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A MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENT LATINO  
POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
Twyla Kay Hernandez

May 2005

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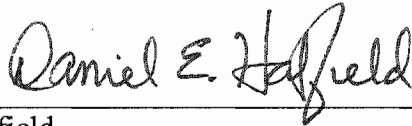
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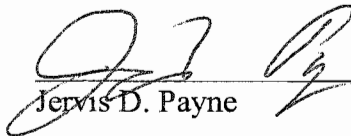
Read and Approved by:



Charles E. Lawless, Jr. (Chairperson)



Daniel E. Hatfield



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## PREFACE

This project could never have been completed without the help of many people who have supported me along the way. Friends and family alike have encouraged me and helped me to stay focused even when I was ready to give up. To my family, I say thank you, and I promise this graduation will be the last!

In particular, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Chuck Lawless, who has graciously helped me mold this dissertation into something of which I can be proud. He has spent many hours and much ink correcting these pages and helping me clarify my thoughts on the subject matter. He is an outstanding professor whose life supports everything he teaches.

My passion for ministering to Hispanics began on a missions trip to Chile many years ago. I am grateful to everyone who has guided me and taught me about life in the Hispanic context, both in Latin America and here in the United States. They are too numerous to mention, but to all of them, I say “¡*Muchas gracias!*”

I would also like to express my gratitude to my husband, Clemente, for allowing me the time necessary to finish this work—especially since the bulk of the work was done during the first months of our marriage. Thank you for supporting me in everything, *mi amor*. *Eres mi mundo entero*. I look forward to many years of happiness and ministry by your side.

Last, I recognize that I could never have accomplished this task without the grace of God which sustains me daily. I never would have believed that a girl from College Grove, Tennessee, would have reached this point, but God's purposes and power are much greater than our own. To Him, who is able to do even more than we can ask or imagine, to him alone be the glory forever.

Twyla K. Hernandez

Louisville, Kentucky

April 2005

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Census 2000 “heightened the sense of urgency for Christian groups engaged in Hispanic evangelism and discipleship.”<sup>1</sup> Why would a document produced by the United States government create this type of excitement among Christian groups? The answer lies in the fact that the census showed that the Hispanic population had already passed the African-American population to become the largest minority in the United States.<sup>2</sup> What was projected at the beginning of the 1990s to take place in 2070<sup>3</sup> has already occurred: Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States.

The phenomenon of the influx of Hispanic immigrants in the 1990s does not account for all Hispanics in this country. Nor are all Hispanics in the United States even immigrants. Many have ancestors who antedate the offspring of the European explorers. In addition, within the mosaic that is the Hispanic community in this country, a great diversity exists between cultures, customs, and even language. Before undertaking the

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<sup>1</sup>Rodolpho Carrasco, “Catching Up with Hispanics,” *Christianity Today*, 12 November 2001, 66.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Other data regarding population statistics can be found at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). The Census Bureau considers Hispanics to be an ethnicity rather than a race. Thus, Hispanics may be of other races, such as an immigrant from an Afro-Caribbean heritage who considers himself to be a Black Hispanic.

<sup>3</sup>Andrés Tapia, “¡Viva los Evangélicos!” *Christianity Today*, 28 October 1991, 16.

task of trying to develop a ministerial model for working among Hispanics, the first task must be to understand this diverse group.

### **Demographic Data**

While the entire population of the United States grew only 13 percent between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic population grew by 58 percent from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000. This increase is the largest 10-year population increase in the nation's history among any group.<sup>4</sup> While the Hispanic population's growth in the United States has exploded in the last decade, Latinos are not newcomers to this country. In fact, "the Hispanic presence in what is now the United States actually began before the country existed."<sup>5</sup> Florida, for example, did not even come under control of the United States government until 1821.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the Southern part of the United States, Latinos resided, raised their families, and died even before the country was formed.

Today, however, Latinos live not only in these historically Hispanic areas. They also live in large cities like New York, Atlanta, and Chicago. They live in small, rural communities throughout the Southeast and the Northwest. Indeed, Latinos are found in every state of the union. Surprisingly, it is the non-traditional Hispanic areas that reflect the greatest growth of the Hispanic population. In fact, "some counties in nontraditional Hispanic states such as Georgia and North Carolina had sizable proportions of Hispanic populations. Hispanics within some counties in North Carolina,

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<sup>4</sup>These population statistics can be found at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

<sup>5</sup>"History of Hispanic American Immigration" [on-line]; accessed 16 September 2002; available from <http://www2.worldbook.com/features/cinco/html/immigration.htm>; Internet.

Georgia, Iowa, Arkansas, Minnesota, and Nebraska represented between 6.0 percent and 24.9 percent of the county's total population."<sup>7</sup>

About 44 percent of Hispanics live in the West and 33 percent in the South. The Northeast and the Midwest accounted for 15 percent and 9 percent, respectively, of the Hispanic population.<sup>8</sup> North Carolina's Hispanic population grew by almost 400 percent between 1990 and 2000. Arkansas' Hispanic population more than tripled over the decade from 1990-2000. Of the ten states with the largest percent increase in the Hispanic population, seven are located in the South: North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, and Kentucky. These were not the only non-traditionally Hispanic states to show growth. For example, Rhode Island's population increase is directly attributable to the Hispanic population. Were it not for the increase in the number of Latinos residing there, Rhode Island would have lost population. Most of the increase in population for North Dakota and Connecticut was also due to Hispanic growth, accounting for over 90 percent.<sup>9</sup>

### **Marketing to Hispanics**

To be sure, the Hispanic population in the United States is growing at a rapid rate across the entire country. In fact, the Latino population is growing so quickly that it

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Betsy Guzman, "The Hispanic Population" (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), 5.

<sup>8</sup>"Facts for Features" [on-line]; accessed 11 November 2003; available from <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02ff15.html>; Internet. For simplicity, I chose to use round numbers for these percentages, thus resulting in a total of 101 percent. All of the information in this paragraph is from this source.

has become a target for marketing gurus and political activists.

Some business experts have recognized the buying power of the Hispanic population and are now aiming their publicity and products at them. For example, Kmart has signed Thalía, one of the most recognized female pop singers in Latin America, to promote the Thalia Sodi brand of clothing, accessories, and home furnishings. The brand, which is to be launched in over half of the Kmart stores in the nation, is “designed primarily to cater to the retailer’s growing Hispanic customer base.”<sup>10</sup> In other cases, companies are producing new products to reach out to and into the pockets of Latino consumers. For example, at a 2002 candy fair held in Chicago, specialists noted that the newest candies seen in the industry were “caramelos de piña con sabor a ají, hojuelas de maíz cubiertas de chocolate, chupetines de tamarindo con sabor a ají, caramelos blandos salados con sabor a fruta tropical, etc.”<sup>11</sup> Recognizing that these are not flavors that normally attract the American public, the industry replies that the 35 million Latin consumers are the retail impetus.<sup>12</sup>

Along with the attention from the marketing experts, the Hispanic population has also gained attention from the politicians. The Census Bureau recorded that “While

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<sup>9</sup>Guzman, “The Hispanic Population.”

<sup>10</sup>Parija Bhatnagar, “Will Thalia heat up Kmart sales?” [on-line]; accessed 4 August 2003; available from [http://money.cnn.com/2003/08/04/news/companies/kmart\\_thalia/index.htm](http://money.cnn.com/2003/08/04/news/companies/kmart_thalia/index.htm); Internet.

<sup>11</sup>“Fabricantes de golosinas de EE.UU. apuntan al mercado hispano” (Manufacturers of Sweets in the U.S. target the Hispanic Market) [on-line]; accessed 11 July 2002; available from <http://cnnenespanol.com/2002/america/eeuu/06/06/golosina.ap/index.html>; Internet. Translation: “pineapple candies with chile, chocolate-covered popcorn, tamarind suckers with chile, soft, salty candies with a tropical fruit flavor . . . .”

turnout by Hispanic citizens in the 2000 presidential election--45 percent--was not statistically different from 1996, the number of Hispanic voters increased about 20 percent over the period.”<sup>13</sup>

Republicans and Democrats alike are vying for the favor of this powerful slice of the American population. While stereotypically Democrats, Hispanics also have conservative leanings. Because of their non-individualistic worldview, Latinos favor almost any type of social aid and (sometimes) relaxed immigration laws. These points of view lean them to the political left. On the other hand, their strong family values and anti-abortion views lean them largely to the side of the Republicans.<sup>14</sup> In an attempt to reach out to this power bloc, President Bush used a phrase in Spanish in his first speech to Congress: “*juntos podemos*” which means “together we can.” This event marked the first time a language other than English had been used by a President on the floor of Congress.<sup>15</sup>

Just as the marketing experts and the political pundits have awakened to the sleeping giant that is the Hispanic population, the church must also respond, but for very different reasons. The church, in contrast to marketing experts, has no desire to strip Latinos of their hard-earned dollars, nor do we want to attract them so that we can win a political campaign. We must, however, share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them,

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>“Facts for Features.”

<sup>14</sup>For an interesting article regarding the Hispanic worldview, see Yuri Mantilla, “A Decisive Moment for Hispanics in the Clash of Worldviews” [on-line]; accessed 1 October 2003; available from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?I=ISO2J1&v=PRINT>; Internet.



and we must do it in a comprehensive manner.

### **Statement of the Thesis**

The evangelization of the Hispanic population in the United States is of utmost importance. The majority of this population “still call themselves Catholic, [but] the percentage is dropping—down from 66 percent in 1990 to 57 percent in 2001.”<sup>16</sup> Of the 35 million Latinos, 13 percent say that they have no religion at all.<sup>17</sup> Hispanics, after rejecting Catholicism, are following secular American culture. Many have no hope and mistakenly believe that they will find happiness and peace in the material wealth of their adopted country, the United States.

It is time for the church to view the Hispanic population in the United States as a mission field “white for harvest” (John 4:35).<sup>18</sup> We no longer have to travel to an international destination to spread the news of Christ to Latinos; instead, we must look at the Hispanic population in the United States through missiological eyes. The thesis of this dissertation is that our missiological response to the emergent Latino population in the United States must be three-pronged: church planting, social ministry, and leadership development.

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>“Hispanics turning away from organized religion, studies show” [on-line]; accessed 31 December 2002; available from [www.churchcentral.com/nw/s/template/Article.html/id/14416](http://www.churchcentral.com/nw/s/template/Article.html/id/14416); Internet.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>All quotations of Scripture are from the New American Standard Bible.

## **Background of the Proposal**

My interest in the status of the Hispanic church in the United States began in 1996 when I returned from the international mission field. I had been a missionary in Argentina for three years and returned to the United States with the sole purpose of obtaining a seminary degree so that I could return to Latin America. Upon my arrival at seminary, I instantly gravitated towards the Latino students and soon became involved in a new Hispanic church plant pastored by one of the students.

My interest in the world of Hispanic ministry in this country was piqued as I served in multiple church plants due to the lack of Hispanic leaders. I became convinced that church planting, while of utmost importance, must be coupled with leadership development if the Hispanic church would continue to grow and be healthy. The lack of leaders is astonishing. Hispanic churches in all denominations lament the lack of leaders, especially theologically-trained leaders. In 2003, for example, when The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary hosted the first annual Hispanic Leader's Institute, the response was overwhelming. Over two hundred participants attended this first event, and many expressed their genuine desire to need for this type of training event. Even some of the churches that could not attend called to say how much these events are needed to train the leaders of the churches.<sup>19</sup>

Later, as I came to realize the true economic and cultural assimilation realities of Hispanics in the United States, it became obvious that social ministry must be coupled with evangelism in order for Hispanics to see the love of Christ. As I have ministered in

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<sup>19</sup>For example, one pastor of a Hispanic Disciples of Christ congregation called to relate that his church would be unable to attend due to a prior commitment, but requested to be advised of future conferences.

local Hispanic congregations, the need for social ministry is overwhelming. I personally have assisted in the births of three Hispanic babies so that the mothers could understand the doctor and nurses. In addition, I have been called by local hospitals to translate for families with a sick family member. Our church has also helped Latino families in enrolling their children in local schools. These experiences along with many similar ones have convinced me of the need for the church to help in these areas of primary need. The church, however, cannot be only a social agency. Instead, social ministry must be coupled with evangelism in the church planting strategy of the Hispanic church.

### **Research Methodology**

This study was a research-based examination of the need for a strategic, unified, and practical model for Hispanic ministry in the United States. By focusing on common denominators, it also attempts to provide a viable model that will be applicable throughout the country with only minimal adjustments for each local setting. I included various types of research in the study. Southern Seminary's library provided access to many of the necessary books and publications. Additional published resources were available from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, through the interlibrary loan system, and from my own personal library. I have built a library of materials related to Hispanic ministry over the last ten years.

In addition, being fluent in both written and spoken Spanish allowed me access to materials in both English and Spanish. That, along with my experience of having lived in a Latin American country, also provided a greater understanding of the culture. I have gained additional insight into the culture of the Hispanics of the United States through my ministerial experience among them during the last eight years.

This dissertation begins by providing statistical data related to the Hispanic population in the United States. To accomplish this task, I found a wealth of demographic data on today's Hispanic population available through the Internet. The Census Bureau provided current information regarding the makeup of the Hispanic population, where Hispanics live, etc. In addition, since Census 2000, when it became known that Hispanics were now the largest minority in the country, this governmental agency has provided a yearly summary of the current trends within the Latino population. News agencies were also a wonderful source of current information. They are continually writing articles on the effect the Hispanic population is having on the culture of the United States and vice versa. This up-to-date information was key to providing an informational basis for the need of having Hispanic ministries.

To gain further data related to the actual state of the Hispanic church in the United States, I also gathered information from various Hispanic leaders from around the country. The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention provided statistics regarding Baptist church planting work among Hispanics in the country. I also visited churches in different areas of the country to gain a greater national perspective. Last, I visited churches in both rural and urban settings and churches in historically Hispanic areas as well as in "pioneer" Hispanic areas.

During the first two years of my Ph.D. program, as well as in my Master of Divinity program, I took every opportunity to address the topic of Hispanic ministry in research projects. Even though only a small percentage of Hispanics in the United States are practicing Catholics, it was imperative to have a good understanding of Catholicism in order to reach them since they are culturally and emotionally attached to that

religion.<sup>20</sup> Thus, I researched Catholic theology and Mariology. In addition, I researched the best ways to do personal evangelism to Latinos living in this country. I also examined the historical origins of the church both in Latin America and in the United States. This preliminary research laid the groundwork to be able to complete this dissertation using the prescribed research methodology.

### **Definitions and Limitations**

This dissertation had one preset limitation to the scope of the research. Though there is a definite need for the same type of research throughout Latin America, the focus of this dissertation was limited to the Hispanic population in the United States. The need for these ministries in the United States is at a precipice. While the Hispanic population in the United States predates the country's existence, its tremendous growth over the last decade has created an overwhelming need for something to be done now.

Because the title of this work is "A Missiological Response to the Emergent Latino Population in the United States," it is necessary to define the term *missiology*. Missiology is defined as "the conscious, intentional, ongoing reflection on the doing of mission."<sup>21</sup> This "conscious, intentional, and ongoing reflection" applied to how the church should respond to the Latino population in this country is the focus of this work.

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<sup>20</sup>"Hispanics turning away from organized religion, studies show." Even though many Hispanics in the United States are no longer practicing Catholics, they are still heavily influenced by the Catholic culture that pervades all things Hispanic. To further illustrate this point, Justo Gonzalez says in his book *Mañana* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990) that "the Spanish-American Roman Catholic church is part of the common background of all Hispanics—if not personally, then at least in our ancestry" (55).

<sup>21</sup>Alan Neely, "Missiology," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 633.

Last, the words “Latinos” and “Hispanics” and their derivatives will be used interchangeably in this dissertation. These words refer to anyone who is of a cultural heritage related to any Spanish-speaking country. Neither word is considered derogatory either by this author or the majority of members of this ethnic group.<sup>22</sup>

### **Obstacles to Implementation**

To begin this dissertation, it is necessary to first examine the obstacles to a comprehensive, missiological response. The first obstacle is that many non-Hispanic church leaders have yet to recognize the Hispanic population in the United States as a true mission field. They do not recognize the growth of the Latino population because the group usually remains segregated from the general population due to economic status and language barriers.

A second reason most churches and denominations have not recognized the missiological challenge posed by this group is that, while the Census 2000 results are remarkable, they fail to account for the entire demographic. Because of the mobility of the group, the census was unable to capture a complete picture of the group. In other cases, the individuals’ immigration status (i.e., being in the country illegally) made them wary of giving their names and other personal information to a government official.

