to leave loopholes in the questions so it is important that the questions are direct so that the right information can be brought in and the questions can directly relate to the research questions (as the table below states).



**Table 3.2***Screening Survey and Research Question Comparison*

Research Question	Corresponding Screening Survey Questions
What is the overall mission of each church (in terms of the pastor's perspective) in terms of discipleship and evangelism?	1 & 2
What biblical strategy does the church use in evangelizing and equipping people for discipleship?	2
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of leaders in the church?	3 & 4
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of those in the congregation?	3 & 4
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of the younger generations?	3-5

Lastly, due to ethical concerns, some churches may not want to do the study since it may bring their church into the light (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). As stated before, the churches and pastors will be under pseudonyms (Church A, Pastor A, and so on) in order to protect the data and the participants from any harm and keep their names and data confidential and anonymous (2018). Thus, in the informed consent, pastors will be guaranteed confidentiality and all the data will be on a password protected computer in order to protect participants from harm (2018). Thus, the researcher may want to make note of this on the screening surveys (Appendix

C) so the participants can rest at ease. This way, if they want to see the study, they can evaluate it to be sure that they want to participate in the study or not (2018).

### ***Interviews***

The last method or instrumentation is an interview since according to Kvale (1996) is a conversation that elicits information from the participants point of view (as cited in Sewell, 2020). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), interviews, whether structured or unstructured are often open-ended and few questions in number in order to get views and opinions from the participants. They can be either face-to-face, telephone or through a focus group (the latter will not be used for the study) (2018).

The advantages of an interview include allowing the researcher complete control over the questioning and historical data from the participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The disadvantages of an interview include indirect and biased information and not usually taking place in a natural setting (2018). This researcher plans on doing research based on one-on-one interviews since according to Istat (2017), these types of interviews are the most common when it comes to qualitative data collection. The main rationale for this type of approach is that the researcher according to Englander (2012) is to interview the person while staying focused on the phenomena itself.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), phenomenological studies are usually conducted through interviews so the main interview will be online via zoom or Microsoft teams depending on the participant's preference. Prolonged time at the site (if possible) will help this researcher get an idea of how the church goes about worldview formation and spiritual growth since it is important to get to the essence of the phenomenon itself (2018). Thus, the interview method is the best method for getting to the phenomenon of a church since it is deep and

personal and it involves connecting with the hearts of people (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Alase, 2017).

When it comes to interviews, the interview questions and protocol (Appendix D) will follow a semi-structured 30-minute (30-60 minute) interview which will be strictly based on the questions but with some leeway in discussing the phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The questions for the interview will be validated based on the central focus of the study, and an expert (pastor) in the field when pre-testing the questions (2018). The main interview questions (Appendix D) will be developed based on the five research questions since all thirteen questions fall within one of those research questions. In terms of validation, each question will elicit a response that is based on the church's way of development since the questions are asked about the church in nature (2018). While some of the questions may not get much of a response (since every church does not cover everything), the questions are based on the literature in chapter two and have a connection with the phenomenon itself (2018). Thus, the questions like the screen questions will be said three times in order to grasp the whole concept (2018).

When it comes to the main interview, an interview protocol (Appendix D) will be used like the one in Creswell and Creswell (2018) where rapport is established early on through the ice-breaker question and the interviewer will focus on the phenomenon while working with the participants, like in Englander's (2012) study. Early on, consent forms (Appendix E) will be signed where participants are noted of the study so they can get a generalized idea of what the interview is about. Then this researcher will begin the interview and ask questions in a conversational style (2012). This is to gather all aspects of the phenomenon (2012). The demographic information will be asked during the interview in order to get all the demographic information concerning the church. This will complete the basic information about the

phenomenon itself. If needed, the interviewer will probe the participants to get more information out in a general way, but will respect the participant's right to not indulge (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Then as the interview wraps up, this researcher will thank the participant for the interview and gather his notes and the copy of the interview and secure it in a safe location (2018).

Lastly, the interview questions (Appendix D) are developed based on the research questions since some questions deal with the mission and value of the church while some are about the biblical foundation, leadership empowerment, congregational empowerment, and younger generation empowerment. Thus, all the thirteen interview questions (Appendix D) have something to do with the different research questions, since in chapter two, this researcher includes literature addressing all five research questions, including literature about being missional (Mulholland and Mulholland, 2013), empowering leaders and congregation members (Linhart, 2016; Chester and Timmis, 2008), empowering the next generation (White, 2017), having a biblical foundation (Erickson, 2013), and being a church that is biblically sound through community (Chester and Timmis, 2008).

Besides, some of the questions (concerning missions and spiritual growth) are similar to the study done by Long (2014) so there is some validity to the questions concerning other studies. All the questions will advance the research questions (See Table 3.3) since they will help gather data based on the questions and bring the data to the proper conclusions (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). As stated earlier, all questions will be validated since 1) they are based on the literature in chapter two and the research questions, 2) based on other studies, like Long's (2014) and 3) they have the potential to elicit a response back based on the setting and participants given (Appendix D) (2018).

**Table 3.3***Main Interview Questions and Research Questions Comparison*

Research Question	Corresponding Interview questions
What is the overall mission of each church (in terms of the pastor's perspective) in terms of discipleship and evangelism?	1 & 2
What biblical strategy does the church use in evangelizing and equipping people for discipleship?	3-6
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of leaders in the church?	7-8, 10-13* (In conjunction with RQ4)
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of those in the congregation, including the younger generations?	7-13
How does the worldview of each church contribute to the development of the younger generations?	7-13

**Procedures**

The research procedure for this qualitative study starts with the instrumentation itself. The two instruments used in this study are the screening survey (Appendix C) and the main interview (Appendix D) done with the pastors of the eight churches. The screening survey (Appendix C) has been created as a seven-question survey in order to see where the church is at when it comes to worldview development and spiritual growth. They relate to all of the five research questions since they help point to leaders and congregation members to a biblical worldview. All of the questions point to the biblical foundation and the importance of worldview development in the church since the churches need to have a solid biblical foundation and a

strategy for worldview development in order to apply for the study. The main strategy has to do with engaging the culture with a biblical worldview and the great commission.

The interview questions (Appendix D) for the main interview are also related to the five research questions. The questions have been created as a 13-question interview in order to assess where the church stands on worldviews, spiritual growth, gospel, missions and training leaders and congregation members for a biblical worldview and faith. The table (Table 3.3) in the previous section showed how each question relates to each research question and the final two questions help cap the interview with how each pastor thinks the body of Christ can help people have a biblical worldview and how having a biblical worldview has helped the church grow spiritually. Thus, the 13-question interview has been created in order to assess the phenomenon being studied.

After creation of the instruments, the student got IRB approval. The IRB process is an important first step that this researcher will take before the study. In the IRB process, the application will be submitted to the Cayuse IRB portal (Liberty Institutional Review Board, 2021, “Frequently Asked Questions”). The submission will be completed with the supervisor and the student’s approval for the application to be certified, pending the review process by the board (2021). Revisions may be required by the IRB and when they are submitted (in the case of no revisions, the IRB may issue an approval letter), the IRB will issue an approval letter (2021). All consent forms, interview questions and recruitment information (Appendix B, C, D, E) will be turned in upon submission (Liberty Institutional Review Board, 2021, “Application Checklist”). Thus, this researcher got IRB approval through this process listed before going through this procedure. All guidelines will be followed during the procedure as the researcher collects the data and secures it for ethical reasons.

After getting IRB approval, this researcher pre-tested the questions (both screen and interview) with an expert in the area (a pastor) to see if the questions are valid (face validity) (Appendix B). This is in the form of pre-testing with experts as Sage (2016) suggests in his work. The goal of pretesting is to see how the experts think that the questions reflect what the researcher is trying to measure (2016). This helped this researcher avoid a lot of trouble down the road when he is doing his research (2016).

If the questions are valid, then the researcher will send the screens (Appendix C) to the twelve to twenty different churches to see if they qualify for the study (phone calls and introductory emails may accompany in order to properly connect with the churches). If they are not valid, then this researcher will revise the questions based on areas and issues the pastor raised to the researcher. Any area or issue addressed that is not in alignment with the study, this researcher will take into consideration. Ultimately, this researcher will do what is best for the scope of the study and will take the feedback into consideration.

Next, after pre-testing the questions, this researcher sent screens to participants through purposive sampling in order to retrieve his participants. After conversing with each of them concerning the study (through email, phone or online portal), the eight that eventually said yes to the study were selected for the study through purposive sampling. If less than eight say yes, then snowball sampling will be administered through the final screen interview question since this researcher will ask some of the pastors to see if there are any churches in the area that do worldview. If no response is initially given, then phone calls or online portals will be used in order to follow up with the churches to see if they are interested. If less than eight still say yes, then twelve to twenty (or how many is needed to get to eight participants) screens will be sent until the correct number of participants are reached. If there are potential churches for the study,

then those churches may become part of the study if they agree to the study and sign the informed consent form (IRB will know about this beforehand before approving the study). With the majority of churches, the online communication method will work the best with Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Since the majority of churches are online due to COVID, this will be the best method to conduct the interviews.

This researcher through the online communication method interviewed the pastors and transcribe each interview through note taking and video conferencing software. This is after they sign the informed consent form digitally through Qualtrics for the study since this is an important first step in the process. The interview protocol (Appendix D) as outlined in the instrumentation section will be given through going through the questions and probing each pastor on each question in order to get all the available data concerning the phenomenon. As the researcher went through the interview process, the researcher followed Creswell and Creswell (2018)'s model by explaining the nature of the interview early on, introducing them to the topic, interact with them through the questions (after they have signed the consent form), probing if needed for more information, and close out the interview in a graceful way (2018). The researcher took notes and recorded the interviewer in order to transcribe the notes verbatim in order to get the right information for the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Groenewald, 2004).

While the dialog is going, the researcher is gathering all the data that he needs to get the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The interview protocol mentioned in Appendix D will outline the scope of the interview (2018). The interview was recorded through the video conferencing software and the data will be locked up and secured on a password-protected computer (2018). Confidentiality will be assured through protecting the data through a



virus-protected computer since no one else will get to the information (2018). All other ethical guidelines will be enforced in order to protect the rights of the participants.

### **Data Analysis**

After the research is collected and stored for confidentiality purposes, this researcher analyzed and interpreted the data based on the interpretation of the participants in order to gather the essence of the phenomenon of spiritual growth and worldview development in a church. It is important that each response in the interview questions (Appendix D) is broken down in order for the researcher to draw conclusions based on the participant's viewpoint (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Member checking is always an option since it is important for this researcher to get the right facts concerning the phenomenon (2018). This section highlights the two main approaches this researcher uses when breaking down and analyzing the research. Then, the procedure section will outline how this researcher will analyze the data and break the phenomenon down based on the responses given.

### **Analysis Methods**

In terms of data analysis, this researcher has used two different methods as illustrated by Groenewald (2004) and Creswell and Creswell (2018). The first method is qualitative in nature since Creswell and Creswell (2018) outlines how to break down data into themes and categories in order to code the data and interpret the themes based on a larger picture. Before coding the data, the researcher read through all the data multiple times to get an idea of what the pastors are saying concerning the phenomenon (2018). Then, the researcher using Atlas Software and Excel broke down each meaning unit and organized the meaning units into codes and themes.

The open codes helped break down the data into meaningful chunks and these axial codes help relate to one another in terms of categories and themes (Creswell and Creswell, 2018;

Delve, 2021). This is done through selecting topics (five research questions) based on the data and helping the move from codes to categories and themes (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). All the codes are alphabetized and each category and theme are summarized in order to interpret the meaning (2018). This is where the researcher presents the findings by offering an overall description of the findings based on those codes and themes (2018). This method will be used since it fits the qualitative methodology, which the phenomenological is used and can be a good backdrop when it comes to incorporating the phenomenological methodology within a qualitative paradigm (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Groenewald, 2014). Besides, both of these methods will be using similar procedures so both will complement each other in the data analysis process (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Groenewald, 2014).

The other analysis method as presented by Groenewald (2004) points mainly to phenomenological research since it relates to the same principles of looking over the data, breaking down the data into statements and chunks and summarizing each interview and the entire study using validity checks. The only difference is that Groenewald (2004) specifies bracketing one's own experiences in order to delve into the experiences of the participants. This is highlighted early on as the researcher puts aside his own perceptions in order to put themselves in the participants shoes (2004).

This researcher used this method since it is important to protect the data against bias and preserve the truthfulness of the data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Tools such as Atlas Software will help this researcher interpret the data through keeping each meaning unit with each pastor before synthesizing all the data. As stated earlier, a private word document laying out this researcher's own worldview and perceptions (while comparing them with the other pastors in light of a biblical worldview) will mentally help him lay them aside so that he can fully grasp the

pastor's perspective from their point of view in the main data analysis document. This is so that all the data will not be confused and that the researcher will be reminded to link each unit with each church. Since phenomenological research requires putting oneself in another person's shoes, it is important that one tries not to color in what participants have said, which is why this approach is used (Groenewald, 2004). This preserves the study against any unnecessary bias that may occur.

After the researcher conducted the interviews through video recording and taking notes, the researcher rehearsed the interviews through analyzing the notes and looking at the audio or video recording for the whole data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This researcher used the phenomenological reduction by bracketing his own perceptions in order to gain the pastor's perspectives on worldview development and spiritual growth (Groenewald, 2004). Both positive and negative data will be collected in order to increase the validity of the study and keep the essence of the phenomenon in tact (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The entire interviews will be transcribed in a Microsoft Word document in order to be transferred to Atlas Database in order to be used for the project. The researcher will look over the data in order to analyze the data. For validity purposes, member checking will be used to talk to the participants to verify the findings if needed (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This will be done prior to organizing the data.

After the data has been transcribed, the data was organized into meaning units through bracketing and phenomenological reduction in order to grasp the meaning of the phenomenon (Groenewald, 2004). The data is winnowed as Creswell and Creswell (2018) puts it in order to get the important meaning units for the phenomenon. The winnowing process is done through the five research questions listed earlier in the chapter in order to get the full picture of the phenomenon being studied (2018).

The data for validity purposes was then triangulated in order to measure different data from different participants (some of the questions are already loosely based on other studies so this increases the validity of the questions) (2018). This helps with ensuring the study is valid in terms of data collection and that the data is coherent enough in order to draw conclusions (2018). After the data is organized, the researcher will again read throughout the data, assign each set of meaning chunks to pastors, and then break each meaning units into topics, themes and categories in order to get the big picture of the phenomenon (Groenewald, 2004). Through the organizing of chunks to pastors, bias will be negated during this process to be sure that this researcher is still bracketing his perceptions (2004).

Each meaning units are then clustered into themes in order to build on the information that the pastors give to the study (Groenewald, 2004). The codes are open codes since they help break down the data into different chunks and assume them into themes and categories based on the research questions (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Delve, 2021). They can be in the form of topics such as biblical foundation and worldview formation since they both relate back to the research questions. Each pastor will eventually be linked to each topic (Table 3.4) since they help assess the themes and categories in each topic.

The topics that are listed based on the interview data will help organize the meaning units into themes and categories that relate to the research questions (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Then as the axial codes are given for the different themes and categories, the meaning chunks come together into a general description of the phenomenon based on each of the research questions (mission/vision, biblical foundation, leader formation, congregation formation and younger generation formation) (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Delve, 2021). The interviews and codes are then analyzed further in order to develop the selective coding, which paints the

findings of the data in light of the research purpose (Delve, 2021). The codes will relate to the research questions given with all the different themes and category codes along with it and will be open to new codes in the future (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

The researcher then developed a summary of all the themes of the data in order to interpret the phenomenon itself through the perspective of the participants (Groenewald, 2004). Then the researcher developed a composite summary of the findings and will make sure that all meaning chunks are properly clustered in order for the data to make sense (2004). This is to get a final overview of the findings to take care of any errors (2004). As the codes are developed and interpreted, the validity of the study is strengthened since all the information is triangulated from their perspective in terms of the research questions (Groenewald, 2004; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). All the summarized findings are gathered into chapter four of this researcher's dissertation and highlighted based on all five research questions.

Lastly, the data organization and coding have taken place by hand and through Atlas software in order to further organize and code the data into a new project. If any images are used in the data collection, this researcher will import those images into a Microsoft Word document and a computer folder in order to assign them codes and themes. All the data and pictures have been analyzed and organized through Microsoft office and a password protected computer in order to come to a conclusion based on the themes and categories given. Table 3.4 helps organize the themes and categories and by each topic/code (research question) since each code will correspond to each pastor, category and theme. The serves as a mock table since each code/topic will get its own table with a subset of themes. The final step in data analysis is interpreting the meaning and themes. The meaning units have been properly interpreted without bias in order to

get a general description of spiritual growth and worldview development in the church. This is when all the findings are summarized based on that description.

**Table 3.4**

*Data Organization: Themes and Categories*

Topic/Code: Leaders and Worldview Development

Pastor	Theme 1 (Cat 1)	Theme 2	Theme 1 (Cat 2)	Theme 2
A	Y	Y	N	Y
B	Y	Y	Y	N
C	Y	N	Y	N

### **Trustworthiness**

For any research to be valid and trustworthy, it must be credible in terms of the data itself and how the data is collected and filtered. This is where credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability come in since all these elements help the research be trustworthy in all respects. The following four sections will break down each of the four elements of trustworthiness and give a rationale of how this researcher will go about maintaining trustworthiness in his research. Each section will define the element and give the rationale based on the definition given.

### ***Credibility***

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), credibility is the confidence that people can have in the research findings. Credibility determines if reality can be properly described through the research (Bredfeldt, 2021). The main strategies that this researcher will use is 1) triangulation and 2) member checking since these are essential strategies for validity in qualitative research (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Since it is important that all the data is collected properly, this

researcher will first go back to the pastors for any clarification on any part of the interview through what Creswell and Creswell (2018) call member checking. This way, the researcher gets a full understanding of all the data and avoids bias at the same time. Second, all the data will be triangulated or compared with each other in order to come up with codes, themes and categories (2018). The interview questions (Appendix D) will be asked in multiple ways with multiple people in order to get all angles of the research questions (2018). Some are even similar to Long's (2014) interview questions, which enhances credibility. Thus, as the different pieces are synthesized, the researcher can have credible findings since he will conduct eight different interviews with eight different pastors (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The cohesiveness of the study shows that this study can be credible (2018).

### ***Dependability***

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), dependability can be seen as the stability of the findings over a period of time. Bredfeldt (2021) states that dependability is based on the content of the research the researcher is trying to accomplish. This researcher will leave an audit trail where all the findings and dissertations will allow for the reader to come to his or her own conclusions about the dependability of the data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). All procedures will be listed and documented so researchers can determine how the study is reliable (2018). The processes and procedures will back the research questions and purpose and the data will be backed by the participants (2018). The instruments used and the data analysis methods will point to how eight pastors uncover the spiritual growth and worldview formation in their own churches. The conclusions about worldview development in the church and how to deal with the worldview crisis should all be backed by all elements of the study itself (2018).

### ***Confirmability***

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), confirmability is based on whether or not the data can be gathered from other researchers. This is where an audit trail comes in since this researcher will keep his data for five years after his dissertation gets published and any researcher can look over the data upon request if they need to validate the findings (Bredfeldt, 2021). This researcher will do his best to properly transcribe the data so that it is the participants words and not the researcher's words (Groenewald, 2014). Member checking can help this researcher have all the right thoughts and words when it comes to the interviews (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). If any researcher needs to verify these words, they can ask for any documentation for the data given (Bredfeldt, 2021).

### ***Transferability***

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018) and Bredfeldt (2021), transferability refers to this study being used in other contexts. A rich, thick description will help chain the phenomena to the setting and context and will help advance the phenomena to different contexts if possible (Korstjens and Moser, 2018; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This study on worldview development and spiritual growth in a church can be applied in a school setting since many dissertations have been written on worldviews and school settings, including Long's (2014) dissertation on spiritual stamina and young adults in Christian private schools. Like in a church, the scope of the study is limited to the gatekeeper of the school since the superintendent or principal sets the tone and the direction of how the study can go.

This study can use different types of churches and pastors to glean from the study since it can be taken differently in different types of settings. However, it may not happen so readily since different settings have a different set of characteristics, including government, worldview



and ministry focus (churches may not focus on worldview development, the worldview of the church may not be biblically based, or the government may not do studies of any kind). Thus, the lessons that can be learned is that the avenue, setting and participants must be chosen wisely since the participants, setting and avenue (church, school, business) can change the entire focus of the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Thus, this researcher will carefully interview eight pastors through purposive sampling that will best give the right information since every pastor and church has a different worldview (2018).

### **Chapter Summary**

The issues of worldview development and spiritual growth in the body of Christ is at a deficit. While most people see spiritual growth as a necessity, it is lacking in the church today (Barna, 2015; Foley, 2017). On top of that, only 17% percent of Christians polled have a biblical worldview so most Christians are not seeing and interpreting reality based on the Word of God (Barna, 2017; Foley, 2017, paragraph three). This leads to compromise in the Christian faith since many Christians are not fully developed disciples of Christ (Barna, 2015). This methodology seeks to go to eight different Evangelical Protestant churches and interview eight different pastors that will help shed light on the subject when it comes to their own worldview. Getting to the essence of how spiritual growth and worldview developing is happening in the church will help this researcher discover what is needed for Christians to have a complete worldview based on Christ and His Word (Hiebert, 2008). The interviews, data analysis and trustworthiness of the study helped point to how the church can better go about helping people have a biblical worldview that stands the tests of culture and the world (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). All ethical guidelines are enforced throughout the study in order to preserve a safe study for everyone (2018).

The purpose of this dissertation is to see how worldview formation is impacting spiritual growth in all areas in the church. Thus, worldview formation and faith are interchangeable since how one sees the world has a certain action aspect to spiritual growth (Griffioen, 2012). The research questions help lay the foundation for the study since they are the defining questions when it comes to the phenomenon of spiritual growth and worldview formation in the church. Each interview question directly relates to the research questions since they help investigate the phenomenon in the body of Christ. All the data collected and analyzed is filtered and triangulated through these questions in order to get the whole essence of the phenomenon (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Through careful data analysis, one can see the essence of the phenomenon being played out since all the pieces are coming together (2018).

All in all, the whole research purpose, problem and methodology helps point to how any church is helping equip their church in terms of discipleship and the great commission through their biblical worldview (since the data is interpreted based on their worldview and not the researcher's) (Groenewald, 2004). The significance of the study shows how the need for worldview development is important in the body of Christ due to the lack of discipleship in the church (Barna, 2015). The presence of discipleship within the church according to Powell and Clark (2011) will help people (including teenagers) have a faith that sticks. Through the study, data and literature, one can conclude that the church's worldview has an impact on the spiritual growth of the church overall. Everyone in the church from leaders to congregation members can impact their world through a solid faith and worldview (Hiebert, 2013; Knight, 2006).