Besides an inexact counting of the total Hispanic population, the immigration status of some Hispanics poses another obstacle to the missiological response needed for the evangelization of Latinos. Many Christians feel that we should not build churches or

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<sup>22</sup>A “CNN Quick Vote” (a non-scientific poll used to reveal readers’ opinions on the cnn.com website) from September 25, 2002 asked the following question in Spanish: “If you live in the United States and are of a Latin American origin, how do you identify yourself?” The results were 45 percent *Hispano* (Hispanic), 42 percent

provide for the needs of a group that may include illegal immigrants. This problem can be, admittedly, an ethical dilemma. The Bible, however, advises every Christian to love the foreigner (Deut 10:19). In Deuteronomy 24:17 God also commands his people not to be unjust to the stranger. Last, God reveals that he will protect those who find themselves as foreigners (Psalm 146:9). While these passages do not address illegal immigrants per se, they do address how we should treat those from other nations who live among us. We, as Christians, are called to be a people who will announce God's light to the nations (Isa 49:6; Matt 28:18-20; 1 Pet 2:9).

A third obstacle holding the church back from making a significant impact on the Hispanic population is the rapid growth of the population itself. When one begins to take a serious look at what needs to be done, he or she may be quickly overwhelmed. The needs are so great and the population so large that one hardly knows where to begin. A good starting place, however, is to understand some components of the Latino population.

### **Immigration**

First, to truly understand the Hispanics in this country, one must understand how they arrived here. Because different groups come to this country for different reasons, the history of immigration among Hispanics is a good way to begin to see the mosaic that composes this population. As Montoya writes, "The Hispanic community is not one single unit but a mixture of a variety of peoples and customs. We need to

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*Latino* (Latino), 13 percent *Otro* (other).

understand their origins if we are to reach these masses with the gospel.”<sup>23</sup>

### **Mexican Immigration/Expansion**

As the European explorers came to the New World, they conquered lands and raided gold deposits. In what we now call the United States lived many Mexican descendants who came to be under the sovereignty of Spain. Virgilio Elizondo explains the conquering of the Mexican people in this way:

Contemporary Mexican-Americans can trace their origins to two great invasions and conquests: the Spanish and the Anglo-American. Both conquests ushered in an era of colonization, oppression, and exploitation. But the confrontation of parent cultures also produced a new ethnos, a new people: the Spanish-Indian confrontation gave birth to the Mexican people; the Anglo-American confrontation gave birth to the Mexican-American people.<sup>24</sup>

This new population segment, the Mexican-American people, was created when President James K. Polk of the United States declared war on Mexico in May 1846.<sup>25</sup> After the U. S. army occupied the Mexican capital in September of the following year, “negotiations were begun for a peace treaty. On February 2, 1848, the treaty was signed in the village of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.”<sup>26</sup> This treaty gave the United States

a vast territory including the present states of California, Arizona, and New Mexico, and large sections of Colorado, Nevada, and Utah. It also approved the prior annexation of Texas. The territory ceded to the United States was approximately half the size of prewar Mexico. In return the United States paid Mexico \$15 million and guaranteed the property rights and political rights of the

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<sup>23</sup>Alex D. Montoya, *Hispanic Ministry in North America* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 10.

<sup>24</sup>Virgilio Elizondo, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 5.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*



‘native’ population.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, the first Mexican-American citizens began to live in this country as their homeland was sold for \$15 million. They worked as laborers in the railroad system and in agriculture in the Southwest, but making lower wages than other ethnic groups due to racial prejudice:

Mexican laborers did most of the railway construction and maintenance work in southern California, New Mexico and Nevada, where they were willing to work for a lower wage than other immigrants. (The Southern Pacific Railroad in 1908 paid Greek section hands \$1.60 per day; Japanese, \$1.50; and Mexicans, \$1.25.)<sup>28</sup>

A large percentage of the Mexicans who live in this country today continue to work as laborers in the agricultural industry.

### **Other Hispanic Immigration**

While Mexicans are the largest group of Latinos in the United States, they are not the only group. Puerto Rico has been a possession of this country since 1898, but only Puerto Ricans living on the mainland are counted in census data.<sup>29</sup> The majority of Puerto Ricans living in the United States live in New York City where they comprise the largest percentage of that city’s Hispanic’s population (37 percent).<sup>30</sup> They also have “remained one of the poorest groups in the United States. Unemployment among Puerto Ricans is about 50 percent higher than it is among the general population, and the poverty

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 15-16.

<sup>28</sup>Lewis H. Gann and Peter J. Duignan, *The Hispanics in the United States: A History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 41.

<sup>29</sup>“History of Hispanic American Immigration.” According to the Census Bureau, there are an additional 3.8 million Hispanic residents living on the island of Puerto Rico.

<sup>30</sup>“Facts for Features,” 5.

rate is almost four times higher.”<sup>31</sup>

Besides Puerto Ricans and Mexicans, other groups of Hispanics have arrived in the United States through immigration. A large contingency of Cubans live in this country, mostly in Miami-Dade County, Florida.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, Cubans came to the United States primarily to escape political persecution and are treated as refugees by the government. Most Cubans are more highly educated than their Hispanic counterparts and have lower poverty and unemployment rates than other groups.<sup>33</sup>

In education, South Americans are very similar to Cubans. Since the close of World War II, most South Americans arriving in the United States were “skilled, urban, middle-class people” who arrived following economic decline in their countries.<sup>34</sup> Other groups of Hispanics living in the United States include people from the Dominican Republic and Central America. Dominicans came to the United States due to poverty in their country and settled primarily in New York.<sup>35</sup> Central Americans, on the other hand, came to this country due to the guerilla warfare precipitated by Marxist ideologies in their homeland.<sup>36</sup> Central Americans represent 4.8 percent of the total Hispanic population in

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<sup>31</sup>“History of Hispanic American Immigration.”

<sup>32</sup>“Facts for Features,” 6.

<sup>33</sup>“History of Hispanic American Immigration.”

<sup>34</sup>Manuel Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 57.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 56. The Census Bureau states that 53 percent of Dominicans lived in New York City in 2000.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 57.

this country, with the largest sub-group being Salvadorans (655,000).<sup>37</sup>

Figure 1 gives an accurate representation of the different backgrounds found within the Hispanic community in the United States:<sup>38</sup>

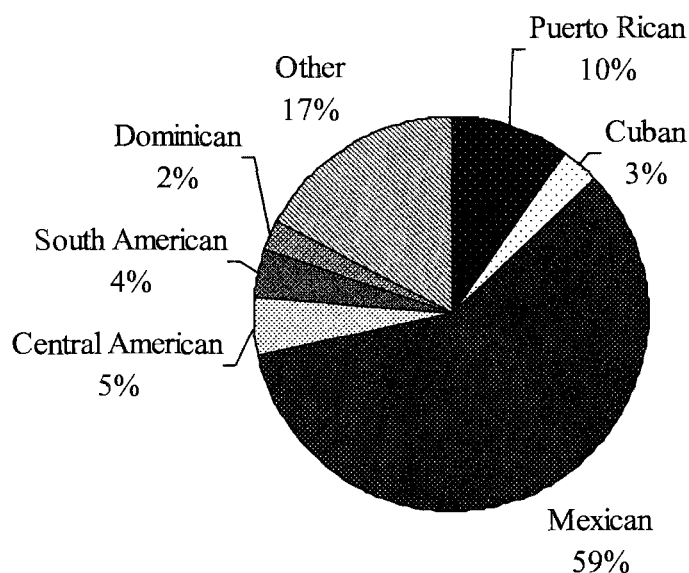


Figure 1. Hispanic Population Segments

A helpful statement that sums up the differences that this chart represents is the popular saying, “Not all Latinos eat tacos.”<sup>39</sup> Within the seeming “sameness” of the Hispanic community, there is much diversity—both national and socioeconomic.

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<sup>37</sup>Guzman, “The Hispanic Population,” 2.

<sup>38</sup>Betsy Guzman, “Census 2000 Paints Statistical Portrait of the Nation’s Hispanic Population” [on-line]; accessed 31 July 2004; available from <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/cb01-81.html>; Internet. Actual Mexican population is 58.5 percent.

<sup>39</sup>Andres Tapia, “Growing Pains.” *Christianity Today* (6 February 1995): 39.

Because American Hispanics come from over twenty-six nations, there are extensive differences in “their way of speaking Spanish, culinary preferences, . . . and histories.”<sup>40</sup> For example, “middle-class Cubans who fled Fidel Castro’s regime for political reasons . . . have an economic, social, and therefore, religious outlook quite different from that of poor rural Mexicans who crossed the Rio Grande for economic reasons.”<sup>41</sup> For this reason, it is necessary to consider the similarities of Latinos as a group and the differences between subgroups of Latinos.

### **Diversity and Similarity**

One Latino author writes about the diversity within the Hispanic population:

As advertisers have tried to figure out effective marketing strategies to implement with this growing population, they are discovering what we as Latinos have always known—we are diverse and similar at the same time. We are from different countries but we speak the same language. We are from different faiths but have the same Catholic roots. Our histories are different, but we have all experienced conquest, colonization and *mestizaje*. We label ourselves differently as well. Some of us prefer to call ourselves Hispanic, Chicano or Latino. Others of us prefer to use terms based on our native countries, such as Argentinian, Ecuadorian or Guatamalen. Still, when we are in a majority setting and discover another Latino in our midst, our differences are put aside and our commonalities rise to the surface with pride as we approach each other as *familia*.<sup>42</sup>

To obtain a better perspective on the makeup of the Hispanic population, I will compare and contrast five different areas: culture, language, education, socioeconomic status, and religion.

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Orlando Crespo, *Being Latino in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 28.

## Culture

First, it is important to realize that while Hispanics have many similar cultural characteristics, they also have many differences. For example, someone who originates from a Caribbean island is going to have great cultural differences with someone who comes from the peaks of the Andes mountains. They will eat different foods. They will dress differently. And, as we will see later, they will speak with different accents and use language differently. In fact, they may even speak different languages. While they are both Hispanic, their cultures are very different.

Different cultures also exist between generations of Hispanics. For example, first generation U. S. Hispanics are mostly monocultural and monolingual which helps them maintain their cultural identity. These traits also, however, make it hard for them to understand when their children and grandchildren embrace concepts from the Anglo culture. They see it as a betrayal of the mother culture. This same misunderstanding occurs in the *barrio* (neighborhood) as well when first generation Hispanics ridicule those from the second generation for not being “true” Hispanics. In response, the second generation Hispanics make disparaging comments towards the first generation, calling them the Spanish equivalent of “hicks.”<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to these cultural differences, similarities do exist that unite most, if not all, Hispanics. Alex D. Montoya in his quintessential book, *Hispanic Ministry in North America*, outlines five primary cultural similarities that must be considered when ministering to Hispanics: *la familia, machismo, mañana, respeto, and el corazón*.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 60-63.

<sup>44</sup>Montoya, *Hispanic Ministry in North America*, 14-19.

*La familia*, or the family, is the primary component of the Hispanic community. The influence of the family goes beyond any other type of external influence, including the church. They are usually large, extended families, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., but there may also be small, nuclear families. No matter how big or small, though, each family will have an elder leader who, unlike most Anglo families, will continue to influence the lives and families of even the married sons and daughters. For this reason, it is extremely difficult for a Hispanic “to make a decision for Christ independent of the entire family.”<sup>45</sup>

Second, the idea of *machismo* in the Hispanic culture is a culturally-accepted form of chauvinism. Although difficult to explain, it is different from the Anglo concept of chauvinism. Some of the negative results of *machismo* are that the Hispanic ideal of a real man is one that “has his wife and children in complete subjection. . . has no physical defects, not even wearing glasses . . . can drink the hardest liquor without losing his mind . . . [and] is a woman’s man.”<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, the positive consequences of this worldview are strong gender roles.

Third, the Hispanic indefinable, futuristic idea of *mañana* (tomorrow) is one that has frustrated many Anglo missionaries. For a Hispanic to say that something will happen “*mañana*,” he is saying that it will probably, eventually, sometime in the future, possibly happen. This trait makes it hard for the Anglo to understand why a Hispanic event that should have supposedly begun at 7:00 p.m. does not actually begin until 7:30 p.m. (or later). Life for the Hispanic is centered on events, not on time.

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

Another part of Hispanic culture that is deeply entrenched is the idea of *respeto*, or respect for other persons. Hispanics tend to maintain a formality at the beginning of friendships that has been lost in the general culture of the United States. Respect is also shown to older persons. This characteristic is reflected in the Spanish language that has two ways to address a person, *tu* and *usted*. *Tu* is the “you” pronoun used to address peers while *usted* is used to address elders and persons in authority. While the frequency of use of these pronouns sometimes differs between the different Hispanic cultures, the basic principle remains the same for all Latinos.<sup>47</sup>

The last cultural aspect to examine is *el corazón*, the heart. Montoya explains:

Hispanics are people of the heart. They are very emotional. If something is not from the heart, *el corazón*, or for the heart, then it is hard to accept. They are more emotional than rational, more for feelings than logic. All of culture is permeated with what strikes the heart, not the head alone. A truth wrapped up in cold logic without warmth of life and emotions is not very well received. A half-truth wrapped in emotion may be totally swallowed up. Take for instance the veneration of Mary. They reason thus: ‘The mother loves the son, and the son loves the mother. If you ask the mother (Mary) to ask the son (Jesus) for something, he will do it.’ Such reasoning is not logical. It’s emotional. We just have to understand the strong bond existing between mother and son.<sup>48</sup>

For this reason, one will often hear Hispanics express their beliefs by saying “*Yo siento que . . .*” (I feel that . . . ) versus the Anglo manner of saying “I think that . . . .”

### **Language**

Language differences also exist between Hispanics from different countries. Even though they speak Spanish, they use words and phrases differently, have different pronunciations, and employ different intonations to convey meaning. For an English

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<sup>47</sup>For example, Mexicans tend to use *usted* much more frequently and more consistently than South American Latinos.

speaker, these differences would be similar to the differences between American English, British English, Australian English, and South African English. Sometimes, they would even be similar to the difference between a native English speaker and someone who is speaking English as a second language. This characteristic is due to the fact that some Hispanics in this country are from non-Spanish speaking indigenous groups who only learn Spanish after arriving in the United States. For example, some of the Mexicans who cross the border into this country are from the Nahuatl tribe. These descendents of the Aztecs speak Nahuatl, not Spanish.<sup>49</sup>

Another language difference revolves around whether the person is a first-, second-, or third-generation Hispanic. Because second and third generation Hispanics often face cultural identity problems, many of these Hispanics do not even speak Spanish or are ashamed by their bungled attempts with the language. The new language of “spanglish” has developed, which mixes English and Spanish together. Sometimes, Spanish and English words are intermingled throughout sentences; other times, English words are “Spanish-cized” to create a completely different word.<sup>50</sup>

## **Education**

The level of education attained by the various Hispanic groups can differ enormously. On one end of the spectrum, for example, are highly-educated doctors from Cuba who come to the country to escape a repressive political regime. At the other end

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<sup>48</sup>Montoya, *Hispanic Ministry in North America*, 18.

<sup>49</sup>The Nahuatl are descendents of the Aztecs.

<sup>50</sup>Some examples are “wash-ateria” for a laundry; “Vamos al *mall*” for “Let’s



are farm laborers from Central America who arrive with little or no education. The Census Bureau also provides the following information related to the education of Hispanics:

1. Only 57 percent of Hispanics have graduated from high school, compared to 88.4 percent of non-Hispanic Whites
2. More than 25 percent of the Hispanic population has less than a ninth-grade education, compared to only 4.2 percent of non-Hispanic Whites
3. Cubans and Central/South Americans are the best educated of the different Hispanic groups, each with 73 percent of their respective populations having at least a high school education. Mexicans are the least educated with only 52 percent having at least a high school education.<sup>51</sup>

This factor's impact on the church is enormous. How does one minister to these different groups when they exist in the same congregation?

### **Socioeconomic Status**

On this topic there exists very little diversity: most Hispanics are poor. There are some who excel and have made “free market society” their mantra. The majority of Latinos, however, are at the poverty level. In *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U. S. Religion*, the authors provide information based on demographic information from the 1990s. Even then, the level of poverty in the Hispanic community was evident:

Poverty is growing rapidly among Latinos. Between 1979 and 1990, poverty within Latino families grew by 6 percentage points, while the African American and Euro-American increase was less than 1 percent each. More recently, between 1993 and 1995 there was 3.6 percent *increase* in income for African American households and a 5.1 percent *drop* in income for Latinos. . . . The number of Latino and Latina [female-headed] families living in poverty grew during the period 1974-1995 by 222.24 percent; for all African Americans, the growth rate for families in poverty was 43.81 percent, smaller even than the growth rate (49.02 percent) among

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go to the mall.”

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 4-5.

all Euro-American families in poverty.<sup>52</sup>

A strong contributing factor to the poverty in the Hispanic community is the tendency towards large families. The Census Bureau reports that “Hispanics live in family households that are larger than those of non-Hispanic Whites....In 2000, 30.6 percent of family households in which a Hispanic person was the householder consisted of five or more people. In contrast, only 11.8 percent of non-Hispanic White family households were this large.”<sup>53</sup> Another contributing factor is that “Hispanics are much more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to be unemployed.”<sup>54</sup> These characteristics, along with dramatic increases in recent immigrants, partially explain the overwhelming number of Hispanics who live at the poverty level.

### **Religion**

In this section, I will outline many of the Catholic beliefs that influence all Hispanics, even Hispanic evangelicals who “have the same Catholic roots.”<sup>55</sup> The influence of Catholicism upon the Hispanic consciousness cannot be discounted. Therefore, to understand Hispanics is to understand (or at least have a knowledge of) Catholicism.

While great inroads were made towards a more biblical Catholicism with the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic church still teaches many beliefs that are

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<sup>52</sup>Ana María Díaz-Stevens and Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo, *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U.S. Religion* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 22.

<sup>53</sup>Melissa Therrien and Roberto M. Ramirez, “The Hispanic Population in the United States” (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001), 3-4.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>55</sup>Crespo, *Being Latino in Christ*, 28.

contrary to the Bible. It is important to see that many of the teachings affect the very pillars of Christianity. Catholic beliefs surrounding purgatory, papal infallibility, works salvation, and the Virgin Mary must be understood in order to minister to Hispanics well.

**Purgatory.** The doctrine of purgatory states that purgatory “is the place of temporary punishment for those who have committed venial sins.”<sup>56</sup> There are no biblical references nor chief theologians cited to support this teaching, which the Catholic church did not even have until AD 1274.<sup>57</sup>

**Papal infallibility.** Another important teaching of the Catholic church is the dogma of papal infallibility. This doctrine, declared at the first Vatican Council, basically proclaims that the Pope:

possesses full and complete power and authority over the whole Church, that the Pope can rule independently on any matter which comes under . . .the church’s jurisdiction, without the concurrence of the other bishops or the rest of the Church, and that there is no higher authority on earth than the Pope.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, the faithful Catholic must obey all of the papal decrees.

**Works salvation.** The Roman Catholic doctrine of works salvation was the one of the primary impetuses of the Protestant Reformation. In addition to doing penance for the forgiveness of sins, Roman Catholics believe that salvation is received through

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<sup>56</sup>Ron Carlson and Ed Decker, *Fast Facts on False Teachings* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Pub., 1994), 225.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 226.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 217. This teaching views the Bible as an insufficient “rule of faith.” The Catholic faith depends not only upon the Bible, but also upon tradition (the official church teachings) and the Pope’s infallibility.

continually taking the sacrament of the Mass.<sup>59</sup>

**The Virgin Mary.** The last area in the teachings of Catholicism that is particularly pertinent to the present discussion is the doctrine of the Virgin Mary. Hispanics raised in a Catholic culture have a profound sense of awe, love, and respect for Mary. To say anything negative about Mary is to risk shutting the door to any type of relationship with most Hispanics. When it comes to religion, most Hispanics think first of Mary before either Jesus or God.<sup>60</sup> To understand the profound influence Mary has on Hispanics, it is necessary to examine the Catholic doctrines that surround her.

Beginning with the apocryphal book, the *Protoevangelium of James* which provides a “legendary account of [Mary’s] parentage, youth, and marriage,” the Marian fixation of many Catholics has continued to grow throughout the centuries.<sup>61</sup> Later, Patristic theology regarding Marian doctrine developed three main reoccurring themes: the New Eve, her perpetual virginity, and *Theotokos*.

First, the Fathers of the Church, including Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Jerome, developed a dogma declaring Mary the New Eve.<sup>62</sup> Second, based on the

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 229. This doctrine completely contradicts the biblical standard of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ as found in Eph 2:8-9. Carlson and Decker further explain that “this claim denies the all-sufficiency of Christ, His atonement and death on the cross as a once-for-all, completed act” (ibid.).

<sup>60</sup>This statement would not necessarily be true of all Hispanic evangelical Christians although they are still greatly influenced by the Catholic culture that surrounds all Hispanics.

<sup>61</sup>Elizabeth A. Johnson, “Blessed Virgin Mary,” in *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, ed. Richard P. McBrien (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1994), 833.

<sup>62</sup>Michael O’Carroll, “Mary, Mother of God,” in *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Michael Glazier and Monika K. Hellwig (Collegeville, MN: The

Septuagint rendering of Isaiah 7:14 quoted in Matthew 1:23, the Patristic Fathers unanimously affirmed Mary's biblically-attested virginity.<sup>63</sup> The doctrine became contaminated, though, when it was bestowed with a three-pronged effect: "virginity before the conception of Jesus, in the moment of his birth, and ever afterwards (*virginitas ante partum, in partu, post partum*)."<sup>64</sup> Third, the greatest contribution to Mariology during the Patristic Period was made at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431. Because of the controversy surrounding the relationship between Christ's divine and human natures, the Ephesian Council found it necessary to bestow upon Mary the title of *Theotokos*, or God-bearer, in order to affirm Jesus' divinity and humanity.<sup>65</sup>

In the Middle Ages, a new doctrine surrounding Mary began to be discussed which is a precursor to today's greatest thrust of Mariolatry. During this time, Mary's privileges grew, and prayers devoted to her, such as the Hail Mary and the Rosary, also date from this period. The consensus that Mary was indeed a "mediatrix" demeans Jesus' unique role as mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5); now Mary must intercede with her Son.

Surprisingly, the Reformation did not bring many changes to the doctrines surrounding the Blessed Virgin, even though most reformers did criticize the growing adoration of Mary. In fact, while Calvin did criticize the Catholic use of blasphemous

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Liturgical Press, 1994), 550. The doctrine of the New Eve, supported by Vatican II, purports that Mary, because of her faith and obedience, can redeem herself and all of humanity based upon her own merit.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

titles for Mary, he also apparently upheld the dogma of her perpetual virginity.<sup>66</sup>

In the subsequent centuries following the Reformation, two new Marian dogmas were declared: Mary's Immaculate Conception (1854) and her Bodily Assumption (1950).<sup>67</sup> Both of these papal decrees were strongly criticized by Protestants.

### **Summary**

These false teachings of the Roman Catholic church are only the beginning of the differences that lie between Catholics and evangelicals. Because 70 percent of the Hispanic population in the United States still proclaim themselves to be Catholic, these false teachings also separate millions of Hispanics in this country from the true gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>68</sup>

In contrast to the Catholic Hispanics in the United States, 23 percent of Latinos (8.1 million) in this country are Protestant, with 88 percent of this group self-identifying as Evangelical or born again.<sup>69</sup> The typical Hispanic church service may seem tremendously different from the typical American Protestant church service, since 64 percent (4.5 million) “are members of Pentecostal or Charismatic denominations or claim to be Pentecostal, Charismatic, or spirit-filled.”<sup>70</sup> To understand fully the impact Hispanics will have on the church in the United States is to note that “there are now more

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<sup>66</sup>Bernard Dupuy, “The Mariology of Calvin,” *Sewanee Theological Review* (1995): 117.

<sup>67</sup>Edward J. Gratsch, ed., *Principles of Catholic Theology* (New York: Alba House, 1981), 112.

<sup>68</sup>Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, “Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings,” *Interim Reports* (March 2003): 14.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

Latino Protestants in the United States than Jews or Muslims or Episcopalians and Presbyterians combined.”<sup>71</sup>

### **Conclusion**

This chapter introduces the need for a missiological response to the Latino population in the United States. It began with a history of the Hispanic presence in this country, including an in-depth look at the present population configuration. This chapter also examined the cultural idiosyncrasies of Latinos in general and then the additional characteristics that are unique to the Latino living as a minority in the United States.

Chapter 2 will begin with the explanation of the primary response to the Latino population in the United States: church planting. Both the biblical basis for church planting and the demographic need for more Hispanic churches in the country will be examined. The chapter will also identify the problems of planting churches and then will provide an effective model for church planting among the Hispanics of the United States.

Chapters 3 and 4 will be complementary to the church planting chapter. Chapter 3 will delineate the need for social ministry as a part of church planting in the Hispanic context. In an effort to avoid social ministry for social ministry’s sake alone, the chapter will begin with a biblical basis for social ministry. The discussion will then continue with an examination of different perspectives on the subject. The chapter will also include suggestions for the types of ministry needed by the Hispanic community. The chapter will then conclude with a discussion of how the Hispanic church can

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

biblically participate in social ministry while, at the same time, avoiding becoming a mere social agency.

Chapter 4 will discuss leadership development, the third part of the proposed missiological response. The premise is that for healthy churches to develop from the needed Hispanic church plants, leaders must be trained to minister in them. Attention, therefore, will be given to the types of leadership development needed to develop a healthy Hispanic church model. The discussion will include effective models of leadership development for both the laity and clergy. The chapter will also take into consideration the different educational levels on which training will be needed. Suggested programs will be recommended for church-based programs and for formal education.

Chapter 5 will draw the three elements of the proposed missiological response to a proper conclusion. The chapter will also include suggestions for further research in this area.



## CHAPTER 2

### PRIMARY RESPONSE: CHURCH PLANTING

In chapter 1 I mentioned that one of the obstacles to this research is “the rapid growth of the population itself. When one begins to take a serious look at what needs to be done, he or she may be quickly overwhelmed. The needs are so great and the population so large that one hardly knows where to begin.”<sup>1</sup> After gaining an understanding of the current demographic composite of the Hispanics in the United States, however, it becomes obvious that more Hispanic churches are needed in this country to reach the burgeoning population. C. Peter Wagner states, “The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches.”<sup>2</sup> Church planting, then, will be a necessary strategy for reaching the 39 million Latinos in the United States.

In this chapter I will provide a definition and rationale for church planting and a biblical basis for planting churches. Then, I will discuss a profile for a Hispanic church planter and different church planting models. At the end of the chapter, I will examine potential impediments for the Hispanic churches that need to be planted.

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 12 of this dissertation.

<sup>2</sup>C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 11. Thom Rainer calls this book “one of the best books written on church planting in print.” See Thom Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993), 205.

### Definition and Rationale for Church Planting

It is important to pause at this point to define the term *church planting* since this focus will envelop the entirety of this dissertation. According to Aubrey Malphurs, “Church planting is an exhausting but exciting venture of faith that involves the planned process of beginning and growing new local churches.”<sup>3</sup> Church planting involves faith since the planter is beginning something new that has no guarantee of success. It involves taking risks and following in the footsteps of Abraham in moving “outside [the] comfort zones of certainty and security and enter an unknown, somewhat frightening world.”<sup>4</sup> Church planting is beginning churches, but it also involves growing the church: “A major part of the process is to start a new church and do it correctly. This means that church planters must be familiar with biblical church growth principles, or they’ll see their churches plateau and even begin to decline.”<sup>5</sup> Church planting includes growing and developing the church from its infancy stage into a fully functioning body of believers.

Another question that may arise regarding church planting is why more churches are needed. Some well-meaning Christians may suppose that the churches that exist now should be sufficient to reach their communities. Unfortunately, this supposition is incorrect. Peter Wagner provides insight into this dilemma and suggests five answers to the question “Why plant new churches?”

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<sup>3</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 26.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 23-24.

1. Church planting is biblical.
2. Church planting means denominational survival.
3. Church planting develops new leadership.
4. Church planting stimulates existing churches.
5. Church planting is efficient.<sup>6</sup>

I will further explain the first response above in a section below. Response two, though possibly not the most altruistic of motives, is indeed true. As Wagner states, “While some denominations have been declining in the United States, other denominations in the same country through the same period of time have been growing vigorously. Without exception, the growing denominations have been those that stress church planting.”<sup>7</sup> We will take a look at three such denominations below.

According to Wagner, church planting also develops new leadership by providing more opportunities for new ministers: “New churches open wide the doors of leadership and ministry challenges and the entire Body of Christ subsequently benefits.”<sup>8</sup> Next, Wagner states that church planting stimulates existing churches. He says that “a new church in the community tends to raise the religious interest of the people in general and if handled properly can be a benefit to existing churches.”<sup>9</sup>

Last, Wagner makes the argument that church planting is efficient: “There is no more practical or cost effective way of bringing unbelievers to Christ in a given

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>6</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 19-21.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

geographical area than planting new churches.”<sup>10</sup> Thom Rainer agrees. He states:

New churches have both a higher growth rate and a higher conversion rate. A study was conducted of churches of all denominations in the Santa Clarita Valley of California. The surprising statistical conclusion was that older churches were baptizing four persons for every one hundred members, while newer churches were baptizing sixteen persons per one hundred members!<sup>11</sup>

If church planting is a biblical model of ministry and the most effective way of bringing nonbelievers into Christian brotherhood, how can we not employ this method to bring the Hispanics in the United States to the feet of Christ?

### **Current State of the Hispanic Church in the United States**

Many Hispanic churches need to be planted throughout the entire United States to reach this burgeoning population. To arrive at a starting point for this endeavor, however, it is necessary to understand the current state of the Hispanic church in the United States. According to statistics from the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) study,

1. Seventy percent of Latinos are Catholic which means there are 25 million Catholic Latinos in the United States
2. Twenty-three percent of Latinos are Protestant or other Christian (8.1 million)
3. Eighty-eight percent of all U.S. Latino Protestants are evangelicals (6.2 million)<sup>12</sup>

Of course, if 70 percent of Hispanics are Catholics and 23 percent are Protestant or other

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>11</sup>Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth*, 206.

<sup>12</sup>Bruce Murray, “Latino Religion in the U.S.: Demographic Shifts and Trends” [on-line]; accessed 31 July 2004; available from <http://www.facsnet.org/issues/faith/epinosa.php>; Internet. To clarify, of the 23 percent of Latinos who are Protestant/other Christian, 88 percent of them (6.2 million) are evangelicals.

Christian, then 7 percent of the Hispanics in the United States either have no religion or are of other world religions. This figure translates to roughly 2,450,000 Hispanics who have no connection whatsoever to Christ.

In addition to these general statistics regarding the Latino church, it is important to state that the “largest subset of Latino Protestants are Pentecostals.”<sup>13</sup> Just as the charismatic influence has been influencing the evangelical church throughout Latin America, it is also making an impact on the Hispanic church in this country. Moises Sandoval states that if Hispanic non-Pentecostal Protestants ever join with the Hispanic Pentecostal Protestants, “Hispanic Protestantism may emerge as a force to be reckoned with in U.S. society.”<sup>14</sup>

The Pentecostal influence, however, is not limited to the evangelical Hispanic church; the movement is also influencing the Catholic church. Gaston Espinosa, assistant professor of religion at Claremont McKenna College and Past Project Manager of the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life project, says that “among Latino Catholics, the Charismatic movement is popular and gaining ground. Catholic charismatics believe that Holy Spirit manifests itself in them. The movement emphasizes Jesus, conversion and spiritual renewal.”<sup>15</sup> This influence is not without suspicion among traditional Catholics, though. Espinosa reports that “some traditional Catholics see the Catholic Charismatic Movement among Latinos as a Protestant Trojan horse.”<sup>16</sup>

Besides this general information regarding Latino religion in the United

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Moises Sandoval, *On the Move* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 128.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

States, it is helpful to also see specific data from different denominations. While practically all Christian denominations have some type of ministry among Hispanics, an examination of data from three denominations provides ample information for understanding the current state of the Hispanic church in the United States. Specifically, we will look at the Nazarene church, the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Baptist Convention. These three denominations have been praised as being leaders in church planting, and they are also leaders in the area of church planting among Hispanics.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Church of the Nazarene**

Along with other denominations, the Nazarene church is making an effort to reach the Hispanic community in the United States for Christ. Of this denomination's 84 districts, 49 have Hispanic churches.<sup>18</sup> Throughout the country, there are 314 Nazarene Hispanic churches.<sup>19</sup> The greatest concentration of these churches are found in the cities of Los Angeles and New York, which have 18 and 32 Hispanic Nazarene churches respectively. Another large grouping of these churches is in the Nazarene district named "Texas-Oklahoma Latin" which has 30 Hispanic churches.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 12-16. Although this book is fifteen years old, these denominations continue to be leaders in Hispanic church planting.

<sup>18</sup>"Districts with Active Hispanic Churches and New Starts Reporting Statistics" [on-line]; accessed 14 August 2004; available from [www.nazarenosusacan.org/table2002districts.html](http://www.nazarenosusacan.org/table2002districts.html); Internet.

<sup>19</sup>"Hispanic Churches of the Nazarene—1992-2002" [on-line]; accessed 14 August 2004; available from [www.nazarenosusacan.org/hispanic92\\_02.html](http://www.nazarenosusacan.org/hispanic92_02.html); Internet.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

## Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God denomination has recognized the importance of their ethnic congregations, including Hispanic churches. The website of the denomination reports that “Every year for the past seven years we have experienced a **decline** in the number of English-speaking majority white churches (from 9,137 in 1993 to 8,829 in 1999), yet we have grown from 11,762 churches in 1993 to 12,055 in 1999.”<sup>21</sup> In fact, ethnic minority churches comprise 26.8 percent of Assemblies of God churches.<sup>22</sup> The denomination reports, “If this trend [of growing ethnic churches] remains constant for the next seven years, in 2007 the Assemblies of God will be 30% ethnic minority. That’s almost a 10% change since 1993. In 30 years majority white churches will represent just 50% of all A/G churches at best.”<sup>23</sup>

This general information regarding ethnic participation in the Assemblies of God churches is important since 58.1 percent of these ethnic congregations are Hispanic. In regard to Hispanic churches in particular, the Assemblies of God denomination has added 212 Hispanic churches since 1993. Thus, Hispanic churches have increased by 11.5 percent in the Assemblies of God denomination during this time period.<sup>24</sup> According to these data, 1,843 Hispanic Assemblies of God congregations exist.