## **CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

### **Overview**

The researcher conducted his study via zoom with eight different pastors in eight different churches. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the perceived impact on how worldview development impacted spiritual vitality in the church, either their church and/or the church in general. Through the interview questions, the participants discussed their mission and vision and its impact on the church, the importance of a biblical worldview and its impact on spiritual growth, how the participants shaped their church, leaders and younger generations through a biblical worldview in light of culture, how the church goes about the great commission, and the results and feedback the participants gave about developing a biblical worldview. The data presented best reflects the participants responses towards the subject and each data will be bracketed and coded to present the findings in a non-biased manner.

### **Compilation Protocol and Measures**

This section shall address compilation protocols and measures that are related to the study. Particular emphasis is on how the data was collected, organized, recorded and processed in relation to the study. The researcher shall begin by discussing the collection of the data.

### **Collection of Data**

In this section, the researcher addresses the collection of data for all phases of the research study. This includes the steps for the research study, the elicitation of participants, the Informed Consent process, as well as the process for the zoom interviews.

### ***Steps for the Research Study***

In order to help the reader understand the process of the study, this researcher will offer a written description of the study. The researcher followed this process below for the conduction of the study.

1. Pre-Testing the Interview Questions with several pastors.
2. Contacting Potential Participants via mail, email and phone calls to gather the appropriate number of participants. IRB approved letters and follow up letters were used.
3. Setting up a time with the pastors to schedule the zoom meeting after they signed the informed consent document.
4. Conducting the zoom interviews using the interview protocol with each of the eight pastors in eight different churches over a long period of time.

### ***Eliciting Participants***

Using IRB approved documents, and with permission from the supervisor, this researcher contacted many different churches using these documents in order to gather participants over a long period of time (the number of screens at a time fluctuated as participants came in. The snowball technique that was going to be used did not eventually work with most of the pastors since very few knew of any who would want to do the study). Phone calls were later used (upon permission from supervisor) as part of contacting the churches in order to establish a face-to-face presence with them.

### ***Informed Consent Process***

With IRB approval, this researcher used a Qualtrics document for every participant to sign prior to doing the interview. Since informed consent was a must for the study, it was imperative that this researcher on the IRB screens had the participants sign the consent form when they agreed to the study.

### *Interviews*

Prior to conducting the interviews and gathering participants, the interview questions were pre-tested by two different pastors in two different churches. The first pastor said that the questions made sense for the study itself. The second pastor said the same thing but added that the flow of the questions will make the study more relevant and will add value to what the study has to offer. Thus, from those two pastors, the questions made sense and had a coherence that allowed for the study to be conducted at ease. Thus, they approved the questions and did not think that any should be removed.

The interviews took place from August 2022 to June 2023. The interview protocol took place via zoom with the meetings opening up in prayer (since this is a church study) and asking an introductory ice breaker question (how did you get into ministry?). All eight interviews were recorded with the pastors' consent and the researcher took extensive notes throughout the interview to gather the important points of the interview. The interview closed with prayer and directions for the compensation (per the consent form). Each participant then in an email gave additional information regarding the study if needed.

Since the interviews were recorded via zoom, this researcher did not need to go back to participants to verify what they said. Each participant was interviewed one at a time via zoom at a time preference that was comfortable for them. Each participant was told that their church or pastor would be represented by a letter for ethical purposes. This way, the interviews would be anonymous and confidentiality would be restricted to only the pastor knowing his code name for him and his church (aka Church C, Pastor C).

### ***Recording of Data***

The recording of data was done via zoom software on a Lenovo Laptop with the pastors' consent. Per IRB guidelines, the recordings were stored on a password protected computer to where only the researcher can see it. The transcription of the data via a word document follows the same guidelines as well since it is kept under a password protected computer.

### **Organization of the Data**

#### ***Interviews***

After all the data was recorded through Zoom software, the researcher hand-transcribed all eight of the zoom interviews, with some member checking through going back to participants through email to be sure that the data that was hand transcribed was accurate and that all the data was collected. When the transcription was complete, all the data was saved as a word document and virtually coded using an AI generator on the Atlas.ti Software. The software worked as this researcher thought it would to break everything down into chunks, themes and categories. Then the researcher used PowerPoint slides and spreadsheets to triangulate the data and organize all the data into categories and themes. These narratives will be given in the Data Analysis section to further explain what the participants meant in their own tone and words concerning each data point given in the research questions.

### **Processing of the Data**

The researcher processed all the data with the interviews through Atlas.ti, using an AI Generator to initially get the codes.

#### ***Interviews***

After the AI released its codes through the generator, the researcher winnowed down the codes in the software and separated all the codes into different categories and themes via

PowerPoint slides and spreadsheets, adjacent to the Atlas.ti software. The researcher carefully looked at each of the codes and the corresponding quotation and broke down each of the interview transcripts into chunks (starting with the first two research questions in each interview since they fall under the main category code and subsequent themes). Then after triangulating all the codes in a separate spreadsheet, the codes were then officially listed in narrative format to get a grip on the data itself. Then after several attempts at coding the data, a final set of codes were given and are given in the data analysis and findings section of this chapter.

### **Demographic and Sample Data**

This section addresses the demographic and sample data. Since the population given was the Dallas-Fort Worth area, there is a plethora of churches in the area that are Evangelical Protestant. The interviewer sent screens or made calls to at least 130 churches in the area and only 9 said yes to the study, thus giving a 6.9% response rate. Of the 9 that said yes, only 8 went forward with the study, thus giving a positive return rate. For the sake of sample, only the 8 that participated in the study will be counted in the sample, thus resulting in a 100 percent response rate.

**Table 4.1**

#### Participation and Response

Participation	Number	Response
Overall Population	130	N/A
Overall Sample	9	6.9%
Sample Church Leaders	8	N/A
Church Leaders Participation	8	100%

## Data Analysis and Findings

### **RQ1: How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development to its overall mission in terms of discipleship and evangelism?**

Each of the eight pastors discussed their mission and how their mission directly relates to worldview development, including discipleship and evangelism. The main category code used for this section is mission, since this is what this research question is all about. The main themes in this section are worldview, discipleship, and evangelism. The Bible, Christ, Church, and several other subcodes will be used to discuss findings in this section as well. Also, this section will touch on answers from questions three and four of the interview, since they discuss the importance of worldview development to the church in terms of evangelism and discipleship.

In terms of mission, Church A uses a compass as a model for their mission of their church. Their mission according to Pastor A is to “navigate people to God through four different core values”. The first value is called “navigate” and it deals with telling people about Jesus, especially telling people their story in order to lead them to Jesus. The second value is called “engage” which deals with connecting with other people through different avenues. The third value is called “serve” and this is where the church serves one another (“a huge part of what they do”). Lastly, the fourth value is called “worship” and this is where discipleship, worship and Bible study come in (discipleship, worship and bible being three of the main themes).

Church A according to Pastor A developed their mission back in 2006 out of a conversation with an Indian mission partner through the idea of a compass. Through the four different core values, Church A wants to reach all kinds of people on different places on the spectrum (they have a model they use for this). They want people to “tell their story” in order to bring people to Christ and help them follow Christ. They use their worship services to reach



people on all places of the spectrum (-5 to +5, -5 being not engaged and +5 being really engaged) and when it comes to Bible study groups, they reach people who are maybe on a plus 2 or a plus 3, and in their rooted classes, they try to take a -2 and take them to the other side of the spectrum. Church A's goal through navigation, engaging, service and worship is to bring people to Christ and help them move along the spectrum towards spiritual growth and maturity using a biblical worldview, which is having the right picture of God and having the right biblical perspective, as evidenced by "interactions with God and with others."

Church B's mission, according to Pastor B, is to "transform the world through the truth of God's word, one life at a time". The strategy is to reach the world "locally, nationally and globally" (Judaea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth) through different discipleship and ministry programs. Overall, according to Pastor B, the goal of their church is to "influence the world through Jesus Christ and to make disciples for Him." The way Church B executes that mission in terms of worldview development is through their ministry programs, including Sunday School for all ages, that help people "obey all that Christ has commanded us to do." This includes both General and Special Revelation and how that relates to developing one's biblical worldview in terms of their lens in how they see and view everything.

Church C's mission and vision, according to Pastor C, is to "make disciples that make a difference." The original, founding pastor according to Pastor C created this vision out of the great commission that Jesus gave in Matthew 28:18-20 ("Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit") since Jesus called the disciples "to make disciples." The current senior pastor has put more of an emphasis on evangelism through the "gospel of the kingdom" (the gospel is a main theme throughout the interview with Pastor C) but the mission and vision remain the same.

Church C helps people develop a biblical worldview through their mission and vision by helping people develop a biblical lens of the world and of God through bible studies, small groups, and preaching and teaching the word. Unlike some other churches in this study, Church C equips people through both the word and the spirit since they believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and helping people become more mature in the word through discipleship. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, one can learn about their gifts and fulfill the great commission, which includes the “gospel of the kingdom.”

Church D’s mission is based around the four pillars and doctrine of the Assemblies of God, which is to glorify God, reach the lost, build up believers and show compassion. This is done through launching ministries such as “Ignite”, a praise and worship, spiritual intensity ministry, “REACH”, which is the evangelism and outreach ministry, “Equip”, which is our discipleship ministry, “Small Groups” (in the developmental phase), “lift” (in the developmental phase, a ministry design to help families and those in need), and “ESL/Citizenship classes”, which is to help immigrants adjust to life in America.

In more practical terms, according to Pastor D, ignite is to help “bring the spiritual life into the body” and to help bring people to Christ and get them connected to the vine. “REACH” is to also help them get connected to Christ while through, “Equip”, helping people “develop towards maturity in Christ.” The overall goal, according to Pastor D, is to help take one person “who knows nothing” and take them to a place where they are rooted and grounded in Christ through Bible Studies, classes, and spiritual growth track. One early result from this in the church is a conversation Pastor D had with one of the leaders of leaving spiritual babies in the street corner. This is why the church decided to create avenues in which one can grow from infancy to adulthood, replicating themselves in the process through ministry (multiplication is a

common theme in Churches C and D). This is done through a Biblical Worldview, not just intellectually, but through actions since the authority of God's word is held.

Church E's mission according to Pastor E is to "be a life-giving community of faith, where Christ and Culture Intersect." Their slogan is "Jesus, People, Purpose" and their mission is to engage culture by presenting them with the gospel and the love of God, and demonstrating that through God's word (Pastor E mentioned both Bartimaeus and Zaccheus as examples of Christ's love and the demonstration of that love). Church E, according to Pastor E, uses a culture code (the first point being Jesus over everything) to help train their congregation with a biblical worldview. According to Pastor E, the word of God "is super important for us as a Church" so Christ is their foundation and the Bible is their guide. Thus, the approach to their mission is to be gospel centered and point people to the gospel in everything they do, whether through preaching the word, small groups, discipleship training institute and serve teams. The goal is to "form everyone according to the gospel."

For brevity's sake, Church F and Church G will be combined into one or two paragraphs. The mission of Church F, according to Pastor F, is to "make disciples, locally and globally" and they do this through various ministries in their church. In terms of a biblical worldview, Church F trains its disciples to do what Jesus commanded them to do. This includes seeing themselves and what they are called to do, and seeing the world the way Christ sees the world (Pastor F makes a point that everyone will have a different biblical worldview, but the goal is still the same). Classes on evangelism, attributes of God, fear of God versus fear of man, and other church classes are given in order to help equip people with a biblical worldview and help them go out into the world and make a difference in their community.

Church G is similar to Church F in the sense that their mission is to “go out into the highways and byways and reach and baptize as many as we can” since it is based on the great commission. At the time of the interview, Church G is in the process of remodeling their building and since they are an older congregation, the primary mission as of that time is to reach younger couples through the Bible and a biblical worldview and help train everyone through “bible study groups, Vacation Bible School and any special event you can think of.” Since the mission of the church centers around the great commission, everything they do, whether discipleship or evangelism, flows from that commission.

Lastly, Church H’s mission is, “discipling people of all ages, through a study of the Bible and using their gifts to glorify God.” Despite any cultural changes, the mission remains the same and the message remains the same since Pastor H and Church H wants to see people disciplined for Christ through a biblical worldview that is maintained and acted upon. This is done through exegetical (not eisegetic passages) preaching and teaching at a very early age since Pastor H stated through Barna Research that “a worldview needs to be formed very early.” So, children’s and youth ministries are met with biblical teaching and Church H does its best to establish a biblical worldview in adults since “if you have not developed a Christian worldview by grade school, it is very hard to do.” The curriculum for all ages is checked to make sure that the teaching is biblical so that disciples can be made and people can eventually evangelize their world.

**RQ2: How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of how they incorporate the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism?**

Much like the last section, this section will focus more on how the pastors use the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism. This is not just limited to the mission and vision

questions like the last section was, but incorporates the entire study in how the Bible is used and what strategies the churches use when dealing with leaders, the congregation and even the younger generation. The codes Bible, Religion, Gospel, and Christ will be the main categories and themes, but Youth Development, Church Development, and Culture will also play a role in how they go about their church in terms of bible incorporation. The next three sections will focus more on how the churches develop leaders, congregation and the younger generations but the focus for now will be on biblical incorporation, some of which is already covered in the previous section.

First, as stated in the last section, Church A incorporates the Bible through the worship point of the compass, which includes Bible Study, but from the tone of the entire interview, Church A uses the Bible in everything they do since everything from Navigating people to God, Engaging, Serving, and Worshipping is done through a biblical worldview. In terms of the importance of a biblical worldview, Church A, according to Pastor A, believes in “diving back into God’s word and having a biblical worldview” since in the western tradition, it is easy to be steeped back into tradition, and having a biblical worldview gives Church A an opportunity to deal with the post-COVID world like never before and deal with any issue that comes up. This, according to Pastor A, is all accomplished through studying the whole narrative of scripture.

In terms of areas related to a biblical worldview, Church A, according to Pastor A, believes in having a correct picture of God in one’s worldview, since “the picture of God determines how you interact with him and how you interact with the world around you”. Our worldview, according to Pastor A, impacts “how we interact with God, and how we interact with each other,” so having the correct biblical worldview is important when it comes to not only believing a set of facts and values, but living it out on a daily basis. This is where humility comes

in since Pastor A mentions during one of his staff meetings that having humility in terms of service towards others is part of a biblical worldview and walking in that humility towards others is important when it comes to living out that biblical worldview. Other ways Church A incorporates the Bible is through setting the Bible above the culture around them and helping people establish a biblical perspective (more on that in the fourth section).

Second, in terms of incorporating a biblical worldview in terms of evangelism and discipleship, Church B incorporates the Bible through ministry programs, such as Sunday School. According to Pastor B, a biblical worldview has to be “based in scripture, right” since it helps people answer the basic issues that people face today. Pastor B further divides revelation into two categories, “general and special revelation”, and bases the way Church B goes out training people according to this biblical worldview through making disciples and evangelism. Pastor B states that “if you have a biblical worldview, you will abide in Christ, you will walk with Christ, you will treat God’s word as your guide, as a light to your path.” In essence, it is becoming more and more like Christ, and thus, be able to walk out one’s faith with a biblical worldview and fulfill the great commission.

In essence, Church B incorporates the Bible into a biblical worldview by treating it as a lens in which one sees and determines reality. This includes the Bible being an “anchor” in which truth is established. Pastor B mentioned a quote by Billy Graham in which one takes the Bible in one hand and the Newspaper in the other. Thus, when it comes to social issues, cultural issues, Church B believes that the Bible is the “anchor” and the lens when it comes to viewing and determining reality, and that worldview helps one live out their Christian life “according to God’s will.”

Third, in terms of incorporating the Bible into a biblical worldview in terms of evangelism and discipleship, Church C, like Church B, views a biblical worldview, or the Bible, as a lens, or “basically it is the way we perceive things as a world.” Like all the other churches in this study, Church C believes in the inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of scripture, and that the Bible is the foundation since “Jesus is the word, the way, the truth and the life.” Thus, the Bible is seen as the lens in which one views all aspects of the world, including “one’s job, one’s kids, one’s relationships, one’s marriage” through a biblical worldview (this includes discipleship and evangelism). Government is the main area in which Church C uses the Bible in terms of Evangelism and Discipleship since people are to “occupy” whether in the “business, political or entertainment industry.” A biblical lens according to Pastor C, helps one in the government arena since one can choose to vote based off of biblical values and morals.

When it comes to Spiritual Growth in terms of incorporating the Bible, Pastor C in Church C uses the “Parable of the Sower” to illustrate how one is sown as a seed and “as people get into the word, there is a natural output that should be spiritual growth.” When looking into the word, it is “like a mirror”, in the sense that we see God for who we really are, who Jesus really is, and how one relates to Christ, and this incurs spiritual growth since “He is revealed in the word.” The more one grows spiritually, as Pastor C points out, the more one will value a biblical worldview in all stages of spiritual develop, whether “infancy, teenage, or older.” As one grows in maturity, one begins to value having a biblical worldview to the point of determining if one has the right biblical foundation and whether one counts the cost of discipleship as Pastor C alluded to at the end of the interview. This explains why Pastor C uses the counterfeit technique of determining if something is biblical since he helps train the church to check to see whether any truth claim is real according to the Bible. This way, one can have a sure biblical foundation.

Fourth, Church D, like Church C and the rest of the churches believes in the inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of scripture. Pastor D, of Church D, in the interview explained how his church was weak when it comes to implementing the authority of scripture (even though they believed in it) since the authority of scripture determines a biblical worldview and faith and helps set the tone for evangelism and discipleship in the church since it is the basis of “all matters of faith and practice.” Church D as stated in the first section incorporates the Bible in all of its programs, from discipleship to evangelism to cares, and they believe in the authority of scripture and do their best to implement it in their church, even though many in the church currently “disregard it when it comes to making decisions, attitudes and lifestyles.” Pastor D believes that “one has no choice but to obey it” since it is “the underpinning of developing a biblical worldview.” Thus, Pastor D, of Church D, do their best to teach all facets of the word of God since culture seems to be having the upper hand in their church as a whole. Like Pastor C, Pastor D believes that the word of God helps one know truth from deception, right and wrong, and Pastor D does his best to help disciple his church with the Bible as a whole.

Pastor D expounds on the need for biblical literacy since it is at an all-time low in the Assemblies of God. Bible literacy, according to Pastor D, is extremely important for spiritual growth and the great commission since knowing and reading the Bible is important for someone to grow spiritually and for someone to know their role in the great commission. Pastor D implements the Bible in his church when it comes to cultural “fads” and “opposing views”, such as “internet prophets” and “the prosperity gospel.” Even though biblical literacy is at a low, and they are weak when it comes to the authority of scripture, Pastor D teaches the Bible in a “holistic approach” so that people can go about the great commission, engage the culture, and know truth from deception as stated earlier.



Fifth, Church E incorporates the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism through their culture code, preaching and teaching the word, and through their leadership. Pastor E defines a biblical worldview as “allowing the word of God to be the filter and the final say in everything pertaining to life and conduct” since one’s beliefs and actions should be rooted in God’s word as the final authority. Pastor E elaborates on the importance of a biblical worldview since “one should influence culture with the word of God and the values that Jesus taught.” Pastor E brought up “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendego” as well as “Esther and Daniel” to prove his point further. According to Pastor E, one should be the Christ-centered solution to the culture in the world today and this is framed through being counter-cultural.

Pastor E also brings up the need for one’s actions and beliefs to be connected and he bases this off of 1 Timothy 4 since he encourages not only leaders but people in the congregation to give one “wholeheartedly” to doctrine, growth and growth so it can be evident to all. Pastor E elaborates on the main area related to worldview (hypocrisy) since people have to be “faithful representations of Jesus” since people tend to see the hypocrisy in the church and in how Christians are living. Thus, Pastor E believes that in order for the church to not be a lousy PR Firm for Jesus, they must live and act like Jesus since people “got to live it out, walk it out” so that when people see Jesus doing something, they see the church doing the same thing.

In terms of incorporating the Bible, Pastor E uses this philosophy concerning worldview development to further help the church be solidified in the Bible. Pastor E brought up that there has to be consistency in what is taught throughout his church, whether small groups, preaching on Sundays, or leading a team. Pastor E further elaborates by saying “we teach it, we teach it repeatedly, we teach it consistently, this is what we also say, tell the truth and let it settle, don’t try to hammer it in”. The common phrase Pastor E uses is “in essentials...unity...in non-

essentials...liberty...and all things charity.” Thus, Pastor E uses the Bible and protects essential doctrine (such as the trinity, deity of Christ, and so on) and make sure that the church is being taught Gods word in its accuracy.

Sixth, Pastor F, in Church F, incorporates the Bible using a cultural engagement method since he believes that “having a poor biblical worldview is to be completely isolated from any kind of culture.” Thus, Pastor F encourages people to be engaged with the culture in order to advance the gospel and advance a biblical worldview. Pastor F defines a biblical worldview as answering the questions that pertain to life and reality such as, “Where do we come from? What are we supposed to do? What kind of governs us? What rules do we abide by?” Pastor F goes further by saying that the Bible “answers all those questions, and provides a firm foundation to where we came from, and who we were created by, a holy God who designed us for a specific purpose, what is wrong with the world” since what is wrong with the world is sin and only the gospel of Christ can solve the problems in the world. This, according to Pastor F, gives him and his church, the lens to evaluate different issues that come up, such as government and morality. The main area related to worldview that Pastor F talked about was interacting with others since a biblical worldview helps one see the need to reach the lost and fulfill the great commission, and Church F helps enable people to engage the culture (more on this in section four) with this biblical worldview.

Pastor F also talked about the time between making a decision for Christ and going to heaven when one dies. He mentions that a biblical worldview should make people more like Jesus since they are to “conform to the image of God’s Son.” Thus, Pastor F stresses the importance of spiritual development and having a biblical worldview since it helps people

become more and more like Jesus, thus engaging the culture and fulfilling the great commission with the gospel of Christ.

Seventh, Pastor G in Church G, incorporates the Bible in their church through a biblical worldview, as defined, as, “understanding the world we live in through biblical principles and scripture, no other way, than through scripture.” Furthermore, it is “understanding what is going on in the world through the biblical eyes instead of American eyes or personal eyes.” Pastor G emphasizes that having a biblical worldview is important to reaching the lost, helping those in sin, and those who want to know Jesus and Church G does what it can to help reach them for the glory of God and counsel them in the word (more on this in section 4).

In terms of spiritual growth, Pastor G believes that a biblical worldview affects everything that Christians do since it is a guide, and “it is what we are supposed to do as followers of Jesus...follow God’s word.” It is all “meshed into understanding God’s word and living it out.” Pastor G elaborates further that one cannot develop spiritually without a biblical worldview since it will affect how one behaves, lives, acts and reaches people in this world so Church G uses the Bible to help people develop a Biblical worldview through various ministries of the church, since it is important to “know the truth” through “scripture, and scripture alone.”

Church G according to Pastor G further incorporates the Bible through relationship with others in the church since Pastor G believes that it is important to “have mature Christians and leaders training them” so they can be sound in the Bible. One example that Pastor G mentioned is abortion since Pastor G discusses the sanctity of life in a biblical fashion so that people can understand what the Bible teaches on the subject. Thus, Church G teaches its congregation to “know the truth, and know what the truth is” through reading and studying the Bible. This is not

only done through proclaiming the world, but through other areas in the church, including “Bible Study Groups”, “Counseling” and “worship”.

Lastly, Church H, according to Pastor H, defines a biblical worldview in terms of “living your life based on values taught in the Bible, or as traditionally known as Christian values.” Pastor H makes the distinction that a non-Christian can have a Christian worldview (giving unsaved criminals as an example since they can pray consistently), but that a proper Christian worldview (as a Christian would have it) would “stay in tune with Him” since (given the example of leaving a church) if one allows the Holy Spirit and the Bible to make the deciding factors, then one’s biblical worldview will help one’s spiritual growth. Thus, Pastor H makes the comment that a biblical worldview helps one understand the “plan of God” and the “timing of God” since understanding the Plan of God will help one act biblically in terms of any area of reality, including music and mental health. Pastor H further suggests that the church should have a role in helping those in mental health since Christians are to meet needs since a big part of the biblical worldview is to fulfill the great commission “every day of the week” while holding the Bible, God and Jesus as the “sole authority” on matters.

Pastor H believes that it is important to “apply these values” and not just intellectually believe them since part of having a biblical worldview is “making disciples” or “reproducing disciples” and this is the mission and vision of the church. Thus, as stated in the previous section, Church H instills the Bible early through children’s, youth and even adult ministry, since according to Barna, a worldview needs to be formed early. Church H also produces white papers for people to read on Biblical topics so that the church can be well informed on topics such as “women in ministry”, “speaking in tongues”, and so on and the church actually uses the Matthew 18 philosophy to keep everyone in the church in check on biblical matters (more on this in the

fourth section). Thus, Church H incorporates the Bible through teaching and curriculum and helping people reproduce disciples and fulfill the great commission.

**RQ3: How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of leaders in the church?**

Like the previous two sections, each pastor in each church discussed how they equipped leaders for the kingdom of God in their church and how that impacts their church overall. Some pastors answered the question differently than expected, but their answers reflect how leadership development in terms of worldview impacts their church. Since the results were covered at the end of the interview, most of the results of the impact of worldview development will be covered in the next section (since it deals with the entire church), but the perceived impact on their church and how they go about leadership will be discussed in this section, starting with Church A. The main category code will be leadership and leadership development, but other theme codes such as worldview, church development, teamwork, education, servant leadership and spiritual growth will be used as well.

First, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor A in Church A states that they mainly “try to develop more leaders that are not paid staff that we are really trying to develop a core group of volunteers.” This all coincides with the mission and vision of the church and how the church incorporates the Bible since the mission of the church is to “navigate people to God”, “connect them with others”, “serve others” and worship, “or growing in your faith.” So, Church A has adopted “C. Academy” which is a two-year leadership journey that helps people develop their skills and gifts, and pushing them to their limits so the leaders can evaluate them, see where their issues are, see where they need to view things a certain way and overall help them develop their gifts. Even with the overall staff, the worldview of connecting with others and honoring others (as mentioned in the second section) is communicated with the staff so C.

Academy is using the same techniques to help push volunteer leaders and non-paid leaders to do their job.

Second, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor B in Church B states that “part of developing leaders is developing disciples of Jesus Christ, and helping them develop a biblical theology of Christian leadership”. Pastor B expounds on this by saying that “Christ said that those who desire to be great in his kingdom will humbly serve” and “the Christian leader is the one who knows where Christ is going” as Paul told the Corinthians to “Follow me as I follow Christ.” Thus, part of being a Christian leader is being conformed to the image of Christ and surrendering one’s rights and walking in the footsteps of Christ, thus taking the different theories of leadership and funneling them through the image of Christ. The result of that is that “Pastor B sees leaders who are committed to the truth of God’s word” and as a result, are living the way Christ lives and are influencing the members to follow Christ as well.

Third, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor C in Church C as well as Pastor D in Church D both see the role of leaders as not just attaining to vocational ministry but those who are in the church as well. In Church C, pastor C states that the senior pastor has developed a curriculum for leaders that cover many basic elements of the faith, including the cross, hearing from God, being empowered by the Holy Spirit, identity and purpose, identity in Christ and other topics. The founding pastor of the church has a bible study on Wednesday nights that equip leaders in the church, and Church C has an entire platform in which leaders can grow in Christ since it is all based on “biblical principles and living by the word” since everything Church C does is based on the Bible.

The result of leadership development according to a biblical worldview in Church C is discipleship multiplication since Church C is “helping them grow in their relationship with

Christ”. Thus, when leaders multiply leaders, in turn multiply disciples, then Church C begins to grow and expand (from Pastor C’s tone, it is something that has already happened). Both Pastor C and Pastor D in their respective churches (C and D) use the passage in Ephesians where God calls pastors, prophets, teachers and evangelists to do their work to equip people for the ministry (Pastor D quotes in 1 Corinthians, “How many are prophets? How many are evangelists? How many are teachers? How many are pastors?”). Pastor D in Church D goes a step further by stating that all in the church (Who believe in Christ) are Saints who are called to ministry in and out of the church using their gifts (Pastor C in Church C says the same thing).

Thus, part of the multiplication process in Church C according to Pastor C is getting people out of their seat and developing them with the word of God and the Spirit of God so they can reach the unchurched and be lights to the community. Pastor D of Church D says the same thing since part of their leadership training in the church is to develop people according to their gifts so they can use their gifts for the kingdom of God, in and out of the church. Overall, Church C wants people to be contenders and not pretenders so whether they are “lawyers, doctors, sales person, whatever that looks like”, they are commissioned by Pastor C and the rest of the staff through a biblical worldview (as discussed in section two) to go out and reach the unchurched as leaders (Pastor C mentions that the senior pastor makes a call at the end of every service to “go out and be the church”). Pastor D in Church D did not mention any results in terms of leadership in his current church, but the discipleship programs he implemented in his last church helped equip saints to be in leadership positions, which overall created a positive culture for the church.

Fourth, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor E in Church E models his leadership strategy on Jethro’s advice to Moses since Jethro said that Moses was “going to kill himself, and wear himself out” while dealing with the complaints. Jethro told Moses to

divide up the people into several leaders to deal with the issue (Pastor E also uses the example in Acts 6 when it comes to appointing leaders as well). This is the strategy that Church E uses in leadership since Pastor E appoints leaders and commissions them to “lead different teams” using a biblical worldview, which is intended to help “leaders reproduce leaders” and helping people follow their leadership (under the condition of) as they follow Christ. Pastor E has a monthly leadership huddle with his leaders and they go over practical and operational things with them along with leadership skills that are rooted in a biblical worldview.

Pastor E also uses a personality profile to identify and equip leaders with their gifts and skills. It is a communication profile which helps Pastor E see their process and how they communicate and this is all developed in their monthly leadership huddles and with one-on-one mentoring. Leaders, according to Pastor E, have to be in a small group and regularly attend church since the preaching and teaching of the church (that is Christ-centered and gospel-centered) helps shape their leadership skills and helps them to reproduce leaders. This is done through servant leadership since the execution of this leadership strategy is their culture code statements “towels over titles.” This means that “everyone does the dishes” and that people are to serve rather than be “proud and haughty.” Using the examples of Jesus washing people’s feet and Paul’s call for submission and humility in Philippians 2, Pastor E executes his leadership through serving others, or “washing the dishes”, and the results he has seen is multiplication through servant leadership since it has been a positive “leaven” that has leavened the whole lump.

Fifth, in terms of leadership development, Pastor F, in Church F, as well as the rest of the staff, train leaders “using a different number of pathways” since they are a plural elder-led church. Pastor F is in charge of two of those. The first pathway deals with younger men wanting to be elders and Pastor F uses books and the bible to help them navigate the process of becoming



a pastor or an elder. The guys in the process of becoming elders go through theological training that ask the questions, “who is God? What is man? Who is Christ? What is the trinity? What is common grace? What is providence?” through a popular theological book to help further their worldview. The second pathway deals with people just wanting to be leaders and the pastors at Church F help them lead small groups, different areas of the church, and help them interact with others with the gospel of Christ. Thus, potential leaders are given the Bible as instruction on how to be leaders and Pastor F and the rest of the staff helps answer any questions and facilitate their growth along the way. According to Pastor F, this has been fruitful over the years in the church so the results for leadership development have been positive.

Sixth, in terms of leadership development, Pastor G in church G believes in “one on one” leadership training by pairing “an older person with a younger person” and facilitating that growth through relationships since it involves a position of leadership, whether an “associates’ position or a youth position.” This includes youth development since youth pastors, according to Pastor G, are to lead the youth to eventually become future leaders and Christ followers. When it comes to results, Pastor G did not comment much on this strategy in his church, but he did point out the “the church tends to take on the attitude of the leadership.” Thus, “if the leadership is lackadaisical, then the church will be lackadaisical, if the leadership is evangelistic, then the church is evangelistic.” Giving this response, the effect of the leadership at Church G must have been affected by the overall attitude of the leaders over time (not disclosed). This probably contributed to the results mentioned in the next section (concerning the congregation).

Lastly, in terms of leadership development, Pastor H, in Church H, believes in having a watchful eye towards his leaders in terms of their talents, spiritual gifts and Gods work in their life. This is to make sure that all leaders constantly possess a biblical worldview since one

“cannot have people in leadership who do not have a biblical worldview. That will destroy the church.” Pastor H and the rest of the staff sit down with potential leaders to make sure “they agree with the church constitution, with the leaders and are using scripture as the basis for their lives.” In terms of results, Pastor H empowers leaders to help people be in God’s will so since this is happening in the church, Church H has had a positive impact (since 80 percent of churches, according to Pastor H, are stagnating). Pastor H, in terms of a biblical worldview of leadership, believes in the power of unity, so to use Henry Blackaby’s model, he believes that everyone should come to a consensus in order to make any decision (so that the church can be in the will of God). Pastor H did not say the staff used this model in his church, but due to the unity of the leaders in terms of a Christian worldview, this has helped the church overall be in unity in terms of a Christian worldview (since they use the Matthew 18 principle to stay biblically grounded).

**RQ4: How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of those in the congregation?**

This section will expand on the previous three sections by discussing how each church describes worldview development in terms of overall spiritual development in the congregation. Church Development will be the main category for this section while all the other themes and categories will be mentioned as subthemes (such as Christ, Bible, Leadership Development, Youth Development, and Worldview as well as many different codes such as multiplication, discipleship, evangelism, culture, gospel, me-centered vs. God-centered, results, and other codes). Each church and pastor will be listed in order and unlike the other sections, all the interview questions will be used since this question covers the overall scope of the study.

First, in terms of spiritual development in the congregation, Church A through their mission and vision develop the worldview of the congregation through the four sides of the

compass, which are navigate, engage, serve and worship. Through these areas, Church A, according to Pastor A, help disciple people according to that worldview, which is founded on the “biblical perspective”. Since Pastor A does not want “a worldview to overtake a biblical worldview,” the main strategy according to Pastor A is to help people have the right view of God and the right perspective, so they can interact with both God and each other well and not let their own worldview override a biblical worldview in this manner. When it comes to the great commission and a biblical worldview in general, the focus is on humbly serving one another in love since how one interacts with God determines how one interacts with others. Thus, having a biblical worldview helps spur these types of humble interactions with others since it helps people “wash each other’s feet”, “meeting people where they are at”, “going after the marginalized”, “helping people”, and “serving one another.” It helps one truly treat others the way Jesus treats others, which is the essence of the great commission.

Pastor A has had multiple hats in Church A over the past three years and recently, he has been “overseeing the discipleship processes and pathways for the entire organization of Church A.” He has helped with “Rooted”, “which is a discipleship experience that really helps people dive into who God is, how they can help connect well with others, and then really and truly discover their story and their purpose in life.” Pastor A’s main job is to “create experiences” that help people in the congregation develop a biblical worldview and to develop a biblical narrative and see how it interacts with their story. He also does on-on-one discipleship with coaches and other people to help them develop a biblical worldview. When it comes to defending the congregation against other truth claims, Pastor A believes in getting into the Bible, not seeing it as another “weird book” that no one can understand, but helping the congregation delve into the

word of God without confirmation bias and helping them “be in close communion with God” by “doing their own prayer” and “doing their own study” with the tools that Church A gives them.

Two tangible results have come through Pastor A’s leadership in the church. In Pastor A’s early days as the Next Steps pastor, Pastor A took someone out to lunch and helped him out with his situation by pointing him to the Bible and helped him develop a biblical perspective on what he was going through. No follow-up was mentioned, but from the tone of Pastor A’s voice, it seems like it had an impact on this man. The main result that Pastor A shared during his current time in Rooted is that a convicted felon did the program alongside a district attorney. The district attorney mentioned that she had a bias towards the convicted felon since “she put people like him away all the time.” But towards the end of the program at the big celebration, she realized her worldview was “messed up” and “she rededicated her life to Christ.” In the end, the convicted felon baptized the district attorney, which made this result more memorable. This is “one in hundreds” of stories that Pastor A could mention since these helped the worldview of many become more like Jesus and the biblical worldview.

Second, in terms of spiritual development in the congregation, Pastor B of Church B reiterated the “anchor of scripture” that defines a biblical worldview and since he believes in conforming people to Christ, “addressing any issue (not just theological issues)” (recall the Billy Graham newspaper point Pastor B made in the second RQ section) that may come up in one’s view of the world, and helping them to “abide in Christ”. This includes “processing cultural issues through a biblical framework and lens”. Truth also plays a role in how Pastor B disciplines the worldview of Church B since Church B believes in “teaching biblical doctrine” and not “watering down the message” which helps people be conformed into the image of God. Pastor B believes in “erecting the framework of a biblical worldview” through laying the biblical

foundation of inerrancy and infallibility and helping people through their leadership apply God's word and eventually live out their faith as they mature in Christ.

In terms of the great commission, Pastor B believes that this is the purpose of Christians, to “evangelize and disciple the world” (hence their mission). When Christians, according to Pastor B, discover their purpose through the word of God, then they can develop a biblical view of the world and regardless of profession, they can reach people for the glory of God and make disciples since “there is no greater privilege than being invited to do God’s work”. When it comes to results, Pastor B has seen both leaders and members of the church “staying true to God’s work” and because of this, 1) they are walking with Christ, 2) they are fulfilling the great commission in their lives, and 3) they are investing/participating in the work of the church, thus helping the leaders fulfill their duties according to Ephesians 4:11-12.

Third, in terms of spiritual development in the church, Pastor C of Church C said that “the word is incorporated in everything we do” and “prayer is a huge part of what we do,” whether it is a meeting or anything else they do. Thus, as stated in the second section, everything Church C does is in “Spirit and in truth” since “there needs to be a healthy balance of that” and it is like “watering the seed.” Pastor C makes an interesting notion that even though their mission is to make disciples, they actually do not “make disciples” (in the sense that they cannot force someone to be a disciple). Instead in everything they do, they water the seed and help people grow spiritually and that “people are growing and becoming more Christ-like in everything they do”. If they want to be more than converts and be a disciple, Church C does whatever they can through small group meeting, Sunday morning gathering, and coffee visits to help people become more Christ like. It is not a guarantee that it will happen, but the seed is planted in everything they do.

In terms of the worldview lens, Church C encourages its people to see through a biblical lens, especially when it comes to government. Pastor C makes sure that people through the Holy Spirit, “occupy”, and do the work of the kingdom on earth, whether in the “political, business, or entertainment industry”. Pastor C notes that his church is very involved in culture, especially politically culture, and that he encourages people to “see their job” differently since God is using them to advance the kingdom. Overall, Pastor C believes in spirit and in truth and advancing the kingdom through Mark 16:15-18 and he believes that by having the correct biblical worldview, one can see their current vocation and see it as an opportunity to evangelize and make disciples. Some, according to Pastor C, see it as mainly the pastor’s role to make disciples and evangelize the world, but Pastor C encourages the believers to “occupy” and make disciples and evangelize where they are at.

In terms of culture, Pastor C believes in being “counter-cultural”, meaning, “being ambassadors for Christ” and teaching people that “they are part of the kingdom.” As stated before, the word of God is central in training up the Christians to make disciples and evangelize the world and Pastor C uses the counterfeit method to determine truth from reality and guard the church from opposing truth claims. To tell something is counterfeit, “they study the real thing” and when the counterfeit comes along, they can “easily identify that that is not the right thing.” Much emphasis is placed on being “rooted and grounded in kingdom culture” and “renewing one’s mind to the word of God.” Of course, Pastor C emphasizes that they cannot make people do this but through the Holy Spirit, people can be drawn and Church C makes the gospel of the kingdom “a continual thread” in everything they do, so that people can be rooted in God’s word and in the work of the kingdom. Pastor C later emphasizes the need to be grounded in the word of God so that when the time comes to give one’s life for it, one will be willing to take a stand

for Christ and not back down and be “truly committed” to making disciples. They will be “doers of the word and not just hearers” and will stand the test of time and not deny their faith in Christ when under pressure.

In terms of the strategy, Church C strives for people to “have an encounter with the Lord, discover the word, discover their purpose, to connect with Jesus, to connect with each other, in community, and make a difference.” The goal of the service is to make sure that the preaching is geared towards teaching God’s word, and grounded in God’s word, in order to deal with opposing truth claims, such as “me-centered” worship and other deceptions. The goal is to not have a bunch of programs, but to connect people to Christ and to “make disciples that make a difference.” The results, according to Pastor C, have been fruitful since they “have been growing in maturity, growing in their love for God, growing in their love for others” so since Pastor C has been there, he has seen the fruit, especially since there are people in his church occupying in different spheres of influence. There also have been tangible results from previous years in ministry since many of the young adults he ministered to have been fulfilling the great commission as “business, leaders, doctors, teachers, lawyers, pastors, evangelists” and having that biblical worldview. Thus, in the short term and in the long term, the results have been positive.

Fourth, in terms of spiritual development in the congregation, Pastor D of Church D does it through their mission and vision as being in the Assemblies of God. Whether through Ignite, Equip or REACH ministries, Pastor D and his staff helps the congregation evangelize the world and make disciples through the ministries of the church. As stated before, these ministries are designed to “take someone who knows nothing” and help them come out on the other end rooted and grounded and plugged into ministry. The goal is to get them baptized (in water and in the

Holy Spirit) and get them in the word of God, despite the Assemblies not having a good Bible literacy rate according to Pastor D.

The main way Pastor D develops people according to a biblical worldview “is the preaching and teaching ministry of the church,” which involves “connecting the Bible to the application of it.” According to Pastor D, it is easy to compartmentalize the Bible so he takes a “holistic approach” by helping people see how the Bible deals with various aspects of life, such as finances, marriage, family and even politics. Pastor D allows the Bible to inform all answers to various questions that arise in society from the pulpit, since the Bible is the sole authority as mentioned earlier in the second section. The goal of Pastor D’s ministry is not to take a “lofty approach” but to see how the Bible connects with everyday living. Even a multi-disciplinary approach is used in order to connect all areas to the Bible.

When it comes to the congregation, Pastor D believes in discipleship through small groups being the main pathway to dealing with the opposing voices, especially the prosperity gospel, man-centered theology and other false narratives. Pastor D challenges his church to look at the “character” of the speakers they listen to since “character is going to taint or enhance what they are presenting.” He also wants them to “filter everything according to the word of God” and “to be discerning”, and, “to know enough of the word of God to see truth from error.” Also, Pastor D helps Church D develop their biblical worldview by seeing that people are lost, not unchurched, and that “Christ is the only way, a biblical worldview that states that judgement day is coming, there is a heaven to gain and a hell to be feared.” Thus, the motivation is not to get people in church but to help people be led “from darkness to light”, “from condemnation to being clothed in the righteousness of Christ”. Thus, the biblical worldview regarding the great commission, Pastor D emphasizes, involves helping people be “born again”, and helping people



obey all that Christ has commanded and making disciples. This involves the Holistic method of preaching as well as accountability and intimacy in small groups.

When it comes to the results, like Pastor C in Church C, Pastor D mainly talked about his experience from a previous church he pastored. Like in the current church he is pastoring, he had success with discipling and getting people saved and these people ended up teaching, stepping into ministry roles such as ushering and helps, and “creating a lasting culture”. The results in Church D are unclear, but from how Pastor D answered the last two questions, he emphasized the need for discipleship and small groups since they impact the church in a positive way (Pastor D has seen this first hand).

In terms of discipleship, Pastor D emphasizes accountability since he was able to sit down and talk with several people in order to help them sustain spiritual growth and grow spiritually. Having close intimacy and fellowship instead of being isolated due to COVID, according to Pastor D, will help the body of Christ going forward, especially his church.

Through the “breaking of bread, small groups and teaching ministry of the church”, Pastor D in Church D has seen the impact of how these ministries have helped people develop a biblical worldview and follow Christ. This includes “continuing in the apostle’s doctrine”, in “meeting their physical needs” and “meeting their emotional needs” through the fellowship and compassion ministries of the church. The one area that Pastor D has seen lacking in Church D is the younger generations since it is a “losing battle” having them for one hour and them being bombarded by the culture for one week. This is the main negative result from his ministry overall.

Fifth, in terms of spiritual development, Pastor E, of Church E, shapes his people through “Christ-Centered” and “through the gospel”. Everything they do is based on Jesus Christ since

“all things are held by the word of his power” and people are to follow the apostle’s doctrine and teaching as outlined in Acts 2:42-47. Thus, the whole focus is to help people “see his love” and “see his grace” and see themselves in the story of Jesus, whether it is the story of the woman caught in adultery or Jesus being a friend of sinners or Jesus being with tax collectors. When people see Jesus “in context” of those stories, then people can see their need for transformation and see that there is hope for them.

When it comes to the methodology, Pastor E believes in “grace” and “truth” since Jesus modeled that with the woman caught in adultery. In that story, Jesus, according to Pastor E, showed grace by writing in the sand and sending off her accusers. Then he showed truth by saying “go and sin no more.” Jesus, according to Pastor E, came with grace and truth and hope and Pastor E believes in discipling the congregation with this biblical worldview based on God and his word. Church E is going to love them where they are at, but not leave them where they are at so the discipleship pathway is based on the motto of “grace and truth”.

In terms of cultural influences and opposing truth claims, Pastor E and Church E believes in “emphasis and consistency”: “Consistency in what we say, Consistency in how we live.” This means being “confrontational with the gospel” and making sure that the truth is taught. Pastor E emphasizes in Church E that people should minimize cultural influences and maximize spiritual disciplines, such as the word of God, prayer and community. This way, people can avoid the losing battle of culture that both Pastor D and Pastor E brings up regarding their churches. In community, Pastor E (as mentioned in the second section) believes in making sure that everything from teaching to small groups that the word of God is taught and that there is agreement in the church when it comes to doctrinal positions. However, Pastor E is patient with

people who come from different church backgrounds and over time, helps them be “exposed to the truth” so they can see “the error of their ways.”