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<sup>21</sup>“Statistical Data” [on-line]; accessed 9 August 2004; available from [http://ethnicrelations.ag.org/ethnicrelations/stat\\_ag\\_growth.ctm](http://ethnicrelations.ag.org/ethnicrelations/stat_ag_growth.ctm).; Internet. Bold in the original text.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

## The Southern Baptist Convention

According to sources outside the denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention is, by far, the leader in church planting among Hispanics (as well as other ethnic groups).<sup>25</sup> In the United States and Puerto Rico, there are “more than 4,000 Hispanic Southern Baptist congregations with 500,000 members.”<sup>26</sup> Other important church planting statistics of the Southern Baptist Convention include:

### Ten States with Highest Number of Southern Baptist Hispanic Churches

1. Texas—1,780
2. California—396
3. Florida—334
4. North Carolina—204
5. Oklahoma—131
6. Tennessee—123
7. Georgia—108
8. Kentucky—108
9. Arkansas--96
10. Nevada--93

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<sup>25</sup>“Seizing the Moment in Cross-Cultural Ministry: An Interview with David Ellis” [on-line]; accessed 20 September 2002; available from <http://www.wesleyan.org/ecg/fitness/Mandate/Fall01/Ellisfall01.htm>; Internet. David Ellis’ responsibilities in the Wesleyan church include “assisting the North American Wesleyan Church to plant ethnic churches, . . . assisting the Department of Education and the Ministry with issues specifically related to the credentialing of Hispanic Pastors and assisting in the establishment of Spanish language ministerial training schools or “Institutos.” In this interview he says, “In other words, God has brought missions to North America. The Southern Baptist Church, for example, understands this and has ten thousand ethnic congregations in the United States with a membership of over one million.” In addition to this Wesleyan church planter, even a Catholic author applauds the work of the Southern Baptist Convention. Moises Sandoval in his book *On the Move* says: “Southern Baptist mission agencies have been particularly effective in developing Hispanic ministries. Among traditional Protestant churches, the Southern Baptists probably have the largest Hispanic membership. They permit a degree of local autonomy that facilitates flexibility in responding to the needs and interests of particular congregations, though Hispanic churches appear to be well assimilated into denominational structures, problematic as they are for all Southern Baptists” (Sandoval, *On the Move*, 126).

<sup>26</sup>“Working with Hispanics,” pamphlet (Atlanta: North American Mission Board, 2001).



#### Ten States with Lowest Number of Hispanic Southern Baptist Churches

1. Montana: 0 churches for 19,171 Hispanics
2. West Virginia: 0 churches for 13,541 Hispanics
3. Alaska: 1 church for 28,029 Hispanics
4. Dakotas: 1 church for 21,141 Hispanics
5. Hawaii: 1 church for 93,047 Hispanics
6. Minnesota/Wisconsin: 5 churches for 402,786 Hispanics
7. Wyoming: 5 churches for 32,677 Hispanics
8. Washington, D.C.: 6 churches for 49,150 Hispanics
9. Iowa: 7 churches for 96,983 Hispanics
10. Pennsylvania/South Jersey: 10 churches for 1,669,306 Hispanics

#### Five States with the Highest Ratio of Hispanics per Southern Baptist Hispanic Church

1. New Jersey: 1 church per 121,861 Hispanics
2. Hawaii: 1 church per 93,047 Hispanics
3. New York: 1 church per 55,113 Hispanics
4. Wisconsin: 1 church per 45,562 Hispanics
5. Pennsylvania: 1 church per 45,070 Hispanics<sup>27</sup>

In these lists it is obvious that Southern Baptist work among Hispanics is not limited to Texas and California. Today's Hispanic population is changing, however, and Southern Baptists are striving to keep up with the changing demographics. The 35 million Latinos in the United States are extremely underrepresented in the 16 million members of the Southern Baptist Convention.

While the Southern Baptist Convention is a leader in church planting among Hispanics, more needs to be done. Currently, this denomination has only 4,000 churches for 35 million Latinos. This ratio is much too large. In Texas, where the largest number of Southern Baptist Hispanic churches exists, the ratio of Hispanic Baptist churches to Hispanics is one to 6,501, while the ratio for Anglo congregations is one to every 2,663 Anglo residents.<sup>28</sup> The state, however, is not ignoring its Hispanic population. The

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<sup>27</sup>“2003 Statistics on Hispanics in the United States” (Handout at Church Planter Dinner for Hispanics, Southern Baptist Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 14 June 2004; prepared by North American Mission Board, Atlanta, 2004).

Baptists in Texas “started 181 Hispanic churches last church year [1999] and have started 104 Hispanic churches since October 2000.”<sup>29</sup> The problem is that the Hispanic population continues to multiply more rapidly than churches are started.

### Current Literature

While many have written on the need for more church planting, in general, in the United States, a dearth of information exists on the need for church planting among Latinos in the United States. Occasionally, some of the church planting books give a slight nod to the fastest growing segment of the population. For instance, Gene Getz says in his book *Effective Church Growth Strategies*, “For example, a church focusing on reaching Hispanics certainly needs to use instruments and music choices that fit the culture of that group.”<sup>30</sup>

None of the classic church planting texts, however, even mentions church planting among Hispanics. Hesselgrave’s *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, for example, does not touch on the topic of planting Hispanic churches in the United States.<sup>31</sup> In his very practical church planting book, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Aubrey Malphurs does not deal with Hispanic

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<sup>28</sup>Mark Wingfield, “Thousands of New Hispanic Churches Needed” [on-line]; accessed 12 October 2002; available from [http://www.baptiststandard.com/2001/5\\_28/print/hispanic.html](http://www.baptiststandard.com/2001/5_28/print/hispanic.html); Internet.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Gene Getz and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000), 130.

<sup>31</sup>David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000).

churches at all.<sup>32</sup> Surprisingly, neither does the most recent church planting book published by the Spanish Baptist publishing house, the *Casa Bautista de Publicaciones*.<sup>33</sup> While co-written by one of the foremost Hispanic Baptist leaders (Daniel Sanchez), the book does not ever deal specifically with planting churches in the Hispanic context.

In fact, I found only four books that discuss church planting in the Hispanic context. While others may exist, they are most likely internal documents of denominations.<sup>34</sup> The first is the quintessential Hispanic ministry book, *The Hispanic Challenge*.<sup>35</sup> Another church planting book that gives attention to the need for new Hispanic churches is Harvie Conn's *Planting and Growing Urban Churches*.<sup>36</sup> This book is of particular import since nine out of every ten Hispanics in this country "lived in metropolitan areas in 2000; of these, roughly half lived in central cities."<sup>37</sup> The third book comes from the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board.

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<sup>32</sup>Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

<sup>33</sup>Daniel R. Sánchez, Ebbie C. Smith, and Curtis E. Watke, *Cómo sembrar iglesias en el siglo XXI* (El Paso, TX: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 2001). This book, though co-authored by a Latino, is only a translation of a book previously published in English.

<sup>34</sup>For example, on the website of the Nazarene church, I found three internal documents written by church planting personnel of that denomination. These materials are unpublished.

<sup>35</sup>Manuel Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993). This book is the classic book for Hispanic ministry. Almost every subsequent book related to Hispanic ministry in the United States cites this important writing.

<sup>36</sup>Harvie M. Conn, *Planting and Growing Urban Churches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997).

<sup>37</sup>"Facts for Features" [on-line]; accessed 11 November 2003; available from <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02ff15.html>; Internet. All of the information in this paragraph is from this source.

Compiled by Richard H. Harris, *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting* has a chapter written by Daniel Sanchez on Hispanic church planting.<sup>38</sup> Last, *American Mosaic* by Oscar I. Romo deals directly with the theme of planting Hispanic churches in the North American context while also treating church planting among other ethnic groups.<sup>39</sup>

### **Biblical Basis for Church Planting**

The need to plant more Hispanic churches is not based solely on demographic information. The Bible clearly shows that the church is “the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph 1:23). God places each of His children, “each one of them, in the body, just as He” desires (1 Cor 12:18). Therefore, the church is the home of all Christians and the fulfillment of God’s plan for Christian participation and representation on the earth. Peter Wagner explains that church planting is the “New Testament way of extending the gospel.”<sup>40</sup> He continues by stating, “This [church planting] is a Kingdom activity, strongly endorsed by God our King. Collectively, as a community of the Kingdom, we can scarcely feel that we are obeying God if we fail to plant churches and plant them intentionally and aggressively.”<sup>41</sup> While demographic realities present a need for starting more Hispanic churches, the Biblical mandate must be our first motivation. Both the Old and New Testaments provide ample evidence that church planting is ordained as a way to reach the unchurched.

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<sup>38</sup>Richard H. Harris, *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting* (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board, 2002), 169-80.

<sup>39</sup>Oscar I. Romo, *American Mosaic* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993).

<sup>40</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 19.

## Old Testament Evidence

While today's idea of the local church did not exist in the Old Testament, it is evident that God always intended to bring salvation to all peoples. The calling of Abraham, the naming of Israel as a "light to the nations" (Isa 49:6), and the acceptance of Gentile God-believers within the family of faith are all evidences of God's plan of salvation.

The calling of Abraham in chapter twelve of Genesis is the first time that we get a true sense of God's plan to offer salvation to His highest creation, man:

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (Gen 12:1-3)

Of course, the meaning of "families of the earth" is not that "every individual is promised blessing in Abram but every major group in the world will be blessed."<sup>42</sup> This promise to Abraham extends the possibility of God's blessing to every people on earth from the time of Abraham until today and until Jesus returns. Even the Apostle Paul himself referred to this promise as evidence that God planned to justify all the nations by faith (Gal 3:8).

The continuation of the promise first given to Abraham extended to the people of Israel. As God's chosen people, Israel was not to guard the blessings of God for herself only. In fact, God says that "it is too small a thing that You should be My Servant

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1

To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make you a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth” (Isa 49:6). God never intended for Israel to be the only saved nation; they were the starting point for the extension of His salvation to the ends of the earth. This passage from Isaiah serves as a proto-Great Commission from the Old Testament.

Another evidence of the desire of God to save all the peoples of the world comes in his expressed provisions for the non-Israelites. For example, He told the Israelites to love the alien who is in their midst:

For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. (Deut 10:17-19)

In addition, God cautioned the Israelites on how they should treat a non-Israelite found in their midst: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exod 22:21). God also promised His own protection to sojourners: “The LORD protects the strangers” (Ps 146:9).

Besides these passages related to the protection of the Gentile person living or traveling among the Israelites, God also specifically showed how He wanted to save them in different parts of the Old Testament. We need go no further than the great missionary book of Jonah to see how God used one of His people to spare the destruction of the wicked city of Nineveh. When Jonah complained that God spared the city, God responded, “Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left

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(Waco: Word Books, Inc., 1987), 278.

hand, as well as many animals?” (Jonah 4:11).<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, God intended from the very beginning to bring salvation to all nations. In the New Testament we see how God spread salvation to the ends of the earth through His church.

### **New Testament Evidence**

It is possible to examine many different passages in the New Testament and see God developing His church. In the Gospels we find Jesus giving some of the fundamental principles of what the church should be. In Acts we see the first church learning to live and work together. We also discover that the disciples of the first-century church will carry out God’s plan to be a light to the nations, just as God had intended from the beginning.

**Matthew.** The book of Matthew highlights two important pieces of information regarding the church. First, in Matthew 16:18 Jesus told Peter, “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.” Aubrey Malphurs points out two promises that come from this passage. The first is that “Christ, not Christians, is ultimately the person who plants and grows churches. Second, Satan and all of his forces will not be able to prevail against the church.”<sup>44</sup>

This passage is extremely important for those doing church planting. Indeed, it

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<sup>43</sup>Other Old Testament texts that demonstrate God’s desire to save the Gentile can be found in Isa 42:6; 49:6; and 56:3-7.

<sup>44</sup>Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 40.

is the “first use of *ekklesia* in the Gospels.”<sup>45</sup> It also explains that it is God who builds His church. On the other hand, it does not place limitations on the type of church building or even the ecclesiastical structure of the church. Blomberg says that Jesus “implies nothing here of any particular church structure or government; he merely promises that he will establish a gathered community of his followers and help them grow.”<sup>46</sup>

The second passage from the book of Matthew is a cornerstone for church planting and, indeed, all missionary activity. It is the Great Commission which is found in Matthew 28:18-20.<sup>47</sup> In making the connection between general church planting and planting new Hispanic churches, Bobby Sena explains the primacy of the Great Commission in the planting of new Hispanic churches. He says:

Every barrier to the gospel needs to be bridged by establishing churches that are near to the unchurched, not only geographically but also socially. This applies to the Hispanic communities as well as all of the other sociocultural groups. The command of Christ involves more than getting decisions (which is the starting point). Making disciples involves leading people to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, to become an integral part of His church as life-long followers, learners, and ministers working toward the spreading of His kingdom. This, therefore, necessitates the starting of new congregations among all people groups including Hispanics.<sup>48</sup>

The Great Commission gives the church its marching order to “go” and “make disciples” “of all nations.” These three phrases represent the crux of the Great Commission.

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<sup>45</sup>Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 252.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>47</sup>Parallel passages can be found in Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-49, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8.

<sup>48</sup>Bobby S. Sena, *Hispanic Church Planting Guide* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2001), 4.



In exegeting the word “go” in the text of the Great Commission, it is important to note that the word is an “introductory circumstantial participle that is rightly translated as coordinate to the main verb” of making disciples.<sup>49</sup> It could easily and perhaps be translated better as “while going.” This translation implies that Christians should be making disciples as an everyday occurrence or “while they are going” about their everyday business. It requires an evangelistic lifestyle for the Christian. This lifestyle, however, is not one that focuses on decisions solely. The Christian is called not only to evangelize but also to make disciples.

The phrase “make disciples” (*matheteusate* in Greek) is the “main command of Christ’s commission.”<sup>50</sup> This process of discipling and growing happens best within the context of a church body. It is within the church that the disciple will be baptized and taught to observe all that Jesus has commanded us. The fulfillment of the Great Commission includes church planting so that true disciples can be formed.

Last, the phrase “of all the nations” indicates that our church planting efforts cannot be limited to only people who are like us. The Greek phrase *panta ta ethne* which is translated “of all the nations” does not mean geopolitical nations. Instead, the phrase refers to all of the ethnic or people groups. This translation was suggested by Donald McGavran in his work, *Understanding Church Growth*. He says, “For exact rendering of the Greek words *panta ta ethne*, ‘all nations’ should read ‘all peoples.’ The apostle did not have in mind modern nation-states such as India or Mexico. He had in mind cultural

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<sup>49</sup>Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

groupings—tongues, tribes, castes, and lineages.”<sup>51</sup>

Today, God has brought many peoples or nations to the United States. It does not matter whether one is called to travel to distant lands to be a witness for Christ or if one stays in this country; all Christians are called to make disciples of all nations. In the United States the largest minority group is Hispanics, and as we have seen, many of them do not yet know Christ. A culture of church planting in every Christian denomination must exist so that, while going, many Hispanic disciples will be made.

**Church planting in the early church.** After receiving Jesus’ parallel command to the Great Commission in Acts 1:8, the disciples almost immediately set about the task of being His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the remotest parts of the earth. Citing F. F. Bruce, Ajith Fernando records that “the geographical terms provide a sort of ‘Index of Contents’ . . . ‘in Jerusalem’ covers the first seven chapters, ‘in all Judea and Samaria’ covers 8:1 to 11:18, and the remainder of the book traces the progress of the gospel outside the frontiers of the Holy Land until it at last reaches Rome.”<sup>52</sup>

First, Peter spoke at Pentecost in Jerusalem where there were Jews living “from every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5). He preached repentance and told the Jews who had come into the city that “the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself” (Acts 2:39). It is important

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<sup>51</sup>Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 40.

<sup>52</sup>F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, New International Commentary of the New Testament, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 36-37, quoted in Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The New NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan,

to note that the call to repentance and salvation was made to Jew and Gentile alike. No condition was placed on the person's nationality. Thus, the first New Testament church was born:

So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:41-47)

This "primitive" church grew and developed. They exercised church discipline (Acts 5). They suffered together and persevered together. They developed an ecclesiastical structure by creating the role of deacons (Acts 6). Most importantly, the book of Acts related that the church in Jerusalem became a reproducing church by sending out the best from among them to plant churches throughout the diaspora—and this "church planting movement" followed the same pattern as was set out by Jesus in Acts 1:8 (Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, even to the remotest parts of the earth).