When it comes to the great commission, Pastor E believes this is lacking in the body of Christ at large since people come to church and say it is good for them, but that “does not always translate to Matthew 28:16.” Thus, Pastor E believes in modeling evangelism with the congregation by sharing an example of witnessing to a guy at Starbucks. Modeling evangelism for the congregation, according to Pastor E, helps the rest of the congregation see their need to go out and do the great commission. A tangible result of that is when Pastor E evangelized while working at IT bi-vocationally for several years. As a result of his lifestyle and evangelism, 5-6 coworkers started coming to his church (whether they gave their life to Jesus was unknown). Thus, when evangelism is modeled from the pulpit according to Pastor E, people will see the urgency of soul winning in their lives.

When it comes to the results of worldview development in Church E, Pastor E noted that his strategy has brought about “healthier believers, which produce healthier families, which produce a healthier church, which produces a healthier community, and a healthier world.” Pastor E has seen people go from “anxious to overwhelmed to angry and on the brink of divorce” and when they are exposed to God’s word, they become healthy spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. When this happens, it had a “domino effect” since the kids and teens are better when “they see the healthy transformation.” Healthy churches and families came as result. When the word of God is taught and the leaders do what they need to do, then God can “give the increase.” It takes “consistency” as Pastor E points out several times in the interview.

Sixth, in terms of spiritual development, Church F helps establish a biblical worldview in the lives of their congregation through helping people answer the basic questions about life and

reality and seeing the world the way “Christ sees the world.” Pastor F teaches that the “Bible is all sufficient”, especially in matters related to life and godliness. Whether it is through preaching, expositional books, workshops, small groups or any other method, Pastor F believes in the importance of knowing that all the answers related to life are found in God’s word. This includes the relevant issues relating to homosexuality, abortion, transgenderism, and systemic racism. Thus, Pastor F and Church F believes in “lets read the bible, lets study the bible, lets memorize the bible, lets meditate on the Bible, let’s all that we do be done in the Bible.” It is not a pragmatic, seven step approach, but helping people see all of lives answers in the Bible and being able to live that out, including honoring authorities and understanding the basic cultural issues of our day.

In terms of culture and opposing truth claims, Pastor F and Church F believes in their congregation being an “outpost” to train people to go on the frontlines of culture and influence it for Christ, rather than a “refuge” to hide from culture. Pastor F gives the example of not hiding from the cultural climate and saying “I told you so”, but being in the culture and showing the way to answer the tough cultural issues with a biblical worldview. Pastor F and Church F believes in dealing with opposing truth claims through the elders by warning the sheep of opposing truth claims and helping them “work with these things together as a church.” The goal of Church F in terms of culture is to help its congregation engage culture and different worldviews and help them come back into the church, or “outpost”, and recharge. This, according to Pastor F, is the only way one can make disciples according to a biblical worldview.

In terms of the great commission, Pastor F states that having a biblical worldview means “knowing that the only hope people have is Jesus and knowing that hope means one is going to make disciples.” Pastor F and Church F is not content with just making “converts” since they are

not only helping people come to know Christ but “presenting them mature in Christ.” Thus, having a biblical worldview in terms of the great commission means more than walking down an aisle at church, it means being a disciple. In terms of evangelism, this is where the gospel comes in since he uses a quote from J.I. Packer that states that “one never moves on from the gospel, one moves into the gospel.” Thus, the gospel, according to Pastor F, is the starting line in which people come to know Christ and “become spiritual children”, and one will never fully know (on this side of heaven) the glorious depths of the gospel.

In terms of tangible results from Church F in terms of the congregation, Pastor F serves as the college pastor of the church so he gave results when it comes to the college ministry he helps oversee. Many of the college students that graduated used their biblical worldview formed during their time in Church F to go to the Greater Boston area (which is 3 percent Christian) and bring the gospel to that part of town. Pastor F’s hope is that this positive development in his church “spreads like wildfire” to where the rest of the church will follow suit and go somewhere where the gospel is not present and preach the gospel to a culture that needs it. Another positive result is that the discipling of people in the church has had a trickle-down effect in the church since Pastor F has “seen it happen in his church” when people are being formed through a biblical worldview. Thus, from the leaders to the rest of the congregation, a biblical worldview is being shaped throughout his church.

Seventh, in terms of spiritual development, Pastor G, of Church G, discipled people according to their own biblical worldview through “bible study groups, corporate and private worship.” Pastor G does a lot of his discipleship one on one with people, through biblical counseling, through prayer, through bible study and through encouragement. Since Church G is mentoring and discipling people with the word of God, Pastor G says it will affect their walk and

encourage them to be a witness for others since their church's mission is based on the great commission. Pastor G helps people have "proper hermeneutics" (inductive bible study for the young people) so they can interpret God's word in light of cultural challenges. Pastor G believes that "culture is not the key, the bible is the key" so people in his congregation are taught God's Word so they can face cultural challenges. This includes knowing the truth that is founded in God's word since "Jesus is the way, the truth and the life" and God's word is "where the truth is." Truth, according to Pastor G, is not founded in a denomination or Sunday school teacher, it is founded on Christ and the word, so Pastor G believes in helping his congregation "know the truth, know what the truth is" that is found in God's word.

In terms of the great commission, Pastor G believes in the Matthew passage which states to "go into all the world to Jerusalem, to Judea and to the uttermost parts of the world." This involves "actually doing it" and not just "feeling good about doing it." Pastor G mentioned that one can be 80 years old and still be involved in missions through tithing to local missionaries. Pastor G believes that "every place you go," one is to fulfill the great commission right then and there and since the mission and vision of the church is to reach people "on the highways and byways", Pastor G and the rest of the staff help train people to do just that.

In terms of results, Pastor G boils it down to "salvation and glory to God". Pastor G noted that the main thing they are called to do is to "help people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus and to give him honor." Pastor G has seen salvations through one-on-one evangelism, people inviting others to the church through witnessing, and through programs such as Vacation Bible School and Bible Boot Camp. One lady in the church has given her life to Christ at Bible Boot Camp when attending the event. Thus, while results were not given when it comes to discipling others through a biblical worldview, the results regarding evangelism when it comes to having a

biblical worldview in terms of the great commission have been documented well by Pastor G of Church G.

Lastly, when it comes to spiritual development, Pastor H, of Church H, establishes this through relationships in the church. Pastor H asserts that “the key to this is relationships” and mentions in his doctoral dissertation that if one only sees people two hours a week, then they are not a first century church. Thus, it is about “building relationships”, “being vulnerable, to grow, to talk about things we struggle with.” Pastor H mentions an example of mental health since he believes that the church should help those who struggle with mental health and allow them to talk about their struggles. This, according to Pastor H, keeps things under a Christian, or biblical worldview. Through relationships, the church can lay out a path to help people find Jesus and through referrals and other resources since the key is to build relationships with those who struggle with mental health. In all things (not just mental health), the key with relationships and small groups and other facets of the church is to keep people disciplined in Christ and on the path that Christ wants them to follow. Also, to realize that “Christ is the solution to all the problems that people have” and to continually put the Christian worldview before them so they can follow Christ according to God’s Word.

When it comes to culture and opposing truth claims, Pastor H and Church H, unlike some of the other churches, believes in using culture as the strategy in getting the word of God to people. In other words, “culture trumps strategy over time.” The message is adapted to the culture but the message remains the same, which is the word of God. As mentioned earlier, Pastor H and his staff at Church H creates a Matthew 18 system where people can be grounded in the word against opposing truth claims (white papers are given on different topics). If people have a theological issue with a particular pastor or speaker, they go to them to get things straight.

Pastor H has had to adapt to COVID since more people, according to the pastor, have been wanting to watch church online rather than attend in person. Pastor H mentioned other events that have changed culture such as 9-11 since research done prior to 9-11 (according to Pastor H) is antiquated. In his church, Pastor H has had to address the issue of alcohol since that has changed from the 50-70s to today so Pastor H and his team warn the church “of excesses of alcohol.” Overall, Church H and Pastor H believe in the authority of scripture so to further a biblical worldview in their church, the church needs to “build relationships, teach people about Christianity, teach people about Jesus, show people what Jesus has done for them” under the authority of the Bible. When conversion happens, this is when the worldview begins to take shape.

In terms of the great commission, “God and Jesus have to be the sole authority” since if one is not holding to the Bible, then they are not going to follow the great commission. Thus, this is built on relationships through discipleship and evangelism. The great commission according to Pastor H and Church H has to be a lifestyle choice and not just a “Tuesday night” event. People have to see the world as “doomed to hell...because they do not have that relationship with God through Jesus Christ” and they have to build relationships based on trust so that when people “have no place to turn” when challenges mount, the Christians can help bring them to Christ.

When it comes to results in Church H, Pastor H notes that there is a core group of leaders who possess a biblical worldview and they partner with many organizations that “have the same worldview.” Their ministry reach has expanded and they have seen the kingdom grow by people coming to faith in Christ. They have shown God’s love to others, especially through the program “love your neighbor”, and have seen great results from that. Their church has had a positive



influence in the community, especially in the political and educational arenas, so the community “is a great place to live because of Christian values and Christian worldview.”

**RQ5: How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of the younger generations?**

Each pastor discussed their overall plan and strategy for worldview development in their church with the younger generations. However, only one of the eight pastors, pastor D of church D, gave a negative report since reaching the younger generations is a “losing battle” in the church due to the small amount of time during the week and the broad amount of time the younger generations have in the world (why pastor D states that the younger generation in his church do not have a biblical worldview). The category, youth development will be covered along with other codes and themes such as church development, Bible, Christ, truth, discipleship, evangelism, parent’s role, authenticity and other codes. This section will build upon the previous four and mainly discuss each church’s role in reaching the younger generations. Material from the first four sections may be used to go along with the results in this section. Results are not given in this section since this study focused on leadership and the church overall. Any results concerning the younger generation are based on the congregation overall unless otherwise noted in this section.

First, in terms of the younger generation, Church A and Pastor A believes in “humble honesty” or “authenticity” when it comes to reaching the younger generation with a biblical worldview. This is because the younger generation, according to Pastor A, wants to “live their own truth” out of a desire for authenticity. Church A and Pastor A believes in being “raw” with them, not as a “pharisaical jerk” or someone who has it all together. In other words, people need to be humble with them and let them know they have messed up before when someone of the younger generation messes up in the church. As a pastor, Pastor A has engaged the younger

generation with conversations about how he started off in ministry and the youth ended up having similar struggles about decisions that both Pastor A and they have been making. Thus, there was a connection there that was made since Pastor A talked to them about any decisions, they needed to make based on how he learned from his own decisions.

Pastor A and Church A ultimately believe that being humble and authentic with this generation is a must since “they can sniff out fake in an instant.” Living an authentic life, according to Pastor A, can “chip away at people’s perceptions of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.” The church must be willing to “break down those barriers” so trust can be formed and a biblical worldview can be slowly implemented. People can feel more comfortable talking to people in Church A, even with the younger generation, since this authenticity is established and people are operating out of humility with people.

Second, in terms of the younger generation, Pastor B of Church B believes that “you have to start today and at the youngest age of children, when they are able to understand, you have to start laying the foundation of God’s truth in their life.” This is because the world, the enemy, and the culture are trying to distort the minds of the younger generation early. According to Pastor B, it is important that Church B lays the biblical foundation for a biblical worldview, including who they are in Christ, that they are a child of God, that they are created “on purpose for a purpose”, and they are to walk in God’s word since they are God’s workmanship according to Ephesians 2:10. This includes truth and God’s love since if truth is not taught, then the world is going to teach them. In terms of children and youth development, Pastor B believes in talking to them while building a biblical foundation since they are being assaulted by things that were not around years ago for children. This means installing a biblical worldview so they can answer any question and be able to take any issue and see it through a biblical lens, including their purpose

and how God views them as a person (not as Hollywood sees it, but how God and the Bible say about it).

Third, in terms of the younger generation, Pastor C, of Church C, believes “it’s the parents to be honest with you” when it comes to reaching the next generation. Thus, Pastor C and Church C “partners with parents” in order to equip them to help the young people have that biblical worldview and biblical foundation. Pastor C talked about his time as being a youth pastor and instilling the presence, power and word of God into the youth every week. However, once a week time in the church usually does not work so partnering with parents helps Pastor C and Church C equip the young adults with a biblical worldview since they are around their parents more than the church overall. Therefore, for Church C, it is important that Pastor C equips the parents with the resources they need, especially on purity, since “parents are the primary disciplers of their kids”.

When it comes to the subject of purity and church involvement with the younger generations, Pastor C experienced this firsthand when he was younger so he knows firsthand the dangers of pornography and other sexual issues that youth face. Thus, he partners with parents to help lead their kids in the word, in devotionals, in communion, and for all members of the family to receive biblical education so the church can have a trickle-down effect with the younger generation and to avoid any impurity issues and other issues related to a biblical worldview in the church. Since Pastor C in the last section has seen fruit in the church overall when it comes to making decisions, there is some result when it comes to this method of reaching the family and younger generations in the church.

Fourth, in terms of the younger generation, as mentioned earlier, Pastor D of Church D has had little documented success (as far as the interview) so far when it comes to reaching the

younger generations in his church. However, Pastor D did mention that generation gaps are indeed seen and that the indoctrination in the schools is somehow overmatching the once-a-week instruction that the younger generation get in the church. Pastor D does not have a “silver bullet” when it comes to addressing this issue since it is a losing battle. Even sitting with them and asking about their biblical worldview will show that their understanding is foreign to what many had in previous generations concerning the Bible. Thus, with the attempt to deconstruct the younger generation in the public schools on a daily basis and the one-week instruction in church, Pastor D says it is not enough and he does not have an answer, other than the discipleship tools he uses for the whole church in terms of the small groups, holistic teaching, REACH, and Equip.

Fifth, in terms of the younger generations, Pastor E, of Church E, uses Matthew 13:52 (“master of the house builds out of his treasure what is new and what is old”) to illustrate that the “message of grace and truth” does not change, but the method does as each generation moves along. In other words, “you do not change the message, there are times in which you have to adjust the method.” According to Pastor E, it is important to speak their language, or “speak to them in a way that resonates with them without compromising the message.” Thus, what Pastor E says to the adults, the student ministries director may say it another way to the students. In essence, the main goal for this strategy is to make sure that this is the worldview (as Pastor E described in other sections) that they need to embrace.

When it comes to a biblical worldview, Pastor E wants to give the younger generations a biblical picture of how young people have shaped culture overtime in the Bible. Theses biblical pictures include “God giving Joseph a dream at 17”, “God raising up David to confront Goliath at 16”, “Mary, a young lady”, and “Esther”. The point of these pictures that Pastor E uses is to show that the younger generations “do not need to figure it out later” can influence their culture

since these young people did the same in the Bible. They can “stand out” and not “fit in” and be established in community where they are loved and affirmed for who God made them to be (Pastor E mentions that many kids and teens want to be popular and feel accepted). This is so they can know that God has a purpose for their life and that they matter and they are loved, thus being equipped with a biblical value.

Sixth, in terms of the younger generation, Pastor F of Church F states that the youth minister of Church F has developed a six-year curriculum where “when a sixth grader graduates high school, these are the bucket or categories they are going to have to go through in the six years in our ministry”. These include, “is the Bible true? Why does the church matter? What does it look like to follow Jesus? What does God say about abortion? What does God say about homosexuality? What does God say about XYZ”. This is to develop a biblical worldview so that no matter what question comes up, the youth can be rooted in scripture and know how to deal with every issue. Pastor F believes that this starts “in first grade, in second grade, all the way up to sixth grade,” since a worldview starts early on. If a six-week course was only taught at the end of high school, it would be too late so giving them the biblical basis for the issues will help develop a biblical worldview from the early onset.

Lastly, in terms of reaching the younger generations, Pastors G and H both have an older congregation (Churches G and H), but help reach young people through “bible study groups” (Church G) and “Vacation Bible School” (Church G) and “taking care of their needs” (Church H) and “working with their time constraints” (Church H). Pastor G, of Church G, defines youth as any young people up to young couples while Pastor H, of Church H, keeps the focus on young adults in general.

Pastor G of Church G believes reaching the younger generation is through “real good inductive Bible study”. This means not just feeding them pizza, taking them to camp, but “really getting them involved in reading and studying God’s word.” When Church G does this, this helps the younger generations know Gods word in a “richer and truer fashion.” Young people, when taught that the Bible is not just an old book, but relevant for their lives, can be further equipped to not only understanding and learning the Bible, but developing a biblical worldview.

Pastor H of Church H believes reaching the younger generation is through “providing for their needs”. Pastor H starts off by stating that one has to “pay attention to their culture, you got to know technology, you got to have an app, you got to have an app, you have to have a Spotify account.” Furthermore, “one has to accept that Facebook is for old guys and the younger generation is for something else.” For young marrieds, child care needs to be present so they can come to the meetings. They need to have parent’s nights out so their family needs can be met while they go to events so they can grow as Christians. The goal is to be relevant to them so not only their needs can be met but that they can know that scripture is timeless and they can apply it to their needs and their culture.

Pastor H brings up a cultural example with his son since his son was new at college at the time. His son asked him to help him put studying in his schedule so when it came time to do his school work, he took the break first instead of studying first like Pastor H’s generation did. This was a cultural difference that Pastor H had to understand when it came to instilling a biblical worldview in the younger generations (in this case, it was related to school). Pastor H then concluded that the younger generation wants to learn and be involved but they have time constraints and they have need’s that the older generations do not have.

Therefore, taking care of their needs while supplying them with scripture when they come to events helps them develop a biblical worldview.

**Table 4.2**

Survey of Data Analysis

Codes	RQ1	RQ2	RQ3	RQ4	RQ5
Category	Mission	Bible	Leadership, Leadership Development	Church Development	Youth Development
Themes	Worldview Evangelism Discipleship	Religion Gospel Christ	Church Development Servant Leadership Spiritual growth Education	Christ Bible Leadership Worldview Youth Development	Christ Bible Leadership Truth Culture
Subcodes	Bible	Evangelism	Teamwork	Evangelism	Evangelism
Subcodes	Christ	Discipleship	Worldview	Discipleship	Discipleship
Subcodes	Church	Culture	Teaching/Preaching	Gospel	Parents Role
Subcodes	Engage	Youth Development	Engage	Culture	Authenticity
Subcodes	Religion	Truth	Multiplication	Engage	Community
Subcodes	N/A	Church Development	Results	Results	Results

**Table 4.3**

Statistical Analysis of Main Codes and Themes Generated by AI (Not Covering All Codes Generated by AI)

Code/Theme	Out of Total Codes	Percentage
Mission/Vision (All Codes)	15	3.4%
Bible (All Codes)	91	20.7%
Leadership (All Codes)	57	12.95%
Church Development (All Codes)	121	27.5%
Evangelism/Gospel (All Codes)	64	14.5%
Discipleship/Engagement (All Codes)	196	44.5%
Youth Development (All Codes)	69	15.7%
Worldview (All Codes)	86	19.5%
Religion/Faith (All Codes)	146	33.2%
Christ/Christianity (All Codes)	215	48.9%
Morality/Culture/Truth (All Codes)	118	26.8%
Results (Code Name)	10	2.3%

### **Evaluation of the Research Design**

In this section, the researcher provides a reflective analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology of the research study. The researcher used his own instrument for the qualitative study: a thirteen-question interview that focused on the five research questions. With each of the eight participants in each of the eight settings, each question was asked and answered based on the participant's response. The researcher will evaluate each phase of the research design in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

#### **Methodological Strengths**

After pre-testing the questions, one thing that one pastor who pretested the study mentioned that each question flowed well into the next one. It provided an entire argument or



perspective for each participant since everything came together. The questions did flow from one question to the next and this made the interviews go smoothly as the researcher conducted them with each participant. When it came time for data analysis, it was easy to pick themes and categories since the questions already provided the researcher with the overarching categories and themes that are present in the findings.

Since the study was to evaluate how worldview development impacted the church overall, each of the questions could be broken down into sections that helped talk about the importance of a worldview and how it is shaped in the church. This helped provide results in question six regarding leadership and question twelve regarding the entire congregation. Each participant zeroed in on one particular section of the interview, but all the sections provided the answers to the different research questions (RQ1 being the mission and vision, RQ2 being Bible, RQ3 being leadership, RQ4 being church development overall and RQ5 being younger generations).

This study from the researchers vantagepoint can be easily replicated by finding eight participants (who are willing) and interviewing them through zoom or Microsoft teams. The only issue is that church leaders were extremely busy and the screen surveys tended to not be looked at in the email system of many churches. But if the target area is big enough, a person can find eight pastors and interview them based on the research questions and interview questions and have a successful study.

### **Methodological Weaknesses**

As mentioned in the strengths, the questions are very well organized and easy to break down into the different RQs. The only issue is that much of the content can overlap with the five research questions, causing some issues in the data analysis portion of the research study. When

it came to results, the study was meant to evaluate how leaders and the rest of the congregation were impacted by worldview development. A sub question in the interview could have been added with question nine that dealt with the younger generations since more results from that area of worldview development could have been mentioned (there were some, but more could have been given).

Early on, the researcher went through the questions as normal but as time went on, the interviewer gained traction and was able to get the participants to answer all sub-questions (even probing for more questions). Thus, with some of the early interviews, there could have been more probing but the researcher felt like what he got was enough. Some of the questions were so open-ended that some of the participants tended to generalize the answers rather than focus entirely on their church. However, the focus overall was kept on their church and the researcher was able to tie in all their responses according to how they answered the question (due to bracketing).

When it came to the member checking and the snowball sampling, both items were limited in scope due to the lack of participants responding back to various questions regarding the interviews and other pertinent information. Snowball sampling and member checking only worked with one of the participants who did respond, since the researcher was able to go back and get pertinent information regarding the setting and the interview. Other participants when asked about the setting or interview did not respond. Of the 100 plus pastors who received the screens, only two offered suggestions when it came to churches in the area. Most of them did not even answer question number seven since it was optional on the screening survey.

Lastly, the research questions could have been arranged in a different order, with RQs 4 and 5 being swapped since the focus of the study was on how the congregation was impacted by

worldview development. Due to the nature of the participants being interviewed, the overall detailed results could not be conducted since all of them gave a general answer (since this was just a thirteen-question interview), but the results could be connected back to the other interview questions so the overall instrument was able to still take shape.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

### Overview

The goal of this study is to explore the perceived impact of biblical worldview development on spiritual development in the church for pastors to oversee discipleship at Evangelical Protestant Churches who hold conservative doctrine (biblical inerrancy along with a few others). This section will focus on the general conclusions, applications, and implications of how the pastors viewed the impact of worldview develop in their church, either theoretical or in practice. Limitations regarding the study will also be discussed in order to explain the overall weaknesses of the study. This chapter will conclude with evaluation for future research regarding this study as a whole. Several points will be considered when it comes to the results of the study.

### Research Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceived impact of biblical worldview development on spiritual development in the church for pastors who oversee discipleship at a doctrinally conservative, Evangelical Protestant churches in Texas. At this stage in the research, biblical worldview development will be generally defined as helping people develop their faith and view of their world through Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008). Spiritual development is developing people according to the Word of God and Christ for holiness and a solid faith (Hiebert, 2008; Knight, 2006). The theory guiding this study is Hiebert's (2008) holistic development with a biblical worldview since all truth is in Christ and Christians should be Christ-centered in everything they do.