**The apostle Paul.** Taking the gospel to the remotest parts of the earth was carried out by the Apostle Paul. He made it as far as Rome where his story ends with the following epitaph: "And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered" (Acts 28:30-31). While Paul's life may have ended in Rome, "the story has not reached its final destination—the witness

continues.”<sup>53</sup>

Paul made it clear that he aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that [he] would not build on another man’s foundation” (Rom 15:20). He had a simple strategy of traveling and spreading the gospel “while he was going” as directed in the Great Commission. He would arrive in a city, go to the synagogue, and reason with the Jews from the Scriptures (Acts 17:1-2).<sup>54</sup> Paul would then form these believers into churches and identify local leaders who were then responsible for discipling the new believers.<sup>55</sup> He would also train these leaders and mentor them by visiting occasionally or writing letters, thus ensuring that true discipleship took place.

Then, Paul would move on to another area and repeat the process. By this method, the Scriptures can readily proclaim that “all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19.10). Roland Allen explains the church planting ministry of Paul in this way:

In a little more than ten years St. Paul established the Church in four provinces of the Empire: Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia. Before A.D. 57 St. Paul could speak as if his work there was done, and could plan extensive tours into the far West without anxiety lest the churches which he had founded might perish in his absence for want of his guidance and support.

The work of the Apostle during these ten years can therefore be treated as a unity. Whatever assistance he may have received from the preaching of others, it is unquestioned that the establishment of the churches in these provinces was really his work. In the pages of the New Testament he, and he alone, stands forth as their founder. And the work which he did was really a completed work. So far as the foundation of the churches is concerned, it is perfectly clear that the writer of the Acts intends to represent St. Paul’s work as complete. The churches were really

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<sup>53</sup>John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 86.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 360.

<sup>55</sup>Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 151.

established. Whatever disasters fell upon them in later years, whatever failure there was, whatever ruin, that failure was not due to any insufficiency or lack of care and completeness in the Apostle's teaching or organization. When he left them, he left them because his work was fully accomplished.<sup>56</sup>

From the beginning of Scripture God had a plan to see all nations receive the offer of salvation. He promised Abraham that he and his descendents would be a blessing to all nations. He told Israel that it was not enough for them to only be a light to those who were like them; they must also be a light to the nations. In the New Testament it becomes evident that the church will be God's lighthouse. The Great Commission tells Christians to be not only a light to the nations but to disciple them. To accomplish this task, the Christians of the first century formed churches and gave us our model for planting churches today among all people groups. Thus, planting churches among the Hispanics in the United States today has biblical precedence and impetus from Abraham's blessing to Jesus' commission to Paul's model.

### **Church Planter Profile**

The successful church planter must, in many ways, be a superstar minister. The challenges of planting a church are many, and the planter must be able to overcome and to withstand them. The planter may be a founding pastor or a sequential planter,<sup>57</sup> but "the leader is the principal key to a successful church planting endeavor."<sup>58</sup> Many

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>57</sup>A "founding pastor" church planter is one who starts a church with the goal of continuing as the pastor once the church is established. A "sequential church planter" is a church planter who begins a church with the goal of leaving it, once established, in the hands of a capable pastor so that the sequential planter may continue planting other churches.

<sup>58</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 51.

authors in the church planting field provide a list of characteristics that are helpful when trying to determine who would make a good church planter. I will survey three of these lists.

### **Aubrey Malphurs' Church Planter**

Aubrey Malphurs provides a list of characteristics for church planters that is based primarily on church planters coming to know themselves and accepting who they are, along with their spiritual gifts, their strengths, and their weaknesses. He then applies the characteristics to the type of role the planter will assume: the lone church planter or part of a church-planting team. Malphurs stipulates that it is always better to plant a church with a team, but he recognizes that the ideal is not always possible.<sup>59</sup> For this reason, he differentiates between the characteristics necessary for the lone planter and for the church planting team.

This type of distinction is very important since solitary church planters need gifts that may differ greatly from a person who assumes a leadership position on a church planting team. For example, when Malphurs addresses the topic of spiritual gifts, he says,

Lone church planters should look in particular for such gifts as that of leadership, faith, evangelism, and preaching. If they plan to minister in a cross-cultural context, then the gift of apostleship [defined as the 'capacity to adapt and minister cross-culturally'] would be most helpful. They should have at least one or more of these gifts.<sup>60</sup>

On the other hand, Malphurs indicates,

The same gifts of leadership, faith, evangelism, preaching, and apostleship are

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 96.

<sup>60</sup>Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 94-96.

necessary for a church-planting team, but may be spread out among the various members of the team. It will be to the team's advantage if its leader has the gift of leadership combined with evangelism and preaching. However, another member of the team could be strong in evangelism and gifted accordingly.<sup>61</sup>

Malphurs' list of qualities for church planters also includes specifics regarding the planters' passion, their temperament, their leadership skills and styles, their ministry role, and their family. The planter's passion should be a passion for the lost and, in particular, the unchurched lost.<sup>62</sup> The temperament of the church planter may include different characteristics, but Malphurs, using the Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory, suggests that "thinking types plus intuition (*NTs*) have the edge" over feeling types since they can be "strong, visionary leaders who are good at planning and prefer change and innovation that encourage growth"<sup>63</sup>

In addition, the ideal church planter would be "the leader who has struck a balance between both roles" of leader and manager.<sup>64</sup> These roles "would involve the dual gifts of leadership and administration and strong natural abilities in both areas."<sup>65</sup> The ministry role of the church planter, according to Malphurs, "would be either the visionary/implementer or the implementer. . . . The visionary/implementer and the implementer are entrepreneurs who are designed to start new ministries within any context."<sup>66</sup> Last, the family of the church planter plays an important role in the planter's

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 97.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 99.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 104.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 107.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 110.

success. Malphurs explains, “If church planters don’t have the backing of their families, especially their wives, their ministries will suffer. Without the support of their families, church planters are doomed to failure.”<sup>67</sup>

### **Ron Larson’s Church Planter**

Ron Larson in his chapter “The DNA of a Church Planter” in the book *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting* explains that a church planter must be a “revolutionary leader.”<sup>68</sup> He says, “A revolutionary spirit is the only thing to turn our nation toward its need for Christ. It will not happen through debates, discussion, or detailed deliberations. It will only take place through revolutionary leaders who are willing to lose whatever it takes to gain what God wants.”<sup>69</sup> In order to extrapolate his definition of a revolutionary church planter, Larson provides four characteristics.

First, according to Larson, “*Revolutionary church planters are driven by decisions fueled by a dream.*”<sup>70</sup> They do not depend on other people to motivate them nor do they ask for permission. While this type of church planter seems like he would be a little hard to live with, Larson explains that “this does not mean they are uncooperative or unaccountable. Their emotions are the caboose and their God-dreamed vision is the engine.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 111.

<sup>68</sup>Ron Larson, “The DNA of a Church Planter,” in *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting*, comp. Richard H. Harris (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2002), 7-20.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 11. Italics original.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 12.



Second, “*Revolutionary church planters cut their losses and consistently move forward for the sake of the cause.*”<sup>72</sup> These leaders do not allow other people, even church members, to become a distraction to reaching the lost. Third, “*Church planting revolutionaries do not enter into anything to be a failure.*”<sup>73</sup> While this characteristic may seem obvious since no one intends to fail, the author’s point is that “a failure is a person who quits before the commander says, ‘It’s over.’”<sup>74</sup> The revolutionary church planter may fail, but he will continue to try to make things right until God releases him from his duty.

Last, Larson points out that “*church planting revolutionaries do everything with a specific intent.*”<sup>75</sup> The revolutionary church planter will arrange his time, his hobbies, his every encounter to be able to meet the needs of the lost or to train others to do the same.<sup>76</sup> Larson’s characteristics are a bit more nebulous than Malphurs’, but the paradigm of the “revolutionary church planter” is helpful.

### **C. Peter Wagner’s Church Planter**

Finally, Wagner provides a list of characteristics for the successful church planter. He, like Malphurs, realizes that “characteristics of church planters themselves will differ” based on the type of role they are trying to fulfill.<sup>77</sup> In contrast, Wagner

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid. Italics original.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 16. Italics original.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 18. Italics original.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>77</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 51.

differentiates according to the projected size of the church, whether its membership will be above or below 200. Basing his profile of the ideal church planter on a planter who will be the founding pastor and that the projected size of the new church is over 200,

Wagner lists the following nine characteristics:

1. A committed Christian worker. Church planters need to be people of God. They need to be sure of their salvation through Jesus Christ. They need to know what it means to trust God when things are going well and when they are not.
2. A self-starter. Church planters are their own boss...Because they arrange their own schedules their daily productivity depends on their personal ability to get up in the morning, scope out a day's work, and hang in there until the task is completed.
3. Willing to endure loneliness. Starting a new church is frequently a lonely job, full of frustrations. This is why church planters need to be people who are not easily discouraged.
4. Adaptable. Flexibility is very important for church planters.
5. A high level of faith. Church planters not only need to believe in God, they also need to believe in themselves. That is, they need to be convinced that God can and will do great things through them. They need to be people of healthy self-esteem. The recognition that they are chosen instruments of God for a significant task in the kingdom is not a sign of pride, but of humility, a humble willingness to be a servant of the Most High.
6. Supportive spouse and family. I never recommend leading a new church start...unless the spouse is in full support. I also counsel my students to pray sincerely that God will change the attitude of a reluctant spouse. Human coercion rarely works well. A person convinced against their will is of the same opinion still. But through prayer, God can change the will and the couple can move out in harmony to plant the church.
7. Willing and able to lead. Leadership is crucial. . . . Some seminary graduates have excellent leadership abilities and these are the ones who will usually make the best church planters. I agree with John Maxwell that everything rises or falls on leadership.
8. A friendly personality. Some individuals have a quality about them that makes strangers like them and trust them almost immediately. Some have the ability to relate well to the unchurched and not to feel intimidated by non-Christians or uncomfortable in close contact with a worldly life-style. These characteristics are particularly useful in starting a new church.

9. Clearly called by God to plant a church.<sup>78</sup>

While Malphurs' list seems to be the most comprehensive, Wagner's list of church planter characteristics is complete in its conciseness. Below, I will examine how these characteristics are reflected in the person desiring to start a church among Hispanics.

### **The Hispanic Church Planter Profile**

The Hispanic church planter<sup>79</sup> will need the same spiritual attributes as other church planters, but some of the personality traits and leadership skills will vary slightly. For example, Montoya recalls that the leader of a Hispanic church must be "a man's man" in order to reach the males in the community.<sup>80</sup> Daniel Sanchez is particularly helpful in outlining some cultural dimensions that the church planter among Hispanics must take into account.<sup>81</sup>

First, according to Sanchez, the person who desires to plant a church among Hispanics must be aware of the religious background of the target audience. As

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 51-55. I have purposefully condensed the explanations of these characteristics for the interest of time and space.

<sup>79</sup>The term *Hispanic church planter* does not necessarily refer to someone who is of Latino descent, but rather someone who is planting churches among Hispanics. Usually, a Latino is better able to relate to those he is trying to reach, but I have known several Anglo church planters who have done a tremendous job reaching Hispanics. Choosing a church planter should not depend upon the person's ethnic background but upon his calling from God.

<sup>80</sup>Alex D. Montoya, *Hispanic Ministry in North America* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 97.

<sup>81</sup>Daniel Sanchez, "Planting Churches among Hispanics," in *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting* comp. Richard H. Harris (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2002), 169-80.

mentioned earlier, the vast majority of unchurched Hispanics in the United States claim to be Catholic even though they are not actively involved in the church. Even so, “they often experience pressures from their families and friends when they participate in Evangelical outreach activities. They may also go through periods of doubt and confusion when they begin to compare what they are learning from the Bible with some of their religious traditions.”<sup>82</sup>

Because most Hispanics go through a process during their conversion from Catholicism, patience must be exercised on the part of the planter. Sanchez reminds the planter that “Often, even after a person has indicated interest in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, it may take months or even years for him or her to make the decision to be baptized and become a member of an evangelical church.”<sup>83</sup> In addition, because of their Catholic background, Hispanics have particular difficulty understanding and accepting that salvation is by grace through faith alone.<sup>84</sup>

Second, because of the emphasis Latinos place on personal relationships, the church planter among Hispanics must be a “people person.” He and his family must be willing to open their home to church members and participate in all of the birthday parties and other festive events that form a part of the Hispanic society.<sup>85</sup> Strategically, the planter must focus on Jesus’ instruction to His disciples to find the person of peace

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 177.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., 172.

when entering a city (Luke 10).<sup>86</sup> According to Sanchez, “Since Hispanics place a strong emphasis on kinship and friendship ties, finding a person of peace in a community can open the door for key networks that can be very helpful in reaching people with the gospel and starting new congregations.”<sup>87</sup>

Especially in the context of North America, the person planning to start a church among Hispanics must be able to distinguish between methods that are appropriate for Anglo or other ethnic group congregations and what will work among Hispanics. Since Latinos are still a minority group in this country, most of the church planting material available is written for the Anglo church. While the biblical principles are always applicable in the Hispanic context, some of the methodologies are not. For example, Sanchez recalls the following story:

An Hispanic church planter, for example, tried to use some of the media approaches that innovative Anglo church planters have employed successfully. He discovered that in addition to the recommended methods (direct mail, newspaper advertising, radio, TV), personalized telephone calls, home visitation, and other cultivative activities were needed to get Hispanics to attend the first public service. All of this had been preceded by six months of home Bible studies. Culturally appropriate communication methodologies and the sponsoring church’s patience and understanding have contributed to the growth of this church.<sup>88</sup>

The Hispanic church planter, therefore, must be able to discern the cultural lay of the land.

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<sup>86</sup>The terminology *person of peace* comes from the passage in Luke 10:5-6. When the seventy are sent out, Jesus tells them, “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.” In the field of church planting, the person of peace will be the person who will give the church planter entrance into the community that he is trying to reach.

<sup>87</sup>Sanchez, “Planting Churches among Hispanics,” 176.

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*, 177.

In addition to these characteristics expounded by Sanchez, I have also determined three other leadership issues that may affect the ministry of the Hispanic church planter based on my experience and observations. First, many Hispanic church planters working in the United States have come to this country as adults. Therefore, the Hispanic church planter must learn to distinguish between what are cultural church traditions that he brings from his home country and what are biblical principles by which all churches should abide. For example, some autocratic leadership structures that have worked throughout history in Latin America may no longer be effective nor desired as a church grows in this country.

In addition, the church planter must realize that a specific order of worship to which he is accustomed may not be the same order of worship to which his potential parishioners may be accustomed. This situation is very common when the church planter and the target congregation are not from the same country. Along these same lines is the issue of time. As we discussed earlier, Hispanics are more event-oriented in their idea of time. The Latino of the United States, however, has had to make some adjustments to this portion of his/her worldview out of necessity. This new realignment of time priorities carries over to church services as well. In Latin American countries it is not uncommon for church services to last more than two hours, and it is possible that there will be church services every night of the week. The church planter who seeks to work among Hispanics in this country must realize that the time demands in the United States necessitate a different worship schedule.

Another characteristic of Hispanic church planters in the United States is that, due to the lack of trained leadership, many churches import and transfer church planters

from one part of the country to another. This situation is especially true in the pioneer areas of Hispanic ministry, such as the Southeast and Midwest. It is very typical for churches in these areas to seek to bring in church planters from the more historical Hispanic areas (such as Texas, Los Angeles, and Florida). The problem occurs when these church planters are not cognizant of the cultural differences that exist between the state where they lived and their new place of residence. They may last a year (or until the first winter), but then they will return to their home state and leave a new work in shambles. Without ruling out the possibility of a flexible church planter coming in from one of the historical areas, it is always more ideal to find a church planter among the faithful of an area who already lives there and knows how to work among the Latinos of that particular region.

While these three characteristics of a Hispanic church planter are not the only differences that may exist between him and an Anglo planter, they at least provide a starting point for recognizing potential hazards. The next step in the church planting process is to decide what type of church planting model will work best in the Hispanic context.

### **Church Planting Models**

Many biblically-supported models for church planting exist. Deciding which model to employ depends upon the local setting, the culture of the people to be reached, and the personality of the planter among other things. While lists upon lists of these models are available in many books and other writings, I will focus on modality models.

These models “all involve one local church giving birth to another.”<sup>89</sup>

My focus on these types of church plants to the exclusion of others is based on the fact that I believe the biblical model is the local church giving birth to other churches. Kevin Mannoia of the United Methodist church holds this same belief. In his book *Church Planting, the Next Generation*, Mannoia says “districts do not beget churches, churches do.”<sup>90</sup>

Reproducing churches should always be the goal, according to the Antioch model found in Acts. In Acts 11 Antioch receives the gospel. Two chapters later the Antioch Christians are already sending out missionaries. For the sake of this discussion, I have condensed the modality models down to four separate church planting models: hiving off, pioneer, satellite, and multi-congregational.

### **Hiving Off Model**

The method of hiving off “is the most common way of planting a daughter church.”<sup>91</sup> This mother-daughter type of church planting occurs when a group of members leaves the mother church to plant a new church in another location. The group may be small (5-6 members), medium (50-60 members), or large (100 members or more). One of the largest churches in the world, the Yoido Full Gospel Church of Seoul, Korea, has sent out “a starting congregation of 5,000 members plus the necessary funds to have a

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<sup>89</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 60.

<sup>90</sup>Kevin W. Mannoia, *Church Planting, the Next Generation* (Indianapolis: Light and Life Press, 1996), 45.

<sup>91</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 60.



successful ministry in their area.”<sup>92</sup>

The idea behind the hiving off method is that the church plant will have a nucleus of members who are committed to its success and who will also offer some stability, both financial and spiritual, as the new church begins. The goal of this method is that a completely independent daughter church will result from the effort. Many times, this type of church planting is used to reach out to a new population segment in the community that the current church is not reaching.<sup>93</sup>

An additional way of hiving off is called colonization. The major difference is that the starter group will move to a new geographical location to begin the church, thus necessitating selling homes, finding new jobs, etc. Rainer says that this method of church planting requires “a radical level of commitment to the Great Commission.”<sup>94</sup>

### **Pioneer Model**

The second type of church planting occurs when there is no core group to go out from the mother church. It is still considered a mother-daughter church plant in that a mother church provides financial and structural support to the new church plant. Usually, a denominational church planter will work to build the core group from the community and/or the targeted population segment. Getz and Wall call this method “the pioneer church plant.”<sup>95</sup> Like the hiving off and colonization methods, the goal of the pioneer

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<sup>92</sup>Paul Yonggi Cho, December 1983 Pastors Letter, 1, as quoted in Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 62.

<sup>93</sup>Gene Getz and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville: Word, 2000), 122.

<sup>94</sup>Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth*, 210.

<sup>95</sup>Getz and Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies*, 122.

church plant is an independent daughter congregation.

### **Satellite Model**

Satellite church planting is one method with several different versions. All of the versions are united by the fact that, unlike the previous models, the goal is not to create independent daughter congregations. Instead, the new churches will remain as a part of the mother congregation and will be served by the same staff: “In most cases the senior pastor of the mother or central church functions as the senior pastor of each of the satellites.”<sup>96</sup> The members of the new churches will be members of the mother church.

While some satellites occupy the same campus, other satellite church plants have separate locations. In the multi-campus version of the satellite model, the finances of all of the churches are maintained as a whole.<sup>97</sup> The churches usually exist in separate facilities on different campuses.

The one exception to the multi-campus form of satellite planting is the multicongregational church. These churches

minister to several different ethnic groups. If properly managed, they are very effective in urban areas where many different minority groups live in geographical proximity to each other. Some multicongregational churches simply share facilities with ethnic congregations that maintain their own autonomy, while others go so far as to share the entire church administration equitably.<sup>98</sup>

The multicongregational church has many advantages for ethnic churches. They work well in urban areas where they are “an outgrowth of an organized congregation that sees

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<sup>96</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 66. In some cases, the satellites will have the same senior pastor with separate staff.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., 69.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 67.

their community changing and forms more than one congregation to meet that need.”<sup>99</sup> It is very important, however, in the multicongregational church to have some type of written agreement with all parties regarding the use of facilities, the theology of each group, and other governance issues.<sup>100</sup>

The satellite model of church planting, while being of different varieties, diverges from the previous models in that the goal is never to plant an entirely independent church. The daughter church, in effect, never leaves home.

### **Summary**

I would like to suggest two of these models as the most effective means of church planting in the Hispanic context. First, the pioneer church plant is a model that lends itself to Hispanic church planting in this country. While it would be preferable that mature Hispanic churches would “hive off” daughter Hispanic churches, few Hispanic churches exist that have followed this model. In chapter five we will examine specific methods for training more indigenous Hispanic leaders who will lead their churches to plant daughter churches.

At the present time, though, the pioneer model allows Anglo churches to become the mothers of Hispanic daughter churches. This model is particularly effective in pioneer Hispanic areas where there are no mature Hispanic churches that could “hive off.” This model allows Anglo congregations to reach out to the Hispanic community

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<sup>99</sup> Jerry Appleby with Glen Van Dyne, *The Church is in a Stew: Developing Multicongregational Churches* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1990), 76.

<sup>100</sup>For a list of questions to ask in developing a written agreement, see Appleby and Van Dyne, *The Church is in a Stew*, 65-74.

that they observe around them. Another benefit of this model is that it allows for independent Hispanic churches to develop.

Second, I suggest that the multicongregational church of the satellite church plant model is another viable model for the Hispanic context. As stated earlier, 9 out of every 10 Hispanics in this country live in an urban setting. Thus, many Hispanic congregations need to be started in these areas where space is limited and costs are exorbitant. The multicongregational model allows for multiple churches to be developed using the same facilities, thus eliminating the need for more buildings and alleviating the budget demands that a building places on a new church plant.<sup>101</sup> In addition, depending on the goals of the churches involved, it is possible to have independent Hispanic churches using this model.<sup>102</sup>

### **Potential Impediments to Hispanic Church Planting**

Above, I mentioned several characteristics that are specific to the Hispanic church planter. In the same way, some issues exist that could greatly affect the success of a Hispanic church plant in the United States, regardless of the model employed. These issues include bilingualism, multi-nationalism, and education.

#### **Bilingualism**

A challenge facing the Hispanic church in the United States today is the issue of bilingualism. Most Hispanic parents must deal with this subject as they raise their

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<sup>101</sup>Some may argue that churches do not need their own facilities. While I realize that some churches in this country choose not to own a church building, the trend is still for most churches to have a separate meeting place. This model allows for these accommodations without overburdening one congregation.

children in the United States, but the Hispanic church must also confront the subject as well. It would be prudent to address this issue even at the church planting stage.

If the Hispanic church is to continue to be relevant, it must become more effective in reaching third- and fourth-generation Hispanics. As we saw in the first chapter, first generation U. S. Hispanics are mostly monocultural and monolingual which helps them maintain their cultural identity. These traits also, however, make it hard for them to understand when their children and grandchildren embrace concepts from the Anglo culture. They see it as a betrayal of the mother culture.

Language is a sensitive issue within the Hispanic church. Some Hispanics think that to create a bilingual church is to lose the Latino culture and start down the slippery slope towards total assimilation. Others, especially those who have either attached a stigma to their Hispanic heritage or who are not fluent in Spanish, see the bilingual church as a wonderful compromise. It is the best of both worlds. They can worship with their parents and grandparents who may be monolingual as well as their cousin who just arrived in this country. At the same time, they can maintain the Hispanic culture to which they are accustomed. In addition, their children and grandchildren who speak less and less Spanish will be able to understand.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>See Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 66.

<sup>103</sup>In regard to language use, the Pew Hispanic Center reports that first generation Hispanics are 72 percent Spanish dominant, 24 percent bilingual, and 4 percent English dominant; second generation Hispanics are 7 percent Spanish dominant, 47 percent bilingual, and 46 percent English dominant; third generation and higher Hispanics are 0 percent Spanish dominant, 22 percent bilingual, and 78 percent English dominant. If it is acceptable to use self-description as an indication of assimilation, it is not until the third generation that the majority (57 percent) of Hispanics refer to themselves as American. The majority of the first and second generations refer to themselves based on their or their parents' country of origin, 68 percent and 38 percent

As long as the United States continues to experience such a great influx of immigration from Latin America, however, there will still exist the need for Spanish-only churches. The decision to be a Spanish dominant, bilingual or English dominant church will depend on the target audience of the church plant. It is important, though, to determine from the outset what type of church the plant will be. This decision may change in the future as the church develops. At the beginning, however, having this issue settled will provide clear direction for the church.

### **Multi-Nationalism**

Multi-nationalism within a local church could be a great challenge to the Hispanic church in the United States, or it could be a wonderful opportunity. The Latino population of the United States includes people of many different cultures. Mexicans represent 58.5 percent; Central and South Americans, 9 percent; Puerto Rican, 10 percent; Cuban, 3 percent; and other Hispanic, 17 percent.<sup>104</sup> Even though they are united by a similar heritage and use a comparable language, all Hispanics are not alike. If more than two groups attend the same church, these cultural differences can cause problems within the local church.

Multi-nationalism within the Hispanic church could also be a great opportunity. In most cases, this type of church would still be considered a homogenous

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respectively. This information is available from the Pew Hispanic Center in a survey brief entitled "Generational Differences" [on-line]; accessed 9 September 2004; available from <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/15.7.pdf>; Internet.

<sup>104</sup>Betsy Guzman, "Census 2000 Paints Statistical Portrait of the Nation's Hispanic Population" [on-line]; accessed 31 July 2004; available from <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/cb01-81.html>; Internet.

unit based on Donald McGavran's definition.<sup>105</sup> When Latino people worship together in the same church, even though they are from different countries with different cultures, they would form what McGavran calls "homogenous units *within* seemingly homogenous wholes."<sup>106</sup>

While he was referring to different age groups within a whole, the concept is similar to what happens in Hispanic churches where more than one nationality is present. For example, a pastor told me once that his church is composed of Salvadorans and Puerto Ricans.<sup>107</sup> While both groups get along well together, they separate into their two groups when it comes time to eat or share in other social activities.

I have observed this same situation in my church, which is half Mexican and half Chilean. It has taken a great amount of understanding on both parts not to be offended by words or attitudes that would go unnoticed in the home country but which are highly offensive to the other group. The benefit, though, has been that both groups more readily assimilate into the third culture of the United States. Being exposed to a culture that is similar but slightly different has allowed our church members to see the value in another culture while not losing their own traditions. It has also helped them be less fearful of what happens outside their cultural "box."

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<sup>105</sup>McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 163. McGavran introduces his Homogenous Unit Principle in this work and explains it with the axiom, "People like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers."

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>107</sup>Informal discussion with Hispanic church planter Heriberto Torres, June 2004.

## Education

Educational differences may also prove to be a challenge to the ministers of these churches. For example, it is difficult to teach a Bible study to a group that includes uneducated migrant workers from Mexico and highly-educated political refugees from Cuba. These educational differences also occur between generations. Fifty-five percent of first generation Hispanics have only attained less than a high school education. Second generation Hispanics have a majority of their group who have completed high school and some college (61 percent total) plus another 14 percent who are college graduates or more. Third generation Hispanics reflect an even higher evidence of educational attainment. Seventy-nine percent of third generation or later Hispanics have graduated from high school, attended some college, and/or are college graduates.<sup>108</sup>

While there will always be educational disparities in the local church, it will help the church planter if he targets the majority of teachings to a specific educational level.<sup>109</sup> At the same time he must be able to relate to the breadth of educational differences to be found within the Hispanic community.

The issues of bilingualism, multi-nationalism, and educational differences must be taken into consideration from the conception of a Hispanic church plant in the United States. To ignore these issues is to pronounce a death sentence of irrelevance over the new church.

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<sup>108</sup>Guzman, "Census 2000 Paints Statistical Portrait of the Nation's Hispanic Population."

<sup>109</sup>Usually, the planter should target the educational level of the majority of the congregation.



## Conclusion

According to Daniel Sanchez, “Hispanic church planting is one of the greatest and most exciting challenges Evangelicals face today. . . . The explosive growth of the Hispanic community gives us an unprecedented opportunity to start thousands of churches among them in this new century.”<sup>110</sup> Effective church planters who desire to work among the Hispanic population in the United States must be aware of the biblical evidence that supports their work. They also need to have the discernment to know if they would make a good church planter in the Hispanic context. In addition, Hispanic church planters must be able to determine which of the modality models of church planting will work best among their chosen community while, at the same time, taking into account the issues that could affect their church plant, such as bilingualism, multi-nationalism, and educational levels of their target audience. Regardless of the type of church model used, the church planter should take care to “not do anything which cannot be reproduced by new converts soon after they are saved.”<sup>111</sup> The goal is that, from the beginning, the church will reproduce churches.

The Hispanic church of the United States is at a precipice now due to the great influx of Latino immigration. Either it will become a leader in the Christian worldview of this country or it will slip into irrelevancy. Regardless, with most denominations in decline except for their ethnic churches and since Hispanic churches are the majority of these new church plants, the Hispanic church represents the future of the church in the

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<sup>110</sup>Sanchez, “Planting Churches among Hispanics,” 179.

<sup>111</sup>Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting* (Neosho, MO: Church Growth

United States.

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International, 1994), 131.

## CHAPTER 3

### SOCIAL MINISTRY FOR HISPANIC CHURCH PLANTING

In addition to church planting, social ministries must be a key component of the church that desires to reach Hispanics. Many people have written on the need for social ministry in the Hispanic church, but few have written on the need for social ministry as a part of church planting.<sup>1</sup> My purpose in this chapter is to suggest a renewed commitment to biblical social ministry that results in churches.

Part of my suggestion to return to biblical social ministry includes the belief that the church must participate in both evangelism and social ministry. This statement would receive the praise of most Christians, but a point of departure for some would be captured in the fact that I believe that the two ministries cannot be separated. The church should be concerned with both social ministry and evangelism, both in orthodoxy and in orthopraxis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>There are many authors who write on social ministry from varied perspectives. Books that specialize in the Hispanic/Latin American perspective on social ministry are Manuel Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1993); C. René Padilla, *Mission between the Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985); Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992); Tetsunao Yamamori and C. René Padilla, eds., *The Local Church Agent of Transformation: An Ecclesiology for Integral Mission* (Buenos Aires: Kairos Ediciones, 2004). This last book, in a few of the essays, does examine the idea of social ministry as an avenue for outreach, although not necessarily as a method of church planting.

<sup>2</sup>These two terms are not mutually exclusive. Orthodoxy, the correct

Most evangelicals who write on the subject of social ministry propose, in agreement with the Lausanne Covenant, that evangelism must take priority over social ministry.<sup>3</sup> They believe that the Bible emphasizes spiritual salvation over physical needs.<sup>4</sup> In addition to this understanding of the biblical teaching, this position finds its basis in two real situations that occur in the context of doing social ministry. First, some fear that needy people will take advantage of the church by coming only to receive a handout. Second, others fear that evangelism will never take place if a church focuses on social ministry.

While both of these situations have occurred and have caused deep consternation in the church, the church must realize that it is called to help those in need *and* to evangelize. If we are honest, as evangelicals, in our desire to give evangelism its proper place in our churches, we have neglected the biblical mandate for social responsibility. We have relegated this ministry, in large part, to governmental agencies and liberal churches that do not preach the whole gospel of Christ. We, evangelicals as a whole, must incorporate social ministry into our ministry strategies.

The issue of social ministry is particularly relevant for Hispanic church

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understanding of doctrine, should lead to a correct orthopraxis, the practical living out of all that Jesus taught. For further discussion, see C. René Padilla, "Introduction: An Ecclesiology for Integral Mission," in *The Local Church Agent of Transformation: An Ecclesiology for Integral Mission*, ed. Tetsunao Yamamori and C. René Padilla (Buenos Aires: Kairos Ediciones, 2004), 29-30.

<sup>3</sup>"The Lausanne Covenant," in *Perspectives*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1999). While the Lausanne Covenant admits that social responsibility and evangelism are both Christian duties, paragraph 6 ("The Church and Evangelism") of the Lausanne Covenant states, "In the Church's mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary."

<sup>4</sup>While I do not disagree with the emphasis of this position, I argue in this chapter that the evangelical church, and especially the church that is trying to reach

planting. Because of their non-individualistic, communal worldview, Hispanics expect to see the truth of the gospel lived out in community where everyone cares for each other.

The “Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL)” report released in January 2003, is helpful at this point. This study

was the largest bilingual survey in U.S. history on Latino religion and politics. It included a random-sample telephone survey of 2,310 Latinos across the United States and Puerto Rico (2,060 excluding Puerto Rico, which is not included in the released figures). The leadership survey included 268 Latino religious and lay leaders attending 45 congregations. They represented 25 religious traditions in 8 urban and rural areas.<sup>5</sup>

The study revealed that functioning Hispanic churches are very active in social ministries:

Outreach by Hispanic religious bodies includes helping to secure jobs and better wages and working conditions. It also includes immigration aid, ministry to gangs, childcare, after school care or mentoring, and drug rehabilitation, according to the study. Additionally, says HCAPL codirector Virgilio Elizondo, Hispanic churches help conduct English and citizenship classes and operate shelters for unwed or battered women.<sup>6</sup>

Hispanics’ commitment to social engagement is further revealed by their attitude regarding the church’s response to undocumented immigrants. The HCAPL revealed that, “Three quarters of the Latinos surveyed said they want their churches or religious organizations to aid undocumented immigrants even when it would be illegal.”<sup>7</sup>

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Hispanics, must recover a biblical understanding and practice of social ministry.