### Research Questions

**RQ1.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development to its overall mission in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ2.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe

worldview development in terms of how they incorporate the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism?

**RQ3.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of leaders in the church?

**RQ4.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of those in the congregation?

**RQ5.** How does the pastor who oversees discipleship in each church describe worldview development in terms of the spiritual development of the younger generations?

### **Research Conclusions, Implications and Applications**

This section will deal with the conclusions, implications, and applications of this researcher's study. A concise summary of the researchers will be presented to get the big picture of the overall findings of the study. Then, conclusions, implications and applications will be given based on each part of the findings based on the research questions (See chapter four, data analysis and findings). These conclusions will reflect this researcher's attempt to fill in the gap of the literature given in the literature review and give a new piece of the puzzle when it comes to worldview development in the church. Since very few studies, if any, have been given on worldview development in the church, these conclusions will be based on biblical worldview development overall in the church, not just general biblical development.

### **Summary of Research Findings**

This section will summarize the findings given in chapter four according to the research questions. Each question will give a big picture of the overall findings given in each section and each of the findings will be listed based on each participant from Pastor A to Pastor H, in Church A to Church H.

***Research Question 1: Mission and Vision***

According to Pastor A of Church A, the mission and vision of the church was invented in 2006 based on a conversation with an Indian Pastor regarding a compass. The mission and vision are based on the four points of the compass, which is “Navigate,” “Serve,” “Engage,” and “Worship,” and through navigating people to God, serving others, engaging in community and worshipping God through discipleship, a biblical worldview is being implemented. The goal through Rooted, the worship service, and other areas of ministry in the church is to help take a person who is far left (-5) on the spectrum (who may not know God or know little about God) and move them along the spectrum (either +2 with rooted, or -5 to +5 with the worship experience) to where they have a vibrant relationship with God and with others. A major component of worldview development in Church A is interactions with others, which is the principal way they go about worldview development in the church.

According to Pastor B of Church B, Church B’s mission is to “transform the world through the truth of God’s word, one life at a time.” The way Church B executes that mission in terms of worldview development is through their ministry programs, including Sunday School for all ages, that help people obey all that Christ has commanded and “reach the world globally, nationally and locally.” The main worldview they use is based on both General and Special Revelation since this is the proper lens in how they see and view everything.

According to Pastor C of Church C, the mission of the church that was originally created by the founding pastor is to “make disciples that make a difference.” The current senior pastor (at the time of this dissertation) has a more evangelistic approach (in the “Gospel of the Kingdom”) but the mission remains the same. Church C helps people develop a biblical worldview through their mission and vision by helping people develop a biblical lens of the

world and of God through the word and the spirit. This includes equipping people through the baptism of the Holy Spirit and helping people become more mature in the word through discipleship through bible studies, small groups and teaching.

According to Pastor D of Church D, Church D's mission is based around the four pillars and doctrine of the Assemblies of God, which is to glorify God, reach the lost, build up believers and show compassion. This is done through launching ministries such as "Ignite," "REACH" (Evangelism), "Equip" (Discipleship), "Small Groups," "lift," and "ESL/Citizenship classes." In terms of evangelism, "Ignite" and "Reach" are designed to get people connected to Christ and in the vine. In terms of discipleship, "Equip" helps people reach maturity in Christ. The overall goal, according to Pastor D, is to help take one person who knows nothing and take them to a place where they are rooted and grounded in Christ through Bible Studies, classes, and spiritual growth track. This is done through a Biblical Worldview, which according to Pastor D is through actions (not just intellectual) since the authority of God's word is held.

According to Pastor E of Church E, Church E's mission is to "be a life-giving community of faith, where Christ and Culture Intersect." Their slogan is "Jesus, People, Purpose" and their mission is to engage culture by presenting them with the gospel and the love of God, and demonstrating that through God's word. Church E, according to Pastor E, uses a culture code to help train their congregation with a biblical worldview. According to Pastor E, the word of God is foundational as a church so Christ is their foundation and the Bible is their guide when it comes to this worldview. Thus, the approach to their mission is to be gospel centered and point people to the gospel in everything they do, whether through preaching the word, small groups, discipleship training institute and serve teams.

According to Pastor F of Church F, the mission of Church F, according to Pastor F, is to “make disciples, locally and globally” and they do this through various ministries in their church. They train people with a biblical worldview by offering classes on the church and various theological subjects that help them stay grounded. In terms of a biblical worldview, Church F trains its disciples to do what Jesus commanded them to do. This includes seeing themselves and what they are called to do, and seeing the world the way Christ sees the world, even though everyone will have a different biblical worldview.

According to Pastor G in Church G, their mission is to go out and reach and baptize as many people as possible since it is based on the great commission. Since they are an older congregation, the primary mission (as of the time of the interview) is to reach younger couples through the Bible and a biblical worldview and help train everyone through bible study groups, Vacation Bible School or any other event. Since the mission of the church centers around the great commission, everything they do, whether discipleship or evangelism, flows from that commission.

Lastly, Church H’s mission is, to disciple people of all ages, through a study of the Bible, in order for them to use their gifts. Pastor H wants people to be discipled for Christ through a biblical worldview that is maintained and acted upon. This is done through exegetical preaching and teaching at a very early age (due to a Barna Study) and the curriculum is designed to help people become disciples and evangelizing their world. Thus, children’s and youth ministries are met with biblical teaching and Church H does its best to establish a biblical worldview in adults since according to Pastor H, it is very hard to establish a biblical worldview in older adults.



***Research Question 2: Bible***

First, as stated in the last section, Church A incorporates the Bible through the worship point of the compass, which includes Bible Study. From the tone of the entire interview, Church A uses the Bible in everything they do since everything from Navigating people to God, Engaging, Serving, and Worshipping is done through a biblical worldview. In terms of the importance of a biblical worldview, Church A, according to Pastor A, believes in going back to Gods word and having a biblical worldview since it is easy to steep back into tradition. Having a biblical worldview gives Church A an opportunity to deal with any issue that comes up through studying the whole narrative of scripture.

In terms of areas related to a biblical worldview, Church A, according to Pastor A, believes in having a correct picture of God, since that picture impacts how one interacts with the world around them. Also, Pastor A believes in placing the Bible above culture and having the right biblical perspective. Thus, having the correct biblical worldview is important when it comes to not only believing a set of facts and values, but living it out on a daily basis in front of others. This is where humility comes in since having humility in terms of service towards others is part of a biblical worldview and walking in that humility towards others is important when it comes to living out that biblical worldview.

Second, in terms of incorporating a biblical worldview in terms of evangelism and discipleship, Church B incorporates the Bible through ministry programs, such as Sunday School. According to Pastor B, a biblical worldview has to have its basis in scripture since it helps people answer the basic issues that people face today. This is further divided into two categories, “general and special revelation,” since Church B goes out training people according to this biblical worldview through making disciples and evangelism according to both the Bible

and how they view the world, which is the lens in which everything in culture is seen, interpreted and evaluated according to God's truth. This includes abiding in Christ, walking in Christ, and being conformed to Christ since a biblical worldview is becoming more and more like Christ, and thus, walking out one's faith and fulfill the great commission.

Third, Pastor C in Church C views a biblical worldview, or the Bible, as a lens, or how things are perceived in the world. Like other churches in the study, Church C believes in the inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of scripture, and that the Bible is the foundation since it is rooted in Christ. Thus, the Bible is seen as the lens in which one views all aspects of the world through a biblical worldview (this includes discipleship and evangelism). Government is the main area in which Church C uses the Bible in terms of Evangelism and Discipleship since people are to "occupy" in their spheres of influence. This includes voting based on biblical values and morals.

When it comes to Spiritual Growth in terms of incorporating the Bible, Pastor C in Church C uses the "Parable of the Sower" to illustrate how one is sown as a seed in terms of spiritual growth. When looking into the word, it is like a mirror, in the sense that we have the right picture of God and our relationship to Him, this incurs spiritual growth due to Christ being revealed in the world. As one grows in maturity, one begins to value having a biblical worldview to the point of developing a biblical foundation and counting the cost of discipleship. This includes being able to spot the real from the fake in terms of knowing the Bible and living according to its truth claims.

Fourth, Church D, like Church C and the rest of the churches believes in the inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of scripture. Pastor D, of Church D, in the interview explained how his church was weak when it comes to implementing the authority of scripture (even though they

believed in it) since the authority of scripture determines a biblical worldview and faith and helps set the tone for evangelism and discipleship in the church overall. Church D incorporates the Bible in all of its program, and they believe in the authority of scripture and do their best to implement it in their church, even though many in the church currently disregard it at times.

Pastor D believes that in full obedience to Gods word since it is the underpinning of a biblical worldview. Thus, Pastor D, of Church D, do their best to teach all facets of the word of God since culture seems to be winning the battle in the church. Pastor D expounds on the need for biblical literacy since it is at an all-time low in the Assemblies of God and is extremely important for spiritual growth and the great commission. Pastor D teaches the Bible in a “holistic approach” so that people can go about the great commission, engage the culture, and know truth from deception as stated earlier. This includes knowing how to deal with “fads” and opposing truth claims.

Fifth, Church E incorporates the Bible in terms of discipleship and evangelism through their culture code, preaching and teaching the word, and through their leadership. Pastor E defines a biblical worldview as allowing the word of God to be the filter and the final say in everything since one’s beliefs and actions should be rooted in God’s word as the final authority. Pastor E elaborates on the importance of a biblical worldview since one should influence culture with the word of God and Christ-centered values. According to Pastor E, one should be the Christ-centered solution to the culture in the world today and this is framed through being counter-cultural.

Pastor E also brings up the need for one’s actions and beliefs to be connected and he bases this off of 1 Timothy 4. Pastor E elaborates on hypocrisy since people have to be faithful representations of Jesus in a hypocritical church. Thus, Pastor E believes that people must live

and act like Jesus in order to avoid being a lousy PR firm for Jesus. In terms of incorporating the Bible, Pastor E brought up that there has to be consistency in what is taught throughout his church, whether small groups, preaching on Sundays, or leading a team. The common phrase Pastor E uses is “in essential, unity, in non-essentials, liberty, and all things charity.” Thus, Pastor E uses the Bible and protects essential doctrine (such as the trinity, deity of Christ, and so on) and make sure that the church is being taught Gods word in its accuracy.

Sixth, Pastor F, in Church F, incorporates the Bible using a cultural engagement method since he believes that having a poor biblical worldview is to be completely isolated from culture. Thus, Pastor F encourages people to be engaged with the culture in order to advance the gospel and advance a biblical worldview. Pastor F defines a biblical worldview as answering the questions that pertain to life and reality. Pastor F goes further by saying that the Bible answers all the important questions, and provides a firm foundation to where we came from, and who we were created by, man’s purpose, what is wrong with the world and other questions, and the gospel, which can solve this problem. This, according to Pastor F, gives him and his church, the lens to evaluate different issues that come up, such as government and morality, and helps his congregation reach the lost for Christ through this lens.

Seventh, Pastor G in Church G, incorporates the Bible in their church through a biblical worldview, as defined, as understanding the world one lives in through biblical principles and scripture. Pastor G emphasizes that having a biblical worldview is important to reaching the lost, helping those in sin, and those who want to know Jesus and Church G does what it can to help reach them for the glory of God and counsel them in the word. In terms of spiritual growth, Pastor G believes that a biblical worldview affects everything that Christians do since it is a guide. It is all meshed in knowing Gods word and living it out as followers of Jesus.

Pastor G elaborates further that one cannot develop spiritually without a biblical worldview so Church G uses the Bible to help people develop a Biblical worldview through various ministries of the church, since it is important to know the truth through scripture alone. Church G according to Pastor G further incorporates the Bible through relationship with others in the church through leadership and one on one discipleship (something that Pastor G does). Thus, Church G teaches its congregation to “know the truth, and know what the truth is” through reading and studying the Bible.

Lastly, Church H, according to Pastor H, incorporates the Bible in terms of living your life based on values taught in the Bible. A proper Christian worldview would stay in tune with Him since if one allows the Holy Spirit and the Bible to make the deciding factors, then one’s biblical worldview will help one’s spiritual growth. Thus, Pastor H believes that a biblical worldview helps one understand the “plan of God” and the “timing of God” since understanding the Plan of God will help one act biblically in terms of any area of reality. Pastor H further suggests that a big part of the biblical worldview is to fulfill the great commission “every day of the week” while holding the Bible, God and Jesus as the sole authority on matters.

In terms of applying the Bible, Pastor H believes that it is important to apply these values since part of having a biblical worldview is making disciples or reproducing disciples (the mission and vision of the church). Thus, Church H instills the Bible early through children’s, youth and even adult ministry. Church H also produces white papers for people to read on Biblical topics so that the church can be well informed on different topics. The church actually uses Matthew 18 to keep everyone in the church in check on biblical matters.

### ***Research Question 3: Leadership***

First, Pastor A in Church A states that they mainly try to develop a core group of volunteers and not necessarily paid staff. This all coincides with the mission and vision of the church and how the church incorporates the Bible. Church A has adopted “C. Academy” which is a two-year leadership journey that helps people develop their skills and gifts and help them develop their overall leadership. Even with the overall staff, the worldview of connecting with others and honoring others is communicated with the staff so C. Academy is using the same techniques to help push volunteer leaders and non-paid leaders to do their job.

Second, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor B in Church B states that part of developing leaders is developing disciples of Jesus Christ with a biblical theology of leadership. Pastor B expounds on this by implementing servant leadership since the Christian leader is the one who knows where Christ is going as Paul told the Corinthians to “Follow me as I follow Christ.” Thus, part of being a Christian leader is being conformed to the image of Christ and walking in the footsteps of Christ (funneling different theories of leadership to this model). The result of that is that leaders who are committed to the truth of God’s word and as a result, living the way Christ lives and are influencing the members to follow Christ as well.

Third, Pastor C in Church C as well as Pastor D in Church D both see the role of leaders as not just attaining to vocational ministry but those who are in the church as well. In Church C, Pastor C states that the senior pastor has developed a curriculum for leaders that cover many basic elements of the faith. The founding pastor of the church has a bible study on Wednesday nights that equip leaders in the church, and Church C has an entire platform in which leaders can grow in Christ since it is all based on biblical principles and living by the word. The result of leadership development according to a biblical worldview in Church C is discipleship

multiplication since Church C is helping them grow in their relationship with Christ. Thus, Church C begins to grow and expand when leaders multiply leaders, in turn multiply disciples.

Both Pastor C and Pastor D in their respective churches use the passage in Ephesians where God calls pastors, prophets, teachers and evangelists to do their work to equip people for the ministry. Pastor D in Church D goes a step further by stating that all in the church (who believe in Christ) are Saints who are called to ministry (in and out of the church) using their gifts. Thus, part of the multiplication process in Church C according to Pastor C is getting people out of their seat so they can be lights to the community. People are commissioned by Pastor C and the rest of the staff through a biblical worldview to go out and reach people as leaders (No results from Pastor D were mentioned in his current church, but the discipleship programs in his last church helped equip saints to be in leadership positions).

Fourth, in terms of leadership development in the church, Pastor E in Church E models his leadership strategy on Jethro's advice to Moses (Jethro told Moses to divide up the people into several leaders to deal with the issue). This is the strategy that Church E uses in leadership since Pastor E appoints leaders and commissions them to lead different teams using a biblical worldview, which is intended to help leaders reproduce leaders and helping people follow their leadership as they follow Christ, through servant leadership and gospel-centered preaching (small group and church attendance is a must). Pastor E has a monthly leadership huddle with his leaders and they go over practical and operational things with them along with leadership skills that are rooted in a biblical worldview. Pastor E also uses a personality profile to identify and equip leaders with their gifts and skills, which helps Pastor E see their process and how they communicate (through the huddles and mentoring).

Fifth, in terms of leadership development, Pastor F, in Church F, as well as the rest of the staff, train leaders using a different number of pathways since they are a plural elder-led church (Pastor F is in charge of two of those). In the first pathway, Pastor F uses books and the Bible to help them navigate the process of becoming a pastor or an elder. This includes theological training. The second pathway deals with people just wanting to be leaders and the pastors at Church F help them lead small groups, different areas of the church, and help them interact with others with the gospel of Christ. Thus, potential leaders are given the Bible as instruction on how to be leaders and Pastor F and the rest of the staff helps answer any questions and facilitate their growth along the way (According to Pastor F, this has been fruitful over the years in the church so the results for leadership development have been positive).

Sixth, in terms of leadership development, Pastor G in church G believes in “one on one” leadership training by pairing “an older person with a younger person” and facilitating that growth through relationships since it involves a position of leadership. This includes youth development since youth pastors are to lead the youth to eventually become future leaders and Christ followers. When it comes to results, Pastor G points out the church tends to take on the attitude of the leadership since if the leadership is lackadaisical, then the church will be lackadaisical, if the leadership is evangelistic, then the church is evangelistic. Giving this response, the effect of the leadership at Church G must have contributed to the results in the congregation (RQ4).

Lastly, Pastor H, in Church H, believes in having a watchful eye towards his leaders in terms of their talents, spiritual gifts and Gods work in their life. This is to make sure that all leaders constantly possess a biblical worldview since Pastor H makes sure that the church is not destroyed by a lack of biblical worldview in the leadership. The requirements for leadership in



Church H are that they agree with the church constitution, with the leaders and are using scripture as the basis for their lives. In terms of strategy, Pastor H, believes in the power of unity since (using Blackaby's model) he believes that everyone should come to a consensus in order to make any decision. Due to the unity of the leaders in terms of a biblical worldview, this has helped the church overall be in unity in terms of a Christian worldview (since they use the Matthew 18 principle to stay biblically grounded).

***Research Question 4: Congregation***

First, in terms of the congregation, Church A through their mission and vision develop the worldview of the congregation through the four sides of the compass (navigate, engage, serve and worship). The main strategy according to Pastor A is to help people have the right view of God and the right perspective, so they can interact with both God and each other well. The focus is on humbly serving one another in love since how one interacts with God determines how one interacts with others according to the great commission. Thus, training people with a biblical worldview helped spur humble interactions with others since it helps people wash each other's feet, meeting people where they are at, going after the marginalized, and other acts of helping others. The result of the convicted felon baptizing the district attorney after her worldview changed during rooted helped further this aspect of worldview development (this is one in hundreds of stories that Pastor A could tell).

In terms of leadership role, he has been overseeing the discipleship processes and pathways for the entire organization of Church A. He has helped with "Rooted," which helps further the biblical worldview of the church (as defined in this section). Pastor A's main job is to create experiences that help people in the congregation develop a biblical worldview and to develop a biblical narrative and see how it interacts with their story (this includes one-on-one

discipleship). When it comes to defending the congregation against other truth claims, Pastor A believes in helping the congregation delve into the word of God without confirmation bias and helping them develop their own faith through close communion with God and bible reading and prayer. The lunch with the unnamed person serves as an example of how Pastor A helped point someone to the Bible and helped them develop a biblical perspective.

Second, Pastor B of Church B reiterated the anchor of scripture that defines a biblical worldview since he believes in conforming people to Christ and addressing any issue with the Bible, including cultural issues. Truth also plays a role in how Pastor B disciples the worldview of Church B since Church B believes in teaching biblical doctrine and not watering down the message. This includes constructing the framework of a biblical worldview through laying the biblical foundation of inerrancy and infallibility and helping people apply Gods word so they can mature in Christ. In terms of the great commission, Pastor B believes that this is the purpose of Christians, for evangelism and discipleship. When Christians discover their purpose through the word of God, then they can develop a biblical view of the world and reach people for the glory of God (regardless of profession). The results have been positive since Pastor B has seen both leaders and members of the church walk with Christ, fulfill the great commission in their lives, and invest/participate in the work of the church (helping the leaders fulfill their duties).

Third, Pastor C of Church C said that the word and prayer is incorporated in everything we do. Thus, everything Church C does is in Spirit and in truth since it is like watering the seed. Pastor C states that even though their mission is to make disciples, they actually do not “make disciples” since in everything they do, they water the seed and help people grow spiritually (in terms of being Christ-like). Therefore, Church C does whatever they can through small group

meeting, Sunday morning gathering, and coffee visits to help people become more Christ like, in order to plant the seed (even though it is not a guarantee that it will happen).

In terms of the worldview lens, Church C encourages its people to see through a biblical lens, especially when it comes to government. This includes occupying and doing the work of the kingdom on earth, regardless of profession. Pastor C notes that his church is very involved in culture, especially politically culture, and that he encourages people to “see their job” differently (through Mark 16:15-18) since God is using them to advance the kingdom. This eliminates the perception that it is only the pastor that does the work of the ministry.

In terms of culture, Pastor C believes in being “counter-cultural,” meaning, being Christ’s ambassadors and participating in the kingdom through a word-centered mindset. Pastor C uses the counterfeit method when it comes to dealing with opposing truth claims and this involves studying the truth so that one can easily see falsehood. This helps one be rooted and grounded in the culture of the kingdom and the word of God. Of course, Pastor C emphasizes again that they cannot “make disciples” but they emphasize God’s word and applying God’s word in terms of being a true devoted disciple of Christ so that people can participate in the kingdom. This will help them stand firm in Christ under pressure from the world.

In terms of the strategy, Church C strives for people to have an encounter with the Lord, discover the word, discover their purpose, to connect with Jesus, to connect with each other, in community, and make a difference. The goal of the service is to make sure that the preaching is geared towards teaching God’s word so that people can be grounded in God’s word. The goal is to not have a bunch of programs, but to connect people to Christ and their mission in every way. The results, according to Pastor C, have been fruitful since he has seen the fruit, especially since there are people in his church occupying in different spheres of influence and people have been

growing in God and in their faith. The results from previous years in ministry can also attest to this since many of the young adults he ministered to have been fulfilling the great commission in their vocations and having that biblical worldview.

Fourth, Pastor D of Church D equips the congregation through holistic teaching and through small groups and other ministries. Whether through Ignite, Equip or REACH ministries, Pastor D and his staff helps the congregation evangelize the world and make disciples through the ministries of the church. As stated before, these ministries are designed to take someone who knows nothing and help them come out on the other end rooted and grounded and plugged into ministry. The goal is to get them baptized (in water and in the Holy Spirit) and get them in the word of God.

The main way Pastor D develops people according to a biblical worldview is the preaching and teaching ministry of the church, which involves connecting the Bible to the application of it. A holistic approach is given by helping people see how the Bible deals with various aspects of life, such as finances, marriage, and other aspects. Pastor D allows the Bible to inform all answers to various questions that arise in society from the pulpit, since the Bible is the sole authority. Thus, the goal of Pastor D's ministry is not to take a lofty approach but to see how the Bible connects with everyday living.

When it comes to the congregation, Pastor D believes in discipleship through small groups being the main pathway to dealing with the opposing voices. Pastor D challenges his church to look at the "character" of the speakers they listen to, filter everything according to the word of God and to be discerning when it comes to God's word. Also, Pastor D helps develop their biblical worldview by seeing that people are lost, not unchurched, and that Christ is the only way to avoid judgement. Thus, the motivation is not to get people in church but to help people be

transformed from darkness to light. Thus, Pastor D not only helped people get saved but helps people be obedient to God in everything they do.