<sup>5</sup>Jeff M. Sellers, “Hispanic Churches Primed to Be More Socially Active” [online]; accessed 28 February 2003; available from <http://www.christianitytoday.com/global/pr.cgi?/ct/2003/108/56.0html>; Internet.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. The inclusion of this quotation by no means should be understood to promote the idea that the church should help “undocumented immigrants even when it would be illegal.” I included this quotation only to show the extent of aid that the Hispanic community expects from the church.

Another study, *The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations*, further supports the findings of the HCAPL.<sup>8</sup> This study focused on 468 Hispanic Protestant churches and was conducted September 2002 through May 2003. Its findings reveal that existent Hispanic churches, approximately 73 percent of the congregations surveyed “offered social service programs for community residents.”<sup>9</sup>

The information above shows that the Hispanic community has at its core a concern for social responsibility and that the church that would reach them must reflect this same concern. Three figures further demonstrate why there is a need for even more social ministry among the Hispanic population than what is being done currently.

First, “uno de cada cinco hispanos de Estados Unidos, que no habla inglés y reside en comunidades de rápido crecimiento de la población latina, dice evitar el tratamiento medico debido a barreras del lenguaje.”<sup>10</sup> Second, “El 57 por ciento de los adultos hispanos tienen título secundarios, comparado con el 84 por ciento para todos los norteamericanos y el 88,1 por ciento de los blancos no hispanos.”<sup>11</sup> Third, “Comparado

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<sup>8</sup>Amy L. Sherman, “The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations” [on-line]; accessed 5 April 2005; available from <http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf>; Internet.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Jacobo Goldstein and Flavia Colombo, “Estudio revela que hispanos que no saben ingles evitan tratamiento medico” [on-line]; accessed 11 July 2002; available from <http://cnnespanol.com/2001/salud/12/12/hispanos/>; Internet. “One of every five Hispanics in the United States who does not speak English and who lives in communities where the Latino population is growing rapidly avoids medical treatment due to language barriers.”

<sup>11</sup>“Los hispanos de EE. UU. tienen nivel educativo inferior a resto de población, dice informe” [on-line]; accessed 11 July 2002; available from [http://cnnespanol.com/2001/eeuu\\_canada/03/05/hispanos/](http://cnnespanol.com/2001/eeuu_canada/03/05/hispanos/); Internet. “Fifty-seven percent of adult Hispanics have high school diplomas, compared to 84 percent for all North Americans and 88.1 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

con niños negros y blancos, los niños hispanos ‘son más propensos a no tener seguro médico, abandonar la escuela, no tener médico de cabecera, tener más caries, registrar más casos de intentos de suicidio si son niñas y obesidad si son varones.’”<sup>12</sup> These language, medical, and psychological deficiencies in the Hispanic community highlight the necessity of the Hispanic church being involved in social ministry.

The church can and must use social ministry to fulfill these primary needs so that evangelism may take place. As the HCAPL revealed, existing Hispanic churches are active in these ministries. New church plants must also incorporate social ministry into their evangelistic strategies for two reasons. First, the Bible tells us to do so (e.g., Isa 58:5-10; Matt 25:35-40; Acts 2:44-45). Second, non-Christian Hispanics have real social needs and rightly believe that Christians are people who will help them.

From the outset, however, allow me to re-state my personal conviction on this subject since it will undergird what I will propose in this chapter. First, I believe that the Bible calls for Christians to participate in *both* evangelism and social ministry. If we are to be like Christ, we should do the things he did while he was here on earth:

Certainly he preached, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God and teaching about the coming and the nature of the kingdom, how to enter it and how it would spread. But he served in deed as well as in word, and it would be impossible in the ministry of Jesus to separate his works from his words. He fed hungry mouths and washed dirty feet, he healed the sick, comforted the sad and even

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<sup>12</sup>“Niños hispanos en EE.UU. se enferman más y reciben peor atención médica” [on-line]; accessed 11 July 2002; available from <http://cnnenespanol.com/2002/salud/07/03/hispanos.ap/index.html>; Internet. “Compared to black and white children, Hispanic children ‘are more likely not to have medical insurance, to drop out of school, to not have a primary physician, to have more cavities, to record more cases of suicide attempts if they are females and obesity if they are males.’”

restored the dead to life.<sup>13</sup>

Second, it is necessary to live out the biblical mandate for both evangelism and social ministry. It is not enough to say, “Yes, the Bible calls for both, but practically we can’t do both completely so we will give evangelism (or social ministry, depending on who is speaking) priority.” This reasoning basically provides an excuse based on pragmatism to ignore the other type of ministry.

Realizing that the idea of social ministry tends to be very controversial, I will first examine the biblical evidence that teaches that the Bible calls for God’s people to be involved in social ministry, both in the church and in the community. I will then outline the history of the debate regarding the relationship between evangelism and social ministry in order to propose that evangelism can lead to social ministry and vice versa. Finally, I will offer a model for doing social ministry in the Hispanic church with biblical integrity.

### **Biblical Evidence**

There is much biblical evidence in support of doing social ministry. While evangelism is important, the Bible also teaches that the church should do social ministry as well. As Wilkinson and Roesel state it:

Winning persons to faith in Jesus Christ is the priority of many, if not most, evangelical churches. However, evangelism that does not minister to the needs of the whole person falls short of the New Testament standard. Evangelism is incarnational when it recognizes that the Christ who came in human flesh is concerned about persons—body, mind, and spirit. Evangelism that sees persons only as souls to be saved is deficient, at best; in light of the incarnation, it may even

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<sup>13</sup>John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 24.



be considered unbiblical.<sup>14</sup>

The biblical evidence for social ministry speaks to the need for the church to minister to the needs of those both within the fellowship of the local church and of those “who have yet to believe.” These passages can be found in both the Old and New Testaments, and I will examine four of these texts.<sup>15</sup>

### **God Protects (And So Should We)**

First, in Psalm 146, we find that God cares for those who are suffering, including those who are foreigners among us:

[The Lord] is “who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free. The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises up those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous; The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked” (Ps 146:7-9).

This passage draws no line of separation between those who were Israelites and those who were not. Yahweh will protect them all. As Leslie Allen explains: “Yahweh lives up to the highest ideals of kingship as the source of justice and vindication. Food and freedom are his gifts; wholeness is his blessing. The defenseless can find in him their royal champion.”<sup>16</sup>

In fact, instead of drawing lines between his people and those outside the realm, God promises to protect the strangers [Heb. *ger*] who live among the Israelites.

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<sup>14</sup>Donald A. Wilkinson and Charles L. Roesel, *Meeting Needs Sharing Christ* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1995), 13-14.

<sup>15</sup>For other passages that demonstrate the Bible’s support of social ministry, see Deut 10:18-19; Ps 9:7-9; Prov 22:22-23; Isa 1:16-17; 10:1-2; 22:15-16; Jer 7:4-7; 22:15-16; Amos 2:6-7; Mic 6:8; Luke 4:18-19; 1 John 3:17-18.

<sup>16</sup>Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 21

Francisco García-Treto explains this phenomenon:

The *ger*, the alien who lives among the people of Israel, could have been completely deprived of dignity and even of the most basic right to justice, since the *ger* lacked two traditional elements that, at the purely human level, were the foundation of dignity and right in Israel: hereditary property, and the protection of family and kinship. The biblical tradition, however, surprises us by including the *ger* as the object of a particular predilection on Yahweh's part, and therefore to be included, jointly with the native, in the rites that expressed the community's solidarity, as well as among those to whom the law grants a special protection.<sup>17</sup>

In the current subject, Hispanic ministry in the United States, this message is of great import. If God protects the stranger among us, the church should also. This protection would extend to the millions of Hispanics who are living in the United States and who are the *ger* of this country.

### **The True Fast**

In Isaiah 58 we find God complaining about his people feigning righteousness by participating in various religious rituals, including fasting. God answers by describing the fast that he desires:

Is it not to loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light will break out like the dawn, And your recovery will speedily spring forth; And your righteousness will go before you; The glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness, And if you give yourself to the hungry And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness And your gloom will become like midday. And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. (Isa 58:6-11)

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(Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1983), 303.

<sup>17</sup>Francisco O. García-Treto, "El Señor guarda a los emigrantes," *Apuntes*, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 4.

John Oswalt explains that “only twice in the Old Testament does God command persons to fast. But in hundreds of places he commands his people to treat other people, especially those weaker than they, with respect, justice, and kindness.”<sup>18</sup> The Israelites had once again missed the point. They were not to participate in outward religious expressions if their hearts were not right. The point is not even that the poor and downtrodden needed help; the point was that God cared for them and thus, the Israelites should care for them: “The reason lies, not in the influence or power of the poor and afflicted, but in the particular concerns of God. He cares for them and he supports those who do his will in this regard.”<sup>19</sup> The Israelites were to care for other people as a consequence of their relationship with God.

God’s people should care about others because of the love they have received from him. In this way, social ministry should be a consequence of salvation. Christians should seek to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, to divide their bread with the hungry, to bring the homeless poor into their house, and to cover the naked. Then, God will hear our prayers and will guide us and will satisfy our desires and will strengthen us. This is his promise in Isaiah 58.

### **True Sheep**

While the two passages above are from the Old Testament, the New Testament also supports the role of social ministry in the church. This passage, Matthew 25:35-40, is found in the middle of Jesus telling about the separation of the sheep and the goats on

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<sup>18</sup>John N. Oswalt, *Isaiah*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 625.

<sup>19</sup>John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 25 (Waco:

judgment day. The line of demarcation between the sheep and goats is surprising: the point of separation is who served other human beings by giving them food, clothing, shelter, and companionship:

Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ ‘Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? ‘And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? ‘When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ‘The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’” (Matt 25:35-40)

As Michael Wilkins explains, “The powerful twist to the scene is that our service to Jesus is demonstrated best by how we serve the least of Jesus’ brothers.”<sup>20</sup>

The great controversy in this passage is not whether the church should participate in social ministry. Jesus makes that point clear. The debate has revolved around Jesus’ words “these brothers of Mine, even the least of them.” Many have asked the question, based on these words, whether the church should reach out to fulfill the needs of those outside of the church or if the church should be concerned about helping only the “brothers.” Based on this passage alone, the view throughout church history is that Jesus was probably referring to his disciples and other followers.<sup>21</sup> Blomberg explains further:

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Word Books, Publisher, 1987), 275.

<sup>20</sup>Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, The New NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 821.

<sup>21</sup>Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 378.

The minority view throughout church history, which is probably a majority view today, especially in churches with a healthy social ethic, is that these “brothers” are any needy people in the world. Thus the passage becomes a strong call to demonstrate “fruit in keeping with repentance” (3:8). . . . Yet while there is ample teaching in many parts of Scripture on the need to help all the poor of the world (most notably in Amos, Micah, Luke, and James), it is highly unlikely that this is Jesus’ point here.<sup>22</sup>

It is obvious from the passages that we have seen and other biblical evidence that Jesus intended for his followers to help those in need. In this passage, however, Jesus commands the church to minister to its own. In doing so, they may become a witness to others: “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

### **Faith and Works**

In James 2:14-18 the controversial topic of faith versus deeds appears. In this passage James poses several questions related to the tangible evidence of the Christian faith in the life of the believer. He questions, “Can authentic faith find expression in a confession of right doctrine alone? Can authentic faith be expressed merely as sentiment that never reaches the point of action? Or is it by necessity a faith that goes beyond these to include practical action?”<sup>23</sup> His conclusion is “Faith that does not contain within it the will or spring of action appropriate to faith is dead.”<sup>24</sup>

The “will or spring of action” that James highlights in this passage is helping the needy. He asks, “What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>David P. Nystrom, *James*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 147-48.

<sup>24</sup>Kurt A. Richardson, *James*, The New American Commentary, vol. 36

no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?" (Jas 2:14-16). Faith and taking care of the needy cannot be separated for James. Here, "true faith must find some expression other than verbalization or pious sentiment."<sup>25</sup>

In this text, the author draws the conclusion that

works are not optional for the person who claims to have faith; rather the former is inseparable from the latter, since he is advocating the need for a living faith in which belief and practice belong inextricably together. A faith without works is of no profit on two counts: it has no efficacy for the person claiming this kind of faith, for such self-delusion . . . can end only in eschatological disaster, and it does nothing to alleviate the suffering of the needy, who are not helped by pious words alone.<sup>26</sup>

For James, taking care of the needy and other good works are a necessary result of the Christian's salvation. Social ministry, therefore, is not optional for the church; it is an essential part of the Christian life.

Lest confusion result over this passage's doctrine, however, it is important to note that

James' deeds of faith are not at all what Paul meant by 'works of the law.' The question James placed before his hearers is very different from the issues before Paul. James was concerned with the demonstration of faith in Jesus through works of mercy. Paul was concerned with justification through Christ Jesus and not by ritual works of the law, such as circumcision, apart from faith in Christ.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, there should be no doubt regarding this passage's view on salvation by works.

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(Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997), 132.

<sup>25</sup>Ralph P. Martin, *James*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 48 (Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1988), 81.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>27</sup>Richardson, *James*, 128.

Salvation is by faith alone in Jesus Christ, but that salvation, according to James, should result in good works, such as taking care of the needy or other deed of mercy. In the book of James, the author declares that right orthodoxy must lead to correct orthopraxis.

### **Summary**

While there are many other passages in the Bible that speak to the necessity of the church ministering to the needs of its member and to its community, the passages that I examined above, in addition to those noted in footnote 12 provide a general overview. It is clear from the Old Testament that God intended for Israel to take care of those in need: the foreigner, the widow, the orphan. In the New Testament we find the same teachings applied to the church. In addition, the Bible shows concern for the social needs of both the members of the church and for those “yet to believe.” The church must minister both to the physical and spiritual needs of its members and its community.

### **History of the Debate**

The debate between the priority of evangelism over social ministry has reached a precipice in the twentieth century. While some debate occurred prior to the 1900s, Delos Miles says that the “great divide” between evangelism and social action is “basically a twentieth-century phenomenon.”<sup>28</sup> During the 1920s in American culture, the great polarization began between Walter Rauschenbusch’s social gospel and the evangelicals’ emphasis on personal salvation. Even Rauschenbusch noted, however, that

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<sup>28</sup>Delos Miles, “Church Social Work and Evangelism as Partners,” in *Evangelism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Thom S. Rainer (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1989), 52. For information regarding writings prior to the beginning of the twentieth century, see Don Cox, “The Great Commission and Social Ministries,” ed. Thom S. Rainer and Chuck Lawless, forthcoming.

“The adjustment of the Christian message to the regeneration of the social order is plainly one of the most difficult tasks ever laid on the intellect of religious leaders.”<sup>29</sup> Beginning in the 1950s and continuing through today, Christians worldwide have tried to figure out how to balance the two issues of evangelism and social ministry.<sup>30</sup> In response Christians have held several worldwide conferences to navigate through the artificial labyrinth of evangelism versus social ministry.<sup>31</sup>

### **Pre-Lausanne Meetings**

The meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in Mexico City in December 1963 was one of the first meetings that debated the relationship between evangelism and social ministry at a worldwide level. This meeting was important in that it was the first meeting after the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches were combined.<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, the attendees were unable to come to any conclusion on the subject.<sup>33</sup>

The results of the Mexico City conference were nebulous, but in 1966, two other meetings were held to further the debate. The first was a regional conference held in the United States that made a bold step towards defining the need for social

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<sup>29</sup>Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1945), 7.

<sup>30</sup>Athol Gill, “Christian Social Responsibility,” in *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, ed. C. René Padilla (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), 93.

<sup>31</sup>For further explanation, also see Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

<sup>32</sup>R. K. Orchard, ed., *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), vii.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 157.



responsibility in the church. The impact of the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission is described below:

The 'Wheaton Declaration', adopted at *The Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission*, Wheaton, 1966, confessed, 'We have sinned grievously. We are guilty of unscriptural isolation from the world that too often keeps us from honestly facing and coping with its concerns.' It urged all evangelicals 'to stand openly and firmly for racial equality, human freedom, and all forms of social justice throughout the world.'<sup>34</sup>

The "Wheaton Declaration," while still maintaining the priority of evangelism, encouraged the church to look at its role in the social arena.

The second meeting held in 1966 was the World Congress on Evangelism which took place in Berlin, Germany. Sponsored by *Christianity Today* and chaired by Carl F. H. Henry, the meeting focused more on the need for evangelism than for social ministry. The general thrust of the congress is found in one of the speeches made by Billy Graham that reaffirmed "if the church went back to its main task of proclaiming the Gospel and people converted to Christ, it would have far greater impact on the social, moral, and psychological needs of men than it could achieve through any other thing it could possibly do."<sup>35</sup> Thus, evangelism to the almost exclusion of social ministry was the main theme of the Berlin conference. Billy Graham "voiced a basic premise of the Congress organizers and no advance was made towards a more comprehensive concept of mission."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Gill, "Christian Social Responsibility," 95.