When it comes to the results, Pastor D mainly talked about his experience from a previous church he pastored since he had success with discipling and getting people saved and these people ended up getting plugged into ministry. The results in Church D were not given, but through his experience he has seen biblical worldview take shape, including accountability in God's word, breaking of bread, small groups, teaching ministry, and meeting the needs through the apostle's doctrine. The only negative result was the younger generation, which is covered in the next section.

Fifth, in terms of spiritual development, Pastor E, of Church E, shapes his people through Christ and the gospel. Everything they do is based on Jesus Christ since people are to follow the apostle's doctrine and teaching. Thus, the whole focus is to help people see Christ's love and grace see themselves in the story of Jesus. When people see Jesus "in context" of those stories, then people can see their need for transformation and see that there is hope for them.

When it comes to the methodology, Pastor E believes in grace and truth since Jesus modeled that with the woman caught in adultery. Pastor E believes in discipling the congregation with this biblical worldview based on God and his word since Church E is going to love them where they are at, but not leave them where they are at. In terms of cultural influences and opposing truth claims, Pastor E and Church E believes in emphasis and consistency in word and deed. This means being confrontational with the gospel and making sure that the truth is taught. Pastor E emphasizes in Church E that people should minimize cultural influences and maximize spiritual. This way, people can avoid the losing battle of culture. Pastor E believes in making sure that everything from teaching to small groups that the word of God is taught and that there

is agreement in the church when it comes to doctrinal positions. However, Pastor E is patient with people who come from different church backgrounds so they can be exposed to the truth.

When it comes to the great commission, Pastor E believes in modeling evangelism with the congregation (through his example at Starbucks). Modeling evangelism for the congregation, according to Pastor E, helps the rest of the congregation see their need to go out and do the great commission. When evangelism is modeled from the pulpit according to Pastor E, people will see the urgency of soul winning in their lives. A tangible result of that is when Pastor E evangelized while working at IT bi-vocationally for several years and five to six coworkers came to his church as a result.

When it comes to the results of worldview development in Church E, Pastor E noted that his strategy has “brought about healthier believers which in turn produces a healthier world.” Pastor E has seen people go from spiritual unhealthy to a certain degree and when they are exposed to God’s word, they become healthy in all areas. When this happens, it had a “domino effect” since the kids and teens are better (when transformation happens) and healthy churches and families came as result. When the word of God is taught and the leaders do what they need to do, then the multiplication experience can happen.

Sixth, in terms of spiritual development, Church F helps establish a biblical worldview in the lives of their congregation through helping people answer the basic questions about life and reality through how Christ sees the world (through the authority and sufficiency of the Bible). Whether it is through preaching or any other method, Pastor F believes in the importance of knowing that all the answers related to life are found in God’s word. This includes the relevant cultural issues that people face today. Thus, Pastor F and Church F believes in reading, studying,

memorizing, meditating and applying the bible so that people can see all of the answers in the Bible and being able to live that out.

In terms of culture and opposing truth claims, Pastor F and Church F believes in their congregation being an “outpost” (instead of a refuge) to train people to go on the frontlines of culture and influence it for Christ. Pastor F trains his congregation through being in the culture and showing the way to answer the tough cultural issues with a biblical worldview. This includes dealing with opposing truth claims and Pastor F and Church F does through elder supervision. The goal of Church F in terms of culture is to help its congregation engage culture and different worldviews through going in and out and engaging culture (This, according to Pastor F, is the only way to instill a biblical worldview).

In terms of the great commission, Pastor F states that having a biblical worldview means “knowing that the only hope people have is Jesus and knowing that hope means one is going to make disciples.” This means more than just walking down an isle and being converted since it is all about discipleship and presenting one mature in Christ according to the gospel. In terms of tangible results from Church F in terms of the congregation, many of the college students that graduated used their biblical worldview formed during their time in Church F to go to the Greater Boston area and bring the gospel to that part of town. Pastor F’s hope is that this positive development in his church spreads to where the rest of the church will follow suit in this way. Pastor F mentions that a biblical worldview has been evidently formed due to the trickle-down effect of the ministry of the church so the results have been positive.

Seventh, in terms of spiritual development, Pastor G, of Church G, disciples people according to their own biblical worldview through bible study groups, corporate and private worship. Pastor G does a lot of his discipleship one on one with people, through biblical

counseling, through prayer, through bible study and through encouragement. Since Church G is mentoring and discipling people with the word of God, Pastor G says it will affect their walk and encourage them to be a witness for others (due to the mission of their church) since people have the proper hermeneutics to interpret Gods word in light of cultural challenges. This includes being exposed to God's truth since truth is found in Christ and truth is the safeguard against opposing truth claims and culture.

In terms of the great commission, Pastor G believes in the Matthew passage which states to "go into all the world to Jerusalem, to Judea and to the uttermost parts of the world." This involves participating in the mission, regardless if its tithing in local missionaries or reaching people on the byways or in every sphere of life (Pastor G and the staff help one do just that). In terms of results, Pastor G boils it down to salvation and glory to God since the main thing they are called to do is to help people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus and to give him honor. Pastor G has seen salvations through one-on-one evangelism, people inviting others to the church through witnessing, and through programs such as Vacation Bible School and Bible Boot Camp. The results regarding counseling and one on one discipleship by Pastor G are also given in the interview as well.

Lastly, Pastor H, of Church H, establishes the biblical worldview through relationships in the church. It is about building relationships and being vulnerable, to grow, to talk about things we struggle with. Pastor H mentions an example of mental health since he believes that the church should help those who struggle with mental health and allow them to talk about their struggles (thus keeping things under a biblical worldview). Through relationships, the church can lay out a path to help people find Jesus since the key is to build relationships with others through small groups and other ministries of the church to keep people disciplined in Christ and on the path



that Christ wants them to follow (recognizing that Christ is the solution to any problem that ones have).

When it comes to culture and opposing truth claims, Pastor H and Church H, unlike some of the other churches, believes in using culture as the strategy in getting the word of God to people. The message is adapted to the culture but the message remains the same, which is the word of God. As mentioned earlier, Pastor H and his staff at Church H creates white papers on different topics and a Matthew 18 system where people can be grounded in the word against opposing truth claims. Pastor H has had to adapt to COVID since more people, according to the pastor, have been wanting to watch church online rather than attend in person. In his church, Pastor H has had to address the issue of alcohol excess since that has changed in culture over time.

Overall, Church H and Pastor H believe in the authority of scripture so to further a biblical worldview in their church, and helping people through the great commission teach people about Jesus under the authority of the Bible. People have to build relationships based on trust through an everyday lifestyle of the great commission for people to see their need for Christ. It starts with the authority of Jesus and the scriptures which point to the great commission and ones need for a savior. When it comes to results in Church H, Pastor H notes that there is a core group of leaders who possess a biblical worldview and their ministry reach has expanded through kingdom growth. Through an outreach program (love your neighbor), they have seen tangible results from that. Their church has had a positive influence in the community, especially in the political and educational arenas, so the community has been impacted by a biblical worldview and Christian values.

***Research Question 5: Younger Generations***

First, Church A and Pastor A believes in humble honesty or authenticity when it comes to reaching the younger generation with a biblical worldview. This is because the younger generation, according to Pastor A, wants to live their own truth out of a desire for authenticity. Church A and Pastor A believes in being humble with them (not a jerk) and letting them know they have messed up before when someone of the younger generation messes up in the church. As a pastor, Pastor A made the connection with the younger generation with conversations about how he started off in ministry and the youth ended up having similar struggles about decisions that both Pastor A and they have been making. This is to avoid being sniffed out as a fake since living an authentic life in Christ helps chip away at perceptions and breaks down barriers that the younger generation may have.

Second, Pastor B of Church B believes that one has to start young in order to lay the biblical foundation from the onset. This is because the world, the enemy, and the culture are trying to distort the minds of the younger generation early. This biblical foundation includes who they are in Christ, that they are a child of God, that they are created for a purpose, and they are to walk in God's word as Gods workmanship, living according to God's love and truth. In terms of children and youth development, Pastor B believes in talking to them while building a biblical foundation since they are being bombarded by things that were not around years ago for children. This means installing a biblical worldview so they can answer any question and be able to take any issue and see it through a biblical lens, including their purpose and how God views them as a person.

Third, in terms of the younger generation, Pastor C, of Church C, believes in partnering with parents when it comes to reaching the next generation. This is to equip them to help the

young people have that biblical worldview and biblical foundation. Pastor C discussed having youth services a week back in his early days of youth ministry. However, once a week time in the church usually does not work so partnering with parents is the main way Pastor C equips the younger generations with a biblical worldview since they are around their parents more. He helps lead their kids in the word, in devotionals, in communion, and for all members of the family to receive biblical education so the church can have a trickle-down effect with the younger generation. This is done through resources so that parents have all they need to disciple their kids (this includes subjects like purity) and due to the results in the previous section, the fruit has been there.

Fourth, Pastor D of Church D has had little documented success (as far as the interview) so far when it comes to reaching the younger generations in his church due to the generation gaps are indeed seen and the indoctrination in the schools overmatching the once-a-week instruction in the church. Pastor D does not have a “silver bullet” when it comes to addressing this issue since it is a losing battle and many of them do not have a biblical worldview. Thus, with the attempt to deconstruct the younger generation in the public schools and the one-week instruction in church, this is a losing battle according to Pastor D even though Pastor D in the congregation does his best to instill a biblical worldview through different ministries and teaching.

Fifth, Pastor E, of Church E, uses Matthew 13:52 to illustrate that the message of grace and truth does not change, but the method does as each generation moves along. According to Pastor E, it is important to speak their language, or speak to them in a way that resonates with them without compromising the message. Thus, what Pastor E says to the adults, the student

ministries director may say it another way to the students in order to reach them at their level. In essence, the main goal is to make sure that this is the worldview) that they need to embrace.

When it comes to a biblical worldview, Pastor E wants to give the younger generations a biblical picture of how young people have shaped culture overtime in the Bible. The point of these pictures that Pastor E uses is to show that the younger generations can influence their culture since these young people did the same in the Bible. They can stand out in Christ and be established in community where they are loved and affirmed for who God made them to be (to meet their needs of popularity and acceptance). This is so they can know that God has a purpose for their life and that they matter and they are loved, thus being equipped with a biblical value.

Sixth, in terms of the younger generation, Pastor F of Church F states that the youth minister of Church F has developed a six-year curriculum where youth go through a series of bucket list categories that help them establish a biblical worldview (including the Bible, truth, Jesus, cultural issues and XYZ). This is to develop a biblical worldview so that no matter what question comes up, the youth can be rooted in scripture and know how to deal with every issue. Pastor F believes that this starts early on since if a six-week course was only taught at the end of high school, it would be too late. Thus, giving them the biblical basis for the issues will help develop a biblical worldview from the early onset.

Seventh, in terms of reaching the younger generations, Pastor G helps reach young people through bible study groups and Vacation Bible School. Pastor G, of Church G, believes reaching the younger generation is through inductive bible study. This means not just feeding them pizza, taking them to camp, but getting them involved in reading and studying God's word. When Church G does this, this helps the younger generations know Gods word in a rich and true

fashion. Young people, when taught that the Bible is not just an old book, but relevant for their lives, can be further equipped in developing a biblical worldview.

Lastly, Pastor H of Church H believes reaching the younger generation is through providing for their needs (since their age for younger generations is young adults). Pastor H starts off by stating that one has to pay attention to their culture and technology since one has to accept that Facebook is for older people. For young marrieds, child care needs to be present so they can come to the meetings and they need to be able to come and grow (a parent's night out is suggested). Pastor H concludes that the younger generation wants to learn and be involved but they have time constraints and different needs. The goal is to be relevant to them so they can know that scripture is timeless and they can apply it to their needs and their culture and develop a biblical worldview (Pastor H brings up an example with his son).

### **Conclusions (Empirical)**

#### ***Introduction***

In terms of the data in Research Questions one through five, this researcher noticed a trend when it comes to affirming the Bible as the standard when it comes to a Biblical worldview and the overall way of doing church. All pastors and churches agreed to the Bible being the main standard when it comes to a biblical worldview, with one of the pastors (Pastor D) stating an apparent weakness when it comes to the execution of a biblical worldview in his church. Thus, with the current research given by Pew Forum (2021), the Bible is high on the list amongst Christians in DFW, but the execution seems to be off concerning truth since people in the area are confused about absolute truth. Thus, a biblical worldview, according to Knight (2006) and Wax (2016), points people to Christ and to truth as being absolute, and all of the pastors in the

study stressed biblical truth as being both absolute and authoritative in their church as compared to the worldview of post-modernism according to Knight (2006).

One of the pastors (Pastor C) made the comment that it is not up to them to make disciples since they cannot make it happen on their own. Averbeck (2008) states this in his journal article since the Holy Spirit is the one that forms people in community, not pastors overall. This filled in a gap when it came to how disciples are made and how people are transformed according to a biblical worldview since even with a leadership structure with impeccable character, according to Linhart (2016), the results for worldview development will vary based on person to person and from church to church. Due to the low literacy rate in that branch of the Assemblies of God according to Pastor D, Church D was weak in terms of the authority of scripture in their church despite Pastor D's repeated attempts to preach the word and help people develop a biblical worldview. It all comes down to two factors, 1) The Holy Spirit's activity through the leadership and 2) people's willingness to be transformed (Averbeck, 2008). According to Erickson (2013), it involves free agency since people have the free will to choose to serve God or not.

### ***Bible and Mission Incorporation***

In terms of the Bible's incorporation and overall worldview definition, the majority of the pastors assert that the Bible is the sole authority when it comes to how they lead their church. This falls in line with Knight (2006)'s theory of worldview development and Hiebert (2008)'s Christ-centered worldview. First, Church A expounded on how interactions with God and others changes and impacts their worldview and this exchange led to the result of the district attorney having a change of worldview. This perhaps led to axial aspects of worldview changing according to Knight (2006), since her way of seeing people according to God's word ethically

shifted when her opinion of the ex-convict changed. Churches B, G, and H generally incorporate the Bible in their activities and the results have been salvations (in Church G), and a healthy church environment that has impacted the community. This confirms Linhart's (2016) and Van Der Walt (2017)'s theory of leadership since having leaders with character (servant leadership) makes a difference in the church.

Second, Church F incorporates the Bible in terms of helping people engage culture and some of the college students Pastor F pastored ended up taking the gospel to a city that is less than three percent Christian. This affirms Carson's (2008) Christ, transformer of culture paradigms since people are to engage the culture with Christ, not move away from it. This also affirms Niemandt's (2016) missional strategy and Pettit's (2008) spiritual formation since leadership is to help equip people with the great commission, which is part of the Christian worldview. Church F also incorporates a biblical worldview to answer different worldview questions related to life and culture as McDowell (2019) notes in his book and they start early by helping young people develop their biblical training, which is what some of the other pastors (B and F) have stated concerning worldview development. Thus, the need for a biblical worldview is believed to start early in the church as some of these churches (Church B and H) have stated.

Lastly, Church E has incorporated the Bible in terms of shaping the gospel and Christ in their congregation's life, and according to Pastor E, this has produced healthier people, families, churches and societies (the goal of Linhart (2016)'s leadership paradigm) (Church H according to Pastor H and Church B according to Pastor B has had the same impact). Churches C and D incorporated both Spirit and Bible in their churches and since both Pastor C and Pastor D said (either directly or indirectly) they could not make disciples on their own, the only results for spirit-led and bible-led pastoring were that fruit was given, either at their church or a previous

church, and that people are making the right decisions based on a biblical worldview. Since their definitions of a biblical worldview was about acting on one's beliefs, the main focus of their strategy was helping people obey God's word, which helps reinforce the worldview definition provided by Griffioen (2012) as a course of action.

### ***Leadership, Congregation and Younger Generations***

In terms of leadership and development in the congregation, Linhart (2016) teaches that leaders must have solid character in order to lead their churches. Averbeck (2008) would point that out concerning church leaders since there is a connection between church leaders and those in the congregation concerning worldview development since a solid church is based on the leaders. Pastor H mentioned that if leaders do not have a Christian worldview, it would cause the church to be destroyed. Thus, for anyone, not just in education, it is important for pastors and churches to have a biblical worldview since one's values must align with Christ as Knight (2006) points out in his book. Thankfully, this is the worldview of all of the churches presented in the study.

Pastors C and D state that leaders do not make disciples on their own but plant the seed since the line between leadership and development in the congregation is relational, not causal, and God is the main one helping develop a person's biblical worldview. Powell and Clark (2011) and Averbeck (2008) would point out that discipleship is formed through relationships, and through these relationships, a personal encounter with God is formed, which is the basis of Gibson (2004) and Pastor C's definition of biblical worldview. Thus, all the pastor's, especially Pastor H, believe that discipleship takes relationships, since every pastor stress authenticity and servant leadership, to lead like Christ and to multiply disciples (Pastors C, E, H) so that leaders can in turn produce servant leaders (as Pastor B mentions), and a biblical



worldview that helps one see not only scripture, but how to view the world through scripture (as all the pastors mention).

Lastly, in terms of reaching the next generation, this would be defined as Millennials or Gen Z, which are the two youngest generations today. Barna (2017) stats show that very few (4 percent) of believers who are millennials or generation Z have a biblical worldview and the number is slightly higher for younger adults (7-17%) (Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018). Pastor A stresses the importance of authenticity since many in Generation Z can spot hypocrisy in an instant and they want to live out their own truth. Other Pastors in the study (Pastors C, E, and F) believe they all want to learn, but they need to be in an environment where they can feel accepted and be authentic.

Chiroma (2015) and Dunn (2001) in their work believe that Generation Z desires authenticity so they need to be paced according to their emotions and feelings so the development process can take shape. Van Der Walt (2017), Dunn (2001) and Chiroma (2015) along with all the Pastors in the study believe there needs to be worldview development with the young adult, it just needs to be according to their needs as Pastors E, G and H point out in the study. Thus, the overall empirical literature works hand in hand with the results of the study concerning young people since it needs to be where they are at (Pastors A, E, G, H) and for them to feel right at home and accepted so they can learn the truth and live by the truth (Pastors A, E).

Overall, the study contributed new empirical information to the topic of worldview development in the church since the focus is on the church overall helping people see the world through a biblical foundation, not just laying the biblical foundation for discipleship. Since the biblical worldview as defined by each of the pastors helped shape the worldview of those in their congregation, the biblical worldview of acting on one's faith (overall definition from Pastors A

through H) has been raised to importance in the church since less than 7-10 percent of people have a biblical worldview (Barna, 2017; Foley, 2017; Morrow, 2018).

Each of the pastors raised cultural issues, issues related to the younger generations, strategies on how to protect and grow people in the truth, and tangible results. For example, Pastor D raised the importance of small groups, accountability, holistic teaching, God-centered theological messages, the lack of time with young adults, and using ministries to help equip people for evangelism and discipleship. This lack of time with the younger generation has also been raised by Pastor B, C, D, and H since their solution is to bring people up early in the Christian walk, in order to avoid having to shove an entire curriculum as adults, and has led to better results. Pastors B and H furthers this through relationships in their churches. These are not new strategies, but some that has been raised by several of the churches to deal with the issue of worldview development with younger people versus older people.

## **Conclusions (Theoretical)**

### ***Main Theories***

When it comes to the different theories concerning worldview development, the two theories that govern the study is Hiebert's (2008) and Knight's (2006) theories on worldview formation. Hiebert (2008) lays out the details of what different cultures and worldviews look like and details the Christian worldview, which is based on Christ and the Bible. Pastor F when answering the culture question in the interview stated that one needs to engage the culture in order to properly evangelize the culture and disciple the culture. According to Hiebert (2008), this involves understanding the different cultures and relating those cultures with a biblical worldview.

Knight (2006)'s and Sire's (2004) theory on worldview development involves answering the basic worldview questions and aspects that govern a biblical worldview, including creation, the fall of man, and the restoration of man through Christ as well as "What is life? What does it mean to be human? What is right and wrong?" (p. 20-21) The pastors in the churches in the study focused on these questions, including talking about relevant life issues such as the sanctity of life (Pastor G), cultural issues (Pastor D, F) and humility (how to treat other people) (Pastors A, B, E) and even the newspaper (Pastor B). Thus, Knight (2006) and Hiebert (2008) both diverge and complement the findings of the study since the study linked to the basic questions and cultural issues that relate to a biblical worldview.

### ***Church and Developmental Theories***

In terms of the church, several theories related to the church help foster the development of people underneath church leadership. *Total Church* by Chester and Timmis (2008) and *Sticky Faith* by Powell and Clark (2011). illustrate the need for gospel-centered, Christ-centered teaching that results in community evangelism and discipleship. This is the same model that virtually all the pastors use since they use community in the church (example-Pastor H containing truth in the congregation through Matthew 18 and relationships in the church) through ministries (such as equip in Church D) and relationships in order to help develop that biblical worldview and help people participate in the great commission.

From children to adults, each pastor used community in order to instill discipleship and evangelism (as Chester and Timmis (2008) alludes to), whether through modeling evangelism as Pastor E does, or through the preaching and teaching of the church as almost all the pastors do in their churches. Sanchez (2012), Tripp (2012) and Spurgeon (2005) illustrates in their works how the pastor is to use faith and to have healthy pastoral ministry in order to have a healthy church

that has a healthy worldview. This is the conclusion Pastors C, E and G gives when it comes to the results of good leadership since good leadership leads to multiplication of disciples (Pastor C), healthier churches, families and communities (Pastors B, E and H), and a reflection of the congregation (Pastor G).

In terms of *Sticky Faith* by Powell and Clark (2011), many of the pastors emphasized relating to young people at their level and at their needs through relationships in order to build a biblical worldview. Much of what some of the pastors (A and F) define as a biblical worldview stem from how to relate to people since humility and reaching culture is paramount. Pastors B and H do a good job of using these “sticky relationships” in order to help people grow in their faith and build the accountability that Pastor D desired for his church (2011, table of contents). This, according to Smith (2009)’s theory on worldview development, helps people consume the right biblical truth and in turn change their desires and their form of worship to God. This, according to Wallace and McDowell (2019), helps people form the right relationships, which in turn forms the right values, and then, the right actions.

Lastly, in terms of actual worldview development, the churches did not talk much about worldview development as a stage like Kohlberg (2014) and Fowler did in their stages of development (Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995). Rather, many of the pastors focused on children, teens and adults when it comes to developing a biblical worldview since Pastors B and H stated that children and teens need to be taught and interacted with so the biblical worldview can be established early. Much of the stages that Kohlberg (2014), Gibson (2004) and Wilhoit and Dettoni (1995) discuss can apply to anyone on the spectrum, whether spiritual or physical development. Each of the pastors in the study mention different aspect of a biblical worldview in

terms of the story, culture, and questions that Knight (2006) and Sire (2004) mentions that bring hope that people are growing in Christ.

### *Study as New Theory*

Since this study was a general study of how worldview development impacted spiritual development in the churches, a new theory was not necessarily introduced. However, each of the perspectives by each of the pastors serves as a new theory in how each with their biblical worldview help develop everyone according to a biblical worldview and the tangible results that have been given as a result. Each of the questions in the interview helped give the overall pieces of the puzzle when it comes to how each of the pastor's views worldview development either practical or theoretical in their church. For instance, Pastors F and G's church are both based on the great commission, discipleship, and evangelism, and the worldview they use is solely based on scripture and how the Bible interprets seeing the world around them, including cultural issues such as sexual identity and abortion. Discipleship and Evangelism (in terms of a biblical worldview) for the whole church and for kids is based on teaching the Bible, inductive bible study, and helping people be equipped with the gospel of Christ to fully engage the culture and every issue related to the world.

### **Implications (Empirical)**

From the empirical data, one can conclude that having a biblical worldview is much needed in the church and for Christians as well. Even though the data is a couple years old, the newer data that has come out has shown that very few people in church (nine percent) have a biblical worldview, which is concerning since having a biblical worldview helps one grow in their faith in Christ (Barna, 2017; Shepherd, 2021, paragraph one). From the data collected by the different pastors, instilling a biblical worldview has led to mixed results, given the fact that

pastors can only lead through influence, and they can only plant the seed. Since the Parable of the Sower was used by Pastor C to illustrate how a seed is planted, it is up to the condition of the heart whether or not that worldview gets planted.

The data given by all the pastors show that there have been positive results for worldview development in the church since it has produced a healthier church and a healthier community. However, the lone negative data from Church D shows that the need for a biblical worldview is still important, even though Pastor D's church was weak concerning living out the Bible. Thus, even with a weak execution in the church, the need for a biblical worldview has concluded to be important, so that people can have a worldview that is a course of action as Griffioen (2012) states. From looking at the data alone, one can conclude that the pastor's perceived impact on worldview development has been positive for the most part, thus raising the importance of a biblical worldview, even with the lone exception.

Further implications show that there is a connection between the leadership of the church overall and the worldview of the entire church. If the leadership is doing their part in instilling a biblical worldview in their congregation, then eventually, people in their congregation will follow suit as Linhart (2016) mentions. Again, it goes back to the parable of the Sower since it depends on whether or not a person's heart is willing to grow in Christ, but if pastors do their part in modeling evangelism and discipleship (as Pastor E does), then the rest of the congregation can follow suit. It all depends on whether or not the pastor does a good job in servant leadership (Church B) so that disciples can eventually be multiplied (Church C, E, H) and eventually, the church can be a living organism. But as Pastor C indicates, pastors cannot make disciples on their own. What they can do is lead the way so that people can trust their leadership, build healthy relationships and grow as a result.

Linhart's (2016) work on pastoral leadership helps bridge the gap when it comes to both leaders and the rest of the congregation. Most of the pastors in the study indicate that having qualified, strong leadership in the church will help set the example for others to follow in the church (2016). The goal of leadership, according to Pastors B, C, D, E and H is to multiply leaders in the community so that everyone will lead like Jesus and people will follow a biblical worldview as a result. From many different leadership studies, one knows that multiplying leaders is something that almost every church does, whether good or bad. But developing a biblical worldview in leadership through biblical training as all the pastors have noted will help the rest of the congregation follow suit (2016).

It does not always happen for everyone (as discussed earlier), but when leaders are leading the way as Pastor G talks about, the results seem to be positive. For many of the pastors, including pastors B, G, E, and H, the worldview of the church has had a far-reaching impact since those churches have had a documented impact in their communities and church in terms of discipleship and evangelism. Thus, in any church, there needs to be leadership that views the world based on the word of God and their actions follow suit in terms of a godly life and in terms of modeling the great commission as Pastor E notes. It is the way one views reality that determines how one lives in reality as Pastor B mentions so it is important that the leader's view of reality based on God's word helps shape those in the congregation, so they can in turn go and lead in their spheres of influence with a biblical worldview, which includes leading like Christ.

As stated before, worldview development in the church involves planting the seed through relationships as Pastors B, C, E, and H mention. Wallace and McDowell (2019) bring up the need for Godly relationships that produces Godly actions. Pastors' B, C, E, and H brings up the need for parents and leaders to help facilitate that biblical worldview. Ultimately, pastors can

be a guide for people, but people have to submit to Christ and follow Christ on a daily basis as Pastor G mentions. It is not something that happens on Sundays, but something that happens every day (as Pastor G also mentions). Thus, pastors need to plant the seed by helping people take ownership of their faith and worldview, and simply guide them as they trust God to help them see the world and every cultural/worldview issue through biblical eyes (and eventually reach their post-modern world for Christ). God is the one who develops and shapes a person's worldview as Averbeck (2008) mentions, and he uses pastors and other people to help mold that (as Pastor E mentions) so people can follow Christ, while having the right relationships as Wallace and McDowell (2019) state.

This study seeks to fulfill a gap in the literature by examining biblical worldview development in the local church, something that is not really talked about much in doctoral work (last time this researcher checked). There is plenty of studies on how worldview development has worked in Christian education. But as far as the church is concerned, worldview development from the leadership down is not talked about much. According to Barna (2017) and Pew Forum (2021) stats, people, especially in the DFW area, desire spiritual growth. The execution is lacking, even today, since many people are not properly disciplined today, especially with a Biblical worldview that will help them act on biblical principles, truth, and values (Church H) (2017).

### **Implications (Theoretical)**

In terms of theoretical implications, the need for worldview development as a system needs to be instituted since spiritual growth and development is not always the same as physical growth and development. Since one can grow physically and reach adulthood while being a baby Christian (KJV, 1 Peter 2:2), the idea of spiritual development can be tricky, especially since the



terms for adulthood is different spiritually than it is physically (KJV, Hebrews 5:12-6:3). Thus, while the pastors in the study did focus on starting early and developing a biblical worldview, an important detail that was left out was how biblical worldview develop relates to one's physical walk, not just one's spiritual walk. This section will explore these implications and how it relates to all the different theories when it comes to one's personal walk in Christ.

Knight (2006)'s theory of worldview development fits an educational approach since it focuses on how educators can fit the biblical worldview within any age range. This includes the elements of a worldview and how they all relate back to the Christian worldview, which includes all the questions that Christians ask (Pastor F goes into detail on this) and the different elements of the worldview story that biblical Christianity offers (2006). The tricky part when it comes to education, even in the church, is that people can know the story and believe in the values, without coming to know Christ as their Lord and Savior (Pastor H can attest to this). Thus, according to Griffioen (2012) and the pastors, it is important that the great commission aspect of a biblical worldview is established since people need to come to faith in Christ before that biblical worldview translates to fruit in their lives. Church F does a good job of this with their six-year curriculum with their young adults.

When people have given their lives over to Christ, then the never-ending process of worldview formation begins since it is both at the heart and the mind as Shultz (2013) and Smith (2009) states in their books. Thus, when one forms a person based on biblical truth as all the pastors have noted in the interviews, then people will come to know Christ, not just be converts as Pastor C states, and will begin to view the world with God's eyes and with a biblical lens and engage the world and every issue with those lenses. Of course, according to Pastor F, the biblical

worldview will look different based on different denominational beliefs, but the core truths of Christ and the Bible cannot be overstated.

Therefore, when people see the story of the Bible, from the fall to redemption as Knight (2006) and Sire (2004) bring to the table, then they can give their lives to Christ, and begin to develop their biblical worldview based on a growing understanding of God's word. They can be grounded in truth so they can combat the post-modern culture as most of the pastors in the interview (except A) state and "sanctify them in truth" (KJV, John 17:20). Sanctification according to Erickson (2013) is a life-long process, so biblical worldview development will take a lifetime as well even though one can reach maturity and begin to develop other people's biblical worldviews according to God's truth (as Pastor C mentions).

When it comes to the actual process of biblical worldview development, all the pastors through their mission and vision help people get grounded in God's word and live God's word out. Fowler's faith development and Kohlberg's moral development (along with Gibson's (2004) alternative) helps gives a picture of how people grow morally and in terms of their faith (Fowler, 1987; Wilhoit and Dettoni, 1995). Since identity and cognitive formation tend to take shape in the early to teenage years (1987), then it is important that people go from avoiding consequences to being productive members of society to obeying based on a relationship with God, not just to avoid crossing the line (1995). Since the final stage of faith development is being rooted in Christ, it is important that people see the big picture of reality based on God's word so they can frame everything and every decision based on Christ and the Bible (1987; 1995).

It all comes back to being surrendered to Christ and this is what all the pastors in the interview stated when it came to the process of worldview formation in a church (1987; 1995). When one is rooted in truth (Christ and the word of God), then one can develop their worldview

so it becomes a biblical worldview and be able to test the counterfeits from the real thing as Pastors C and F state. According to Pastors B and E, they can be Christ-focused and shaped by the Gospel of Christ, which empowers people to not only be servant leaders but servants as well. This is what happened when the district attorney in Pastor A's church had a change in worldview since it fit more of God's grace and mercy, and not based on carnal judging of people.

Lastly, when it comes to the church theories, worldview development is something that happens through community since the gospel and Christ is best shaped through community with others (Chester and Timmis, 2008). Again, since most churches do focus on the gospel and Christ in terms of spiritual formation, the idea of a biblical worldview shapes both the leadership of the church (as Pastors B, C, E and H state) and the congregation and this is done through relationships, not just through a power struggle. Thus, Pastor H has the right idea when it comes to doing discipleship based on relationships since a person's view of the world is shaped by the relationships one chooses (McDowell and Wallace, 2019).

According to McDowell and Wallace (2019), a person's relationships in turns affects one's values and eventually one's actions. Chester and Timmis (2008) and Niemandt (2016) further alludes to Church being a missional community that helps each other grow so they can in turn see the world through biblical eyes, frame their decisions and convictions, based on a biblical view of reality (most of the pastors allude to this, especially pastors B, F, G and H) and engage their world for Christ. Thus, all the pastors state that it is important to get plugged into Godly community (either through ministries, parents, and other relationships) so that a person's biblical worldview can begin to take shape, and eventually, plug people into service, and develop as Christians (2008; 2016).

### **Implications (Practical)**

In terms of a practical application of worldview development in the church, a church can easily implement a biblical worldview through biblical training as Pastor G mentions so that people can have an understanding of all the issues that are going on in the world and how to see them through biblical eyes. This includes how one views the world in terms of lost versus saved since many churches still tend to have a Christ against culture paradigm when Christ came to transform the world through the gospel and truth according to Carson (2008). Thus, when it comes to a biblical worldview, a church (according to all the pastors in the study) can teach God's word on a regular basis, have ministries that help people understand God's word and live it out. This involves helping people get plugged into the community aspect of the church according to Chester and Timmis (2008) and Powell and Clark (2011) so that they can develop healthy relationships with other believers and be rooted and grounded in God's truth according to a biblical worldview in a post-modern world (Knight, 2006; McDowell and Wallace, 2019).

Of course, the church can only do what they can since people can refuse to submit to God in every aspect of life. Everyone is still growing so one's biblical worldview is not going to be complete. But it is important for pastors and leaders and even congregation members to sow the seed of biblical truth into people's lives (as Pastor C said) so that people can know the truth, live by the truth, and view all reality based on the truth (how discipleship and evangelism tie into a biblical worldview). One pastor in the study (Pastor F) mentioned that they do not have training on apologetics, which is okay since a person's view of reality and the world, according to Knight (2006), simply needs to be bible-centered, which includes the fall and redemption of man, and how the Bible relates to the different aspects of a worldview and the different areas of viewing the world (2006).

If pastors can first help get people in the congregation saved (if they are not already), then they can develop a biblical worldview in them that will last since Christ lives in them and they can begin to see God's truth in everything they do (Pastors B and E confirms this) (Erickson, 2013; Hiebert, 2008). If they are not saved, a biblical worldview will not lead to right values and right living since it takes the Holy Spirit for people to bear fruit in their lives (John 15; Erickson, 2013). Thus, for practical purposes, a church does not need to go too deep when it comes to the different aspects of a worldview, such as epistemology and axiology, but provide the leading framework when it comes to interpreting all of reality based on God's word so they can view their world with God's eyes and reach it for Christ (including all cultural issues such as work, school and government) (Knight, 2006; Hiebert, 2008). Pastors can provide the starting point and through resources such as apologetics, practical theology, evangelism, and other resources, they can help parents and adults with a biblical worldview and help adults develop a biblical worldview be rooted and grounded in truth so they can reach the world and make disciples and frame every decision and every issue based on God's word (2006; Powell and Clark, 2011).

When it comes to the younger generations, Pastor A mentioned authenticity when seems to go well with the literature on the subject (Chiroma, 2015; Dunn, 2011). Pastor E also mentioned the same thing since younger generations need to feel accepted, included and loved so they can grow. Since the younger generations are looking for authenticity (Chiroma, 2015; Dunn, 2011), it is important that pastors be humble and be genuine with them so they can be reached at their level. Pastor H does a good job at reaching the young adults according to their needs so they can be transformed by God's word. Like what Pastors B, C, E, F, and G do with the younger generations, a curriculum to start early with them can be constructed so that young people can

start viewing the world through biblical eyes early on and reach their world for Christ. As Pastor H mentions, if one is not reached when they are kids, a biblical worldview is hard to implement. Thus, it is important that churches, as almost all the pastors have stated, have programs in place where kids and teens are familiar with the issues facing them, have biblical instruction concerning them, and be able to surrender to Christ and the Bible in every aspect. This can only be done when the leadership is doing their part to not only present a biblical worldview, but live it out as a result (Griffioen, 2012).

Lastly, biblical worldview development can also be done in Christian school settings as Long (2014) researches in her dissertation. When the truth is taught and lived out, then a biblical worldview can be developed according to Knight (2006) and Wax (2016). Since worldview training takes relationships, both with leaders, parents and with others, this can only take place when this is modeled, so a school, workplace, or church is where a biblical worldview can be modeled and practiced since as Pastors C and D state, leadership is not just for pastors, but for everyone since everyone is a leader in their own sphere of influence. Thus, when leaders lead with a biblical worldview, according to Linhart (2016), other people can eventually catch on and start to develop that biblical worldview through relationships and eventually multiply disciples and a biblical worldview. According to McDowell and Wallace (2019), this is the starting point for how a person's worldview affects their actions.

### **Research Limitations**

The main limitations that this research has is that 1) it tends to blur spiritual growth with physical growth, even though both are important, 2) there is no perfect correlation between leaders and congregation members due to free will of the congregation, and 3) the study was a

general study and did not cover the whole scope of how each church functioned, this giving more general results instead of more specific results.

Since physical and spiritual growth are often on different timelines, this research did not account for people who are adults that are baby Christians or people who are teenagers who are mature Christians. Even though a church cannot take into account when people get saved, the churches did do a good job of making sure that everyone hears the truth and gets the seed planted so they can have the opportunity to have a biblical worldview. Since all the churches emphasized both evangelism and discipleship, this is something that is going on in each church so the pastors have to prepare for different audiences. Thus, spiritual growth is something that is enforced by the pastors, but it cannot be controlled since people have to grow spiritually as a result on their own time.

Lastly, this study was a general study that focused on how each pastor went about worldview development or believed about worldview development in the church. It did not focus on exactly how it was formed in terms of every detail but the study gave an overall picture of how worldview development is important and how it impacts their churches overall. This helps those reading this dissertation understand the importance of a biblical worldview in a person's life and the church. Thus, any pastor can know how to handle God's word and help people see the world through a biblical framework and lens in terms of evangelism and discipleship.

### **Further Research**

Since this study was focused on biblical worldview development in terms of Evangelical Protestant churches that are doctrinally conservative in nature, this study only allowed pastors and churches that believed in God and the Bible so that the study will focus on a biblical worldview, not a worldview that does not view the bible as authoritative. Conducting a study

with pastors that are from more liberal leaning denominations so see how their worldview impacts how they evangelize the world will be helpful when it comes to raising the importance of a biblical worldview. Of course, no cults should be studied since they do not believe in the authority of scripture, but any set of churches from different churches (that do not compromise God's word) will potentially give a different set of information that could explain the importance of a biblical worldview even further.

Also, a mixed-methods design could also be implemented in terms of worldview development in a church since an anonymous survey can be given to see how many people in each church are equipped with a biblical worldview. Not many pastors may allow for this (which is why this was not considered for this study), but having an extra set of data may help when it comes to explaining the results on how worldview development is impacted by a church. Topics such as cultural awareness and younger generations can be explored so that the academic population in the church can further understand the need for a biblical worldview in terms of culture and in terms of the younger generations. Since there is a crisis when it comes to younger generations and a biblical worldview (Morrow, 2018), it is important that these two areas are studied so that other studies can pick up the need for a biblical worldview in the church and for the younger generations overall.

### **Summary**

The goal of the study was to evaluate the perceived impact of worldview development upon eight different evangelical protestant churches in America. Each of the pastors gave their information on the importance of a biblical worldview, how they facilitate it and the results that have occurred with leadership and the congregation. Each of the pastors stated that a biblical worldview in terms of actions, not just intellectual thought, is important when it comes to



growing spiritually and each pastor develops this worldview with their own congregation according to the truth that is found in God's word (as Pastor G mentions). The results from the study show that instilling a biblical worldview leads to more salvations, multiplication of leaders, and a healthier community and church that is well-rounded in scripture. Thus, the great commission, which is a focal point of every church in the study, is the driving force when it comes to a biblical worldview since everything from evangelism to discipleship hinges on one's view of the world and one's actions in it (Knight, 2006; Griffioen, 2012; Chester and Timmis, 2008).

The younger generation seems to be at a crisis according to the eight pastors so it is important going forward that churches learn to be authentic and help young people see the truth of God's word in a relevant way, and make it applicable to them. This is true of children and spiritual children (even those who are physical adults) according to Erickson (2013), so it is imperative that the church helps one grow in their faith, while developing their biblical worldview around Christ and the Bible (Hiebert, 2008) so that people can effectively grow spiritually and be a light to the community. Only through a biblical worldview (according to the pastors) can this be done since one's view of themselves and the world determines how they act in the world (Griffioen, 2012).

## REFERENCES

- Ackerman, J. (1994). *Spiritual awakening: A guide to spiritual life in congregations* [E-Book]. Retrieved from: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=1729301>
- Akerlund, T. (2016). "To live lives worthy of God": leadership and spiritual formation in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care.*, 9(1), 18-34. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/home/jsf>
- Akin, D. (2019). Foundational Beliefs of a Christian Worldview. [https://www.danielakin.com/wpcontent/uploads/old/Resource\\_479/Foundational%20Beliefs%20of%20a%20Christian%20Worldview%20\(Handout-Answers\).pdf](https://www.danielakin.com/wpcontent/uploads/old/Resource_479/Foundational%20Beliefs%20of%20a%20Christian%20Worldview%20(Handout-Answers).pdf)
- Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, 5(2), 1-12. ProQuest.
- Anderson, T. J., Clark, W. M., & Naugle, D. K. (2017). *An introduction to Christian worldview: Pursuing god's perspective in a pluralistic world*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Averbeck, R. E. (2008). Spirit, community, and mission: A biblical theology for spiritual formation. *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care*, 1(1), 27-53. <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/jsf> (PublisherURL); <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0001789250&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Bailey, L.F. (2014). The origin and success of qualitative research. *International Journal of Market Research* 56 (2): 167-184. <https://chip.uconn.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/1245/2019/05/Bailey-2014-The-Origin-and-Success-of-Qualitative-Research.pdf>
- Bancroft, E.J. (2014). *Recovering Churches Through Biblical Renovation* [Doctor of Ministry Thesis: Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary]. <https://sbts-wordpress-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/sbts/uploads/sites/26/2009/02/D-Min-Thesis-Proposal-Eric-Bancroft.pdf>
- Barna (2009, May 11). Many churchgoers and leaders struggle to define spiritual maturity. Retrieved from: <https://www.barna.com/research/many-churchgoers-and-faith-leaders-struggle-to-define-spiritual-maturity/>
- Barna (2015). Barna new research on the state of discipleship. <https://www.nobts.edu/discipleship/downloadabledocuments1/Barna%20New%20Research%20on%20the%20State%20of%20Discipleship.pdf>

- Barna (2017). *Barna trends 2018* [E-Book]. <https://app.wordsearchbible.com/>
- Barna (2017). Competing Worldviews Influence Today's Christians. <https://www.barna.com/research/competing-worldviews-influence-todays-christians/>
- Barna (2018). 51% of churchgoers do not know of the great commission. <https://www.barna.com/research/half-churchgoers-not-heard-great-commission/>
- Barrows, D. K. (2014). Understanding the times: A causal/comparative study of the effectiveness of a christian worldview curriculum in helping students develop a christian worldview (Order No. 3669701). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1648987975). Liberty University Scholar's Crossing.
- Bergler, T. E. (2014). *From here to maturity: Overcoming the juvenilization of american christianity*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Bonhoeffer, D. (2015). *Discipleship: readers edition*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=4396246>.
- Bradbury, J. (2013). Sticky faith. *The Christian Century*, 130 (11): 22-25. ProQuest.
- Bredfeldt, G. (2021). "Qualitative prospectus template chapter 3". Liberty University. Canvas.
- Carson, D.A. (2008). *Christ & culture revisited*. William E. Eerdsman Publishing.
- Chandler, D. (2016). *Holy Spirit and Christian formation: Multi-disciplinary perspectives*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Chester, T., & Timmis, S. (2008). *Total church: A radical reshaping around gospel and community*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Chipao, L. (2016). Church Planting and Discipleship [E-Book]. Retrieved from: <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.liberty.edu/chapter/1925403/pdf>
- Chiroma, N. (2015). The role of mentoring in adolescents' spiritual formation, *Journal of Youth and Theology*, 14(1), 72-90. doi: <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1163/24055093-01401005>
- Craft, D. (2019). What is a Worldview? Whitesburg Baptist Church. <https://www.whitesburgbaptist.org/article/what-is-a-biblical-worldview/>
- Creswell, J.W. & J.D. Creswell (2018). *Research design* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Sage.
- Davis, J.C. (2019). *An Analysis of James K. A. Smith's Theology of Christian Spiritual Formation in Light of John Frame's Triperspectivalism* [Masters Thesis: Denver Seminary].

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/555e49f1e4b0e15bc3f3ea43/t/5ccbac02b208fcd615d60f43/1556851715469/Thesis2019FinalCopy.pdf>

- De Oliveira, P.C. (2006), *Developing an Interdisciplinary Analysis and Application of Worldview Concepts for Christian Mission*. Dissertation Projects DMin Andrews University.
- Delve (2021). "The essential guide to coding qualitative data". Delve.  
<https://delvetool.com/guide>
- Dockery, D.S. and T.K. Wax (2019). *Christian worldview handbook* [Kindle Edition].  
[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)
- Dreyer, W. (2016). Church, mission and ethics. Being church with integrity. *HTS Theologiese Studies*, 72(1).  
[https://linkgalecom.ezproxy.liberty.edu/apps/doc/A459075562/AONE?u=vic\\_liberty&sid=AONE&xid=b0247ebd](https://linkgalecom.ezproxy.liberty.edu/apps/doc/A459075562/AONE?u=vic_liberty&sid=AONE&xid=b0247ebd)
- Dunn, R. R. (2001). *Shaping the spiritual life of students: A guide for youth workers, pastors, teachers and campus ministers*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Erdvig, R. C. S. (2016). A model for biblical worldview development in evangelical christian emerging adults (Order No. 10243195). Liberty University Scholar's Crossing. Available from Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University. (1861207897).
- Englander, M. (2012). The interview: Data collection in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 43, 13-35.  
<https://phenomenologyblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Englander-2012-The-Interview-Data-Collection-in-Descriptive-Phenomenological-Human-Scientific-Research.pdf>
- Erickson, M. J. (2013). *Christian theology*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Erickson, M.J. & Hustad, L.A. (Ed.) (2015). *Introducing Christian doctrine* (3rd Ed) [E-Book]. Retrieved from: <https://search-ebscohostcom.ezproxy.liberty.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1234916&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Fay, F.R. (2015). *Emergent young adult spiritual formation: A developmental approach for an intergenerational church*.  
<https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1096&context=dmin>

- Foley, A. (2017). "Studies show that only 10 percent of Americans have a Christian worldview". <https://answersingenesis.org/culture/study-shows-only-10-percent-americans-have-biblical-worldview/>
- Fowler, J.W. (1987). *Faith development and pastoral care* [Kindle Edition]. www.amazon.com
- Geiger, M.W. (2017) Worldview Formation, Reflexivity, and Personhood: Their Essential Connectivity in Thick Perspective, *Religious Education*, 112 (5), 504-516. DOI: 10.1080/00344087.2017.1312727
- Geisler, N.L. and Tunncliffe, P. (2013). *Reasons for belief: Easy to understand answers to 10 essential questions*. Bethany House Publishers.
- Gibson, T. S. (2004). Proposed levels of Christian spiritual maturity. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 32(4), 295–304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009164710403200402>
- Griffioen, S. (2012). On worldviews. *Philosophia Reformata*, 77(1), 19-56. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24710030>
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 42–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300104>
- Gonzalez, J.L. (2012). *The story of Christianity: Volume 1*. Harper Collins.
- Gonzalez, J.L. (2013). *The story of Christianity: Volume 2*. Harper Collins.
- Guest, G., Namey, E.E. & M.L. Mitchell (2013). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781506374680.n1>
- Hah, S. M. (2019). Intercultural missional leadership: Theological foundation and biblical narratives. *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*, 75(1) doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.4102/hts.v75i1.5211>
- Hiebert, P.G. (2008). *Transforming worldviews*. Baker Academic.
- Horan, A. P. (2017). Fostering spiritual formation of millennials in Christian schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 26(1), 56-77. doi:10.1080/10656219.2017.1282901
- Horrell, J.S. (2004). Naming the elephant, worldview as concept. Dallas Theological Seminary. <https://voice.dts.edu/review/james-w-sire-naming-the-elephant/>
- Istat (2017). "Qualitative methodologies for questionnaire assessment". European Commission. <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/7f617c55-1b01-41a596-a4966394f28b32/Methodological%20document%20-%20qualitative%20methods%20for%20pretesting.pdf>

- Johns, J. (1995). Pentecostalism and the postmodern worldview. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 3(7), 73–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/096673699500300706>
- Johnston, G. M. (2001). *Preaching to a postmodern world: A guide to reaching twenty-first century listeners*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Jones, A. (2006). *Cooperating with the Spirit: A spiritual formation model for the local church*. <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1264&context=ecommonsa tsdissertations>
- Kanitz, L. (2005). Improving Christian worldview pedagogy: Going beyond mere christianity. *Christian Higher Education*, 4(2), 99-108. doi:10.1080/15363750590923101
- Karhoff, K.J. (2003). *Analysis of Four Current Educational Philosophies and Their Impact on Science Education: Towards a Reformed Christian Philosophy of Science Education* [Masters Thesis: Dordt]. Digital Collections @ Dordt.
- Kilner, J.F. (2015). *Dignity and destiny: Humanity in the image of God*. [www.app.wordsearchbible.com](http://www.app.wordsearchbible.com)
- Kim, D., Fisher, D., & Mccalman, D. (2009). Modernism, Christianity, and business ethics: A worldview perspective: JBE. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 90(1), 115-121. doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/s10551-009-0031-2>
- Kim, Y.K. (2020) Think Christianly, Think Critically: Faith-Learning Integration, Critical Thinking, and Perceived Importance of Worldview Development Among Students in Christian Higher Education. *Religion & Education*, 47 (3), 273-299. DOI: 10.1080/15507394.2020.1765068
- King James Version (2017). King James Bible Online. <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.com/> (Originally Published in 1769)
- Knight, G.R. (2006). *Philosophy & education*. Andrews University Press.
- Korstjens, I. & Moser, A. (2018) Series: practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing, *European Journal of General Practice*, 24 (1), 120-124, DOI: 10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Inter Views: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.
- Leedy, P.D. & J.E. Ormrod (2019). *Practical Research* (12<sup>th</sup> Ed). Pearson Education.
- Lewis, J.W. (2012). Insights From Charles Spurgeon’s Christ-Centered Preaching for a Changing Culture [Doctor of Ministry Thesis: Liberty University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Liberty University.

- Liberty Institutional Review Board (2021). "Application checklist". Liberty University. <https://www.liberty.edu/graduate/institutional-review-board/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/2020/01/IRB-Application-Checklist.pdf>
- Liberty Institutional Review Board (2021). "Frequently asked questions". Liberty University. <https://www.liberty.edu/graduate/institutional-review-board/faqs/#What%20is%20the%20IRB%20process?>
- Linhart, T. (2016). *Teaching the next generation: A comprehensive guide to teaching spiritual formation*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=5248593>
- Long, V. E. (2014). *The role of christian education in the development of spiritual stamina in young adult graduates of christian schools* (Order No. 3620130). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University. (1536400556). Liberty University Scholars Crossing.
- MacArthur, J. (Ed.). (2009). *Think biblically! (trade paper): Recovering a Christian worldview*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- MacArthur, J. F., & Grace, C. C. S. G. C. (2011). *Evangelism: How to share the gospel faithfully*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Maxwell, J.C. (2018). *The Maxwell Leadership Bible*. Thomas Nelson.
- McDowell, S. & Wallace, J.W. (2019). *So the next generation will know* [Kindle Edition]. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)
- Morales, K.L. (2013). An Instrument Validation for a Three-Dimensional Worldview Survey Among Undergraduate Christian University Students Using Principal Components Analysis [Doctoral Dissertation: Liberty University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Liberty University.
- Morrow, J. (2018). Only 4 Percent of Generation Z has a Christian worldview. <https://www.impact360institute.org/articles/4-percent-gen-z-biblical-worldview/>
- Mulholland, M., & Mulholland, M. (2013). Spiritual formation in Christ and mission with Christ. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care.*, 6(1), 11–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/193979091300600102>
- National Association of Evangelicals (2021). What is an Evangelical? <https://www.nae.org/what-is-an-evangelical/>
- Nee, W. (2014). *The Spiritual Man* [Kindle Edition]. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- Nelson, G. (2008). *Borderland churches: A congregation's introduction to missional living*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Niemandt, C. J. (2016). Transformative spirituality and missional leadership. *Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies*, 33(1), 85-103. doi:10.1163/15733831-12341435
- Ogundiran, V. (2013). *Making disciples of Jesus Christ: Implementing an effective strategy for churches in America*. Retrieved from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.684.2491&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Parker, S. (2010). Research in fowler's faith developmental theory: A review article. *Review of Religious Research*, 51(3), 233-253. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20697343>
- Parr, A. (2023). *Misled*. Nelson Books.
- Parrett, G. A., & Kang, S. S. (2009). *Teaching the faith, forming the faithful: A biblical vision for education in the church*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>.
- Pettit, P. (Ed.) (2008). *Foundations of spiritual formation*. Kregel Academic.
- Pew Forum (2021). Adults in the Dallas Metro Area. <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/metro-area/dallasfort-worth-metro-area/>
- Powell, K.E. and C. Clark (2011). *Sticky faith*. Zondervan.
- Pusey, E.B. (2002). *The confessions of St. Augustine*. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3296/3296-h/3296-h.htm>
- Rhea, R. (2011). Exploring spiritual formation in the Christian academy: The dialects of church, culture and the larger integrative task. ProQuest. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 39(1), 3-15.
- Ridenour, F. (2001). *So, what's the difference*. Regal.
- Ruthven, J. (2016). On the quest for authentic Christianity: Protestant tradition and the mission of Jesus. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 25(2), 242-253. doi:10.1163/17455251-02502006
- Rutledge, D.S. (2013). An analysis of the correlation between the Christian education context of the local church and the Biblical worldview of high school students [Doctoral Dissertation: Liberty University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Liberty University. ProQuest.
- Sage (2016). Pretesting and pilot testing. [https://us-sagepub-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/sites/default/files/upm-assets/68507\\_book\\_item\\_68507.pdf](https://us-sagepub-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/sites/default/files/upm-assets/68507_book_item_68507.pdf)



- Samples, K. R. (2007). *A world of difference: Putting Christian truth-claims to the worldview test*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Samples, Z.D. (2016). Developing the whole student: Campus ministry's impact on spiritual development. <http://thekeep.eiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3436&context=theses>
- Samra, J.G. (2006). *Being conformed to Christ in community*. London: T & T Clark.
- Sanchez, J. (2012). Dangerous Calling. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/dangerous-calling/>
- Schultz, K.G. & J.A. Swezey (2013). A three-dimensional concept of worldview, *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 22 (3): 227-243, DOI: 10.1080/10656219.2013.850612
- Seemiller, C. & Grace, M. (2018). *Generation Z: A century in the making*. Routledge.
- Setia M. S. (2017). Methodology series module 9: Designing questionnaires and clinical record forms - part II. *Indian journal of dermatology*, 62(3), 258–261. [https://doi.org/10.4103/ijd.IJD\\_200\\_17](https://doi.org/10.4103/ijd.IJD_200_17)
- Setran, D. (2018). From worldview to way of life. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care.*, 11(1), 53–73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1939790917753171>
- Sewell, M. (2020). "The use of qualitative research in evaluation". University of Arizona. <https://cals.arizona.edu/sfcs/cyfernet/cyfar/Intervu5.htm>
- Shepherd, J. (2021). Survey Finds that Only 9% of Self-Identified Christians have a Biblical Worldview. <https://julieroys.com/george-barna-survey-biblical-worldview/>
- Sire, J.W. (2004). *Naming the elephant: Worldview as a concept*. InterVarsity Press.
- Sire, J. W. (2015). *Naming the elephant: Worldview as a concept* (2nd ed.). InterVarsity Press.
- Smietana, B. (2017). "Lifeway research: Americans are fond of the Bible, don't actually read it". Retrieved from: <https://lifewayresearch.com/2017/04/25/lifeway-research-americans-are-fond-of-the-bible-dont-actually-read-it/>
- Smith, J. K. A., & Stassen, G. (2009). *Desiring the kingdom: Worship, worldview, and cultural formation*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Sproul, R.C. (2003). *Defending your faith: An introduction to apologetics* [Kindle Edition]. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)
- Southern Baptist Convention (2021). "Good news for the whole world". <https://www.sbc.net/>

- Spurgeon, C.H. (2005). *An all-round ministry*. [www.app.wordsearchbible.com](http://www.app.wordsearchbible.com)
- Sweeney, D.A. (2013). *The American evangelical story: A history of the movement*. Baker Academic.
- Toth, D.A. (2015). *In his discipleship-making ministry, how does Jesus determine what to say or do?* Digital Commons George Fox University.
- Tripp, P.D. (2012). *Dangerous calling: Confronting the unique challenges of pastoral ministry*. ProQuest E-books.
- Van der Kooij, J.C., De Ruyter, D.J. & Miedema, S. (2013) "Worldview": the Meaning of the Concept and the Impact on Religious Education. *Religious Education, 108* (2), 210-228. DOI: 10.1080/00344087.2013.767685
- Van der Walt, B.J. (2017). Sharing an integral christian worldview with a younger generation: Why and how should it be done and received? *In Die Skriflig, 51*(1) doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.4102/ids.v51i1.2245>
- White, J. E. (2017). *Meet generation z: Understanding and reaching the new post-christian world*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>
- Wilhoit, J.C. and J.M. Dettoni (1995). *Nurture that is Christian*. Bridgepoint Books.
- Woodbridge, J.D. and F.A. James (2013). *Church history: Volume two*. Zondervan.

**APPENDIX A****IRB APPROVAL LETTER****LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.**  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

January 7, 2022

Nicholas Curtis  
Joseph Butler

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-331 Impact of Worldview Development on Spiritual Vitality in Evangelical Protestant Churches: a Phenomenological Study

Dear Nicholas Curtis, Joseph Butler,

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

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

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

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

**Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB.** Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available

without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**

*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*

**Research Ethics Office**

**APPENDIX B****PRETEST CORRESPONDENCE EMAIL**

Dear Pastor A:

As a student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. The purpose of my research is to evaluate how worldview development impacts spiritual vitality in a church setting, and I am writing to see if you can help pre-test my instruments to ensure that they achieve face validity when it comes to how they are perceived and received by other evangelical pastors in the field.

To participate, please contact me at [REDACTED] for more information to review the instrument and possibly schedule a time to discuss and evaluate the instrument. The instrument questions from both instruments are attached to this email so that you can review them ahead of time to see how they will fare when it comes to the Evangelical church world.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Curtis  
Doctoral Student at Liberty University  
[REDACTED]

## APPENDIX C

### SCREENING SURVEY QUESTIONS AND PROTOCOL

Dear Church A:

As a student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. The purpose of my research is to evaluate how biblical worldview (view of reality and truth based on God and his word) development impacts spiritual vitality in a church setting (using one pastor/participant per church with eight or more churches for the study. Each pastor will be interviewed separately since it is not a focus group), and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, oversee the discipleship aspects of a church (including leaders and congregation members), have 2 full years of ministry experience as a pastor at their current evangelical churches, be evangelical (in the sense that they and their churches must believe the Bible to be absolute truth, without error, and to be authoritative in doctrine and practice), and have a discipleship plan that incorporates one's own worldview along with faith and regularly utilize it. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a semi-structured, video-recorded interview in order to investigate how worldview development impacts spiritual vitality in their church. It should take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete the interview through online software such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Participants will be asked to partake in transcript review to verify the findings of the interview. Follow-up interviews may occur, if needed, and they will take place online through Microsoft Teams or Zoom, and will be video-recorded. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, answer the attached survey questions through email so I can evaluate whether or not you are eligible for the study (Open up the document, answer the questions, and respond by emailing me back your answers). Responding to Question 7 is not required; however, answering this question will help identify other potential participants in the area for this study. Contact me at [REDACTED] for more information.

1. Are you and your church evangelical in the sense that you believe the Bible to be absolute truth, without error, and to be authoritative in doctrine and practice?
2. Do you have a discipleship plan that incorporates your own worldview along with faith?
3. If so, do you regularly utilize the discipleship plan with everyone, including the younger generations?
4. Are you 18 years of age or older?
5. Do you oversee the discipleship of leaders and congregation members in the church?
6. Do you have two full years of ministry experience at your current evangelical church as a pastor?
7. If you know of any other evangelical, protestant churches that may want to participate in this study, please let me know. (These Questions will be attached in the email and not included in the general email)

A consent link through Qualtrics is provided here:

[https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G](https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G). The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document through Qualtrics via the link provided before or when we begin the study.

Eligible participants who have completed this study will also receive a \$25 Visa gift card for compensation.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Curtis  
Doctoral Student at Liberty University



## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND PROTOCOL

#### Interview Protocol

The interviews will be conducted via Microsoft Teams or Zoom (or participant's preference). Each interview will begin in a word of prayer and start off with an icebreaker question (listed below) to kick off the study. Then the interviewer, in phenomenological fashion, will move through the interview questions by bracketing his own perceptions in order to see things from the participant's point of view. The interviewer, if necessary, will ask follow-up questions to get more clarity during any of the questions. If needed, the interviewer will probe gently to see if the participant can provide more information. The interviewer will close by asking if there is anything else the participant needs to add concerning the phenomenon. Then the interviewer will close in prayer and discuss how this interview will relate to the dissertation at a later date.

#### Structure of Interview

##### Basic Information

**Pastors Name:**

**Interviewer:**

**Time and Date:**

##### Introduction

##### **Personal Introduction**

Hey I am Nicholas Curtis and I am a student at Liberty University. I have never been a pastor but I have done discipleship and faith work with kids as well as serve on the connections team at my previous church and the guest services team at my new church. I enjoy writing, growing up in Christ and helping other people find and follow Jesus.

The purpose of my study is to see how worldview development impacts spiritual growth in a church and to see how churches are going about helping people develop a solid biblical worldview and faith in an increasingly secular culture. Special focus will be on the younger generations but also the older generations as well so that awareness can be raised on how the Body of Christ can go about developing people through a Christian worldview.

##### **Structure of the Interview**

13 questions. Some of the questions may include other questions during the interview. It will be a flowing interview.

##### **Opening Question:**

Tell me about yourself. What are your hobbies, goals, interests? How did you get into ministry?

##### **Content Questions (See Appendix D Interview Questions):**

1. What is the vision of your church and what was the process in creating it? What are your church demographics when it comes to denomination, leadership, ethnicity, mission and spiritual development practices? (RQ1)
2. How does your vision/mission help people develop a Christian worldview and follow



Christ? (RQ1)

3. How would you define a biblical worldview? What is the importance of Christians having a biblical worldview? (RQ1, RQ2)
4. How does one's worldview relate to one's spiritual growth? What impact does one's worldview, overall, have on one's spiritual development? (RQ1, RQ2)
5. How do you help shape people's worldviews and faith in Christ through a biblical and Christological foundation? How does it help them follow Christ in every way? (RQ2)
6. Overall, how do you go about developing leaders using a Christian worldview? How does this impact the church overall? (RQ3)
7. In what areas, related to worldview, can you help others, including leaders, see the world through a biblical framework and lens? How can Christians develop biblically in all areas? (RQ3-5)
8. How can you help develop Christians in light of the culture around them? How does culture play a factor in worldview development? (RQ3-5)
9. How do you go about developing the worldview of the younger generation? What tactics can help them succeed, especially when it comes to morality? (RQ5)
10. How can you safeguard your leaders and congregation from opposing truth claims? How can their faith and worldview be strong in the midst of competing truth claims? (RQ3-5)
11. How does having a Christian worldview help enable people to go about the great commission in the church? How can they engage their world with the gospel of Christ? (RQ3-5)
12. What results have come about through developing Christians and leaders through a

Christian worldview and faith, especially with the great commission? (RQ3-5)

13. What steps can the body of Christ, overall, take in helping develop Christians with a proper, Christian worldview? (RQ3-5)

**Probes to be used:**

1. Is there anything else you want to add?
2. Tell me a little bit more about this if you can.

**Closing Interview**

1. Anything the participant wants to add before closing.
2. Interviewer provides information on the study and the dissertation at a later date.

## APPENDIX E

### CONSENT FORMS

#### CONSENT

**Title of the Project:** Impact of Worldview Development on Spiritual Vitality in Evangelical Protestant: A Phenomenological Study

**Principal Investigator:** Nicholas Curtis, Doctoral Student, Liberty University.

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, have 2 full years of ministry experience as a pastor at your current evangelical church, oversee the discipleship aspects of a church (including leaders and congregation members), be evangelical (in the sense that you and your church must believe the Bible to be absolute truth, without error, and to be authoritative in doctrine and practice), and have a discipleship plan that incorporates one's own worldview along with faith and regularly utilize it. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

#### What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to evaluate how worldview development shapes and impacts spiritual vitality in a church (i.e., church health and spiritual growth). Since very few people in America, including Christians, have a biblical worldview (including a biblical foundation), it is essential to see how the church overall is going about developing Christians with a biblical worldview and to see how that worldview-formation affects the spiritual formation of the entire church.

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

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

1. Take part in a 30- to 60-minute, video-recorded interview (through Microsoft Teams or Zoom).
2. Review your interview transcript for accuracy.
3. Take part in a follow-up, video-recorded interview (through Microsoft Teams or Zoom) in order to cover the bases of the scope of the research.

#### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include empowering Christians to view the world and the Bible through the lens of Christ and make an impact for the kingdom of God.

#### What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. The risks involved in this study include you sharing any information about your church that may cause harm to your church. Even though confidentiality will be guaranteed through the use of pseudonyms, you will be exhorted to share information that you would not mind people reading about in the dissertation and that will not bring reproach to your church.

#### **How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers if they need access to the data. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- All data will be protected under pseudonyms (such as church a, church b, church c and pastor a, pastor b, pastor c) in order to keep the data confidential. All interviews will be private (free from other people overhearing the conversation) and all data will be protected through a password-protected computer.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations.
- After five years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for five years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

#### **How will you be compensated for being part of the study?**

Participants who complete the study procedures will be compensated for participating. They will receive a \$25 Visa gift card after the study is complete.

#### **Is study participation voluntary?**

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

#### **What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

#### **Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Nicholas Curtis. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Joseph E. Butler, at [REDACTED].

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [REDACTED]

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

**Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

---

Typed Subject Name

---

Signature & Date

## APPENDIX F

### FOLLOW UP SCREENING SURVEY

Dear Church A:

Two weeks ago, an email was sent about the possibility of you participating in a research study. This study will see how biblical worldview (the nature of reality and truth based on God's word) and faith development as perceived by the pastor (eight pastors in eight churches total for the study. Pastors will be interviewed separately since it is not a focus group) affects spiritual growth and vitality in their church (according to their biblical worldview). Please let me know if you would like to participate in this study. Deadline for Participation is September 1, 2022.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview, review their interview transcripts, and may be asked to participate in a follow-up interview. It should take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete the initial interview. The interviews will be video-recorded and conducted through Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, answer the attached survey questions through email so I can evaluate whether or not you are eligible for the study (Open up the document, answer the questions, and respond by emailing me back your answers). Responding to Question 7 is not required; however, answering this question will help identify other potential participants in the area for this study. Contact me at [REDACTED] for more information.

1. Do you believe the Bible to be absolute truth, without error, and to be authoritative in doctrine and practice?
2. Do you have a discipleship plan that incorporates your own biblical worldview along with faith?
3. If so, do you regularly utilize the discipleship plan with everyone, including the younger generations?
4. Are you 18 years of age or older?
5. Do you oversee the discipleship of leaders and congregation members in the church?
6. Do you have two full years of ministry experience at your church as a pastor?
7. If you know of any other evangelical protestant churches that may want to participate in this study, please let me know (These will be attached through the email).

A consent form is attached below through a Qualtrics link. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document electronically with your name before or at the time when the interview can be scheduled. Consent Qualtrics Link:

[https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G](https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G).

Eligible participants who have completed this study will also receive a \$25 Visa gift card for compensation.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Curtis  
Doctoral Student at Liberty University

Qualtrics Link:

[https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G](https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aa7hh8TUXfmNK2G)