<sup>35</sup>C. René Padilla, "Integral Mission and Its Historical Development" [on-line]; accessed 7 April 2005; available from [http://micahchallenge.org/Christians\\_Poverty\\_and\\_Justice/98.asp](http://micahchallenge.org/Christians_Poverty_and_Justice/98.asp); Internet.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid. This statement should not be understood to imply that Billy Graham is not interested in social concerns, but rather that the emphasis of this congress was not on

Many went to Uppsala, Sweden in 1968 “hoping for a genuine meeting of minds by which this tension [between evangelism and social ministry] could be resolved.”<sup>37</sup> This “meeting of the minds,” however, did not occur in Uppsala either. John Stott quotes one of the meeting’s contributors, though, as a step in the right direction:

I believe that, with regard to the great tension between the vertical interpretation of the Gospel as essentially concerned with God’s saving action in the life of individuals, and the horizontal interpretation of it as mainly concerned with human relationships in the world, we must get out of that rather primitive oscillating movement of going from one extreme to the other, which is not worthy of a movement which by its nature seeks to embrace the truth of the gospel in its fullness. A Christianity which has lost its vertical dimension has lost its salt and is not only insipid in itself, but useless for the world. But a Christianity which would use the vertical preoccupation as a means to escape from its responsibility

for and in the common life of man is a denial of the incarnation, of God’s love for the world manifested in Christ.<sup>38</sup>

Several smaller, regional conferences also addressed the issue of the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility:

*The United States Congress on Evangelism*, Minneapolis, 1969, also made a strong plea for Christians to address themselves to contemporary social evils and *The European Congress on Evangelism*, Amsterdam, 1971, included a recognition of ‘the social implications of the Gospel’ in its fivefold aim. Each Congress called for an end to the artificial polarisation between evangelism and social action, but on each occasion, however, the primacy of proclamation was reaffirmed and social

social ministry. Graham has a long history of being concerned about social issues around the world. For example, when he came to Louisville, Kentucky, for a crusade in 2000, his organization specifically requested information from this author related to racial relations in this city, and he addressed the issues in at least one of the crusade meetings. In the historical context of this paper it is also important to note that Graham’s organization sponsored the Lausanne meeting where the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility would be further debated.

<sup>37</sup>Stott, *Christian Mission*, 20.

<sup>38</sup>Norman Goodall, ed., *The Uppsala 68 Report* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), 317-18, quoted in John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 21.

involvement was conceived primarily in personal terms.

At the Inter-Varsity *Urbana 70* Convention the relationship between evangelism and social concern became the main theological issue.<sup>39</sup>

These congresses and conferences all formed part of the backdrop for the meeting in Lausanne.

### **Lausanne 1974**

The International Congress on World Evangelization was held in Lausanne, Switzerland, in July 1974. It brought together “2,473 participants and close to 1,000 observers representing 150 countries and 135 Protestant denominations.”<sup>40</sup> This meeting is one of the most influential of the twentieth century. Leighton Ford described it thus: “If there has ever been a moment in history when evangelists were in tune with the times, it surely must have been in July of 1974. Lausanne burst upon us like a bombshell. It became an awakening experience for those who attended and thousands of Christians in numerous countries who read about it.”<sup>41</sup> From the Congress came the Lausanne Covenant, “a 2,700 word, fifteen-point document drafted under the leadership of John Stott. With this Covenant, Evangelicals took a stand against a mutilated gospel.”<sup>42</sup>

When the International Committee on World Evangelization adopted the Lausanne Covenant at their meeting in 1974, this group of missiologists, evangelists, and theologians drew an important distinction between evangelism and social ministry. While acknowledging that the church has typically been negligent in one of the two

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<sup>39</sup>Gill, “Christian Social Responsibility,” 93.

<sup>40</sup>Padilla, *Mission between the Times*, vii.

<sup>41</sup>Quoted in Padilla, *Mission between the Times*, vii.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, viii.

areas, they adopted an opinion that though both are necessary, the church should emphasize evangelism over social ministry:

To evangelize is to spread the Good News that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world.

We affirm that God is both the Creator and Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.<sup>43</sup>

While these two sections from the Lausanne Covenant seem to welcome social ministry as a foundational part of the church, the paragraph prior to these, "The Church and Evangelism," reaffirms the priority of evangelism over social responsibility: "In the

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<sup>43</sup>John Stott et al., "Evangelism and Social Responsibility" [on-line]; accessed 18 August 2004; available from <http://www.gospelcom.net/lcwe/LOP/lop21.htm>; Internet. From the International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 19-25, 1982. Paragraphs

church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary."<sup>44</sup>

### **Response to Lausanne**

Several writers, including John Stott and Carl F. H. Henry, contributed to *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*. This book, edited by C. René Padilla, contains essays based on the fifteen sections of the Lausanne Covenant. Each of these essays used the Lausanne Covenant "as a basis for further theological construction, a springboard for fresh innovative thought."<sup>45</sup> In response to the issue at hand, Athol Gill writes

The issue is not settled by stating that either evangelism or social action is primary, nor even that equal emphasis must be given to each. Both belong to the mission of the church in the world, and the situation in the church and the world at the particular time will determine the emphasis and the priority.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, Gill attests to the importance of both evangelism and social ministry to the mission of the church.

While many authors continued to write on the Lausanne Covenant, the writings of C. René Padilla, as an influential Hispanic evangelical, are important for gaining insight on how social ministry is viewed by Hispanics. He gathered many of his post-Lausanne essays into *Mission between the Times*. He states in the preface to that book that "It will by now be very obvious to the reader that most of the essays in this volume reflect the international theological dialogue that has been taking place in evangelical

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4 and 5 from the Lausanne Covenant.

<sup>44</sup>Gill, "Christian Social Responsibility," 99.

<sup>45</sup>John Stott, "Foreword," in *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, ed. C. René Padilla (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 5.

<sup>46</sup>Gill, "Christian Social Responsibility," 100.

circles since the 1974 Lausanne Congress.”<sup>47</sup>

On the issue of social ministry, Padilla writes poignantly in this book in response to the Lausanne Covenant:

Evangelism and social responsibility are inseparable. The gospel is good news about the Kingdom of God. Good works, on the other hand, are the signs of the Kingdom for which we were created in Christ Jesus. Both word and deed are inextricably united in the mission of Jesus and his apostles, and we must continue to hold both together in the mission of the church . . . .

The widest and deepest human need is for a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, through whom the Kingdom is mediated. . . . From this perspective, and this perspective only, “in the church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary” (Lausanne Covenant, par. 6), and the gospel must be proclaimed diligently. But the gospel is good news concerning the Kingdom, and the Kingdom is God’s rule over the totality of life. Every human need, therefore, can be used by the Spirit of God as a beachhead for the manifestation of his kingly power. That is why in actual practice the question of whether evangelism or social action should come first is irrelevant. In every concrete situation the needs themselves provide the guidelines for the definition of priorities.<sup>48</sup>

While most evangelicals will proclaim that evangelism and social responsibility are necessary, Padilla writes that “they are inseparable.”

### **Grand Rapids 1982**

Sponsored jointly by the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the Grand Rapids Consultation met for six days “to consider the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. Over fifty evangelical theologians from twenty-six countries participated.”<sup>49</sup> The Grand Rapids report is the most comprehensive evangelical response to the Lausanne Covenant. It states in part:

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<sup>47</sup>Padilla, *Mission between the Times*, xi.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 197-98.

To proclaim Jesus as Lord and Saviour (evangelism) has social implications, since it summons people to repent of social as well as personal sins, and to live a life of righteousness and peace in a new society which challenges the old.

To give food to the hungry (social responsibility) has evangelistic implications, since good works of love, if some in the name of Christ, are a demonstration and commendation of the Gospel.

Thus, evangelism and social responsibility while distinct from one another, are integrally related in our proclamation of obedience to the Gospel. The partnership is, in reality, a marriage.<sup>50</sup>

In regard to choosing when evangelism should be practiced ahead of social ministry, the Grand Rapids Report concluded:

Seldom if ever should we have to choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger, or between healing bodies and saving souls, since an authentic love for our neighbor will lead us to serve him or her as a whole person. Nevertheless, if we must choose, then we have to say that the supreme and ultimate need of all humankind is the saving grace of Jesus Christ and therefore a person's eternal, spiritual salvation is of greater importance than his or her temporal and material well-being.<sup>51</sup>

While the Grand Rapids Consultation made great inroads into arriving at a conclusion in the evangelism versus social responsibility, its purpose was "not to rewrite, but to clarify, the statement in the Lausanne Covenant concerning the responsibility of Christians to engage in social and political action."<sup>52</sup> It describes evangelism and social ministry as "while distinct from one another, [they] are integrally related in our proclamation of obedience to the Gospel. The partnership is, in reality, a marriage," and thus they are inseparable.

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<sup>49</sup>Miles, "Church Social Work and Evangelism as Partners," 55-56.

<sup>50</sup>"*Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment*" [online]; accessed 18 March 2004; available from <http://lausanne.gospelcom.net/LOP/lop21.htm>; Internet

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Miles, "Church Social Work and Evangelism as Partners," 56.

### **Three Views on the Relationship between Social Ministry and Evangelism**

The Grand Rapids Report outlined three basic views of the relationship between social ministry and evangelism that are helpful in summarizing the different positions on the issue. Using terminology borrowed from the report, social ministry can be regarded as a consequence of evangelism, a bridge to evangelism, or a partner of evangelism.

#### **Social Ministry as a Consequence of Evangelism**

Upon conversion, according to this viewpoint, Christians will naturally do good works: “Their new life manifests itself in the service of others.”<sup>53</sup> In fact, social responsibility, according to the Grand Rapids Report, is one of the “principal aims” of conversion.<sup>54</sup> The Grand Rapids Report does not naively believe that social responsibility will happen automatically. Thus, “social responsibility, like evangelism, should therefore be included in the teaching ministry of the church. For we have to confess the inconsistencies in our own lives and the dismal record of evangelical failure.”<sup>55</sup>

While social ministry should be a consequence of evangelism, many Christians have not been taught that they have a responsibility to do social ministry. God has indeed prepared beforehand the good works for us to walk in (Eph 2:10), but we have been negligent in answering the call from our Savior. Social responsibility should be a

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<sup>53</sup>“*Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment.*”

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.



consequence of our transformation in Christ, but it rarely is unless we are intentional about making it so.

### **Social Ministry as a Bridge to Evangelism**

In addition to social ministry being a consequence of evangelism, it can also be a bridge to evangelism. The process is not linear but more circular. Social ministry should be a result of salvation in the Christian's life, but it may also be a precursor to the evangelistic event.

Social ministry as a bridge to evangelism, however, can be viewed both positively and negatively. Positively, "it can break down prejudice and suspicion, open closed doors, and gain a hearing for the Gospel."<sup>56</sup> Thus, social ministry can provide a bridge to the evangelistic ministry of the church and can also be used in the church planting endeavor.

Negatively, though, social ministry as a bridge to evangelism can be viewed as a bribe. This viewpoint may be understood as asserting that "social action is a useful preliminary, an effective means to these [evangelistic] ends."<sup>57</sup> In this position social ministry can be the "sugar on the pill, the bait on the hook" for the "distasteful" evangelism that will soon follow.<sup>58</sup> Not only does this type of attitude seem to lack integrity; it also seems to take a lower view of the privilege of evangelism. Christians, therefore, should be mindful of their motivations when participating in social ministry.

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Stott, *Christian Mission*, 26.

Love for our fellowman should be the motivation.

### **Social Ministry as a Partner of Evangelism**

Miles, almost quoting word-for-word from the Grand Rapids Report, explains the partnership relationship between evangelism and social responsibility by returning to how Jesus joined them together in His life: “His ministry was characterized by both proclamation (*kerygma*) and service (*diakonia*). The two went hand in hand, with his words explaining his works, and his works dramatizing his words. His words and deeds were expressions of compassion for persons.”<sup>59</sup> The Grand Rapids Report continues:

[His words and His works] were expressions of his compassion for people, and both should be of ours. Both also issue from the lordship of Jesus, for he sends us out into the world both to preach and to serve. If we proclaim the Good News of God’s love, we must manifest his love in caring for the needy. Indeed, so close is this link between proclaiming and serving, that they actually overlap.

This is not to say that they should be identified with each other, for evangelism is not social responsibility, nor is social responsibility evangelism. Yet, each involves the other.<sup>60</sup>

Thus, evangelism and social responsibility are partners in the ministry of the local church.

### **Summary**

Social ministry should be done out of love for the other person, just as evangelism should be done out of love for the other person. Both evangelism and social ministry should also occur because the Bible commands Christ’s followers to do them.

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Miles, “Church Social Work and Evangelism as Partners,” 57.

Both are to be practiced by the local church, and they can function as partners. They are, however, equal, valid partners in the ministry of the local church, and each unique situation will determine which type of ministry is needed at that moment. Social ministry may be a bridge to evangelism or it may be a consequence of evangelism in the life of the believer. Regardless which ministry occurs first, both are needed as part of the ministry strategy of the local church, and more specifically, in the church that will reach Hispanics in this country.

### **Practical Applications for the Hispanic Church**

Now that I have established that evangelism and social responsibility are both needed in the ministry of the local church, it is important to discuss how to do both in such a way that neither is neglected. Steve Sjogren renewed the evangelical church's interest in social ministry with his book *Conspiracy of Kindness*, in which he emphasizes "servant evangelism." Servant evangelism is "*demonstrating the kindness of God by offering to do some act of humble service with no strings attached.*"<sup>61</sup> While his tendency is to suggest servant evangelism instead of other types of evangelism, Sjogren realizes that all types of evangelism are important for the church. Using a golf analogy, he explains the need to use different types of evangelism:

We need an entire "golf bag" full of approaches for reaching those in our communities. Though many of the traditional approaches to sharing the gospel are rather high risk, they have proven to be effective over the years. We would be committing an error in judgment to drop every other approach to evangelism just to adopt servant evangelism. I vigorously support any approach that effectively encounters the unchurched. My hope is that we can grow in our effectiveness by

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<sup>60</sup>"*Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment.*"

<sup>61</sup>Steve Sjogren, *Conspiracy of Kindness* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1993), 17-18. Italics original.

growing in our diversity, that we can learn how to draw on the appropriate “club” at the right time in bringing the good news.<sup>62</sup>

While we are concerned in this chapter about encouraging social ministry to reach the Hispanics of this country, we want to be careful not to emphasize it to the exclusion of evangelism. It is important to keep in the forefront that the two are indeed partners in the ministry of the local church.

We also want to be cautious to do social ministry in such a way that does not create dependency. John M. Perkins explains in his book, *Beyond Charity*, that quick-fix solutions do not work. In fact, they ultimately cause more damage than good. He says:

It is clear in Scripture that God works constantly to transform people who then reflect the fruit of the Spirit. People go wrong when they assume that they know what needs fixing. Some things, like child neglect and abuse, dropping out of school, and the breakdown of the family, obviously need fixing. But if you don't live in the urban community and allow it to become a part of you, you might see what needs fixing but you won't understand the reasons these problems have developed. This lack of understanding will make your approach irrelevant.

Sometimes people from the suburbs come to my neighborhood, take a look at the trash on the street and sidewalks, and say, “What this place needs is a cleanup campaign.” So they go around the neighborhood trying to get people to join a cleanup campaign. Then, when no one joins in it with them, they say, “The problem here is that no one cares about keeping the neighborhood clean.”<sup>63</sup>

The social ministry intended to reach Hispanics should be done by people who live in the community and who have allowed the community to become a part of them. These persons will have the capability to do social ministry in a way that does not create dependency since they understand the total situation. Manuel Ortiz suggests that second- and third-generation Hispanics may be the people to take on this task:

God may be asking for a similar commitment from second- and third-generation Hispanics: to return to the communities they had always dreamed of leaving. It will

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 63.

<sup>63</sup>John M. Perkins, *Beyond Charity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 31.

be difficult, perhaps impossible, to move back voluntarily. But if some of us don't return, our judgment of the Anglo community for leaving the inner city when times got tough and the neighbors changed color and lifestyle may haunt us in the future. God's will must be our criterion for going or staying."<sup>64</sup>

These second- and third-generation Hispanics know the community context. They, and others who have intimate knowledge of the community, could teach the church to do social ministry in a way that is helpful and that will not create a dependency.

### **Specific Ministries for the Hispanic Church**

When we look at what specific ministries the Hispanic church should incorporate into their ministry strategies, we should examine the needs that exist within the Hispanic community. The results of the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) study and other statistical information presented above provide areas in which the Hispanic church can minister to its community.<sup>65</sup>

As we saw above, many of the existent Hispanic churches are already doing some type of social ministry.<sup>66</sup> In many of the Hispanic churches I visited, it was common to find food and clothing closets as examples of social ministry. The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Churches survey also found that these were common ministries in the Hispanic church: "Like most other churches, Hispanic Protestant congregations tend to be more active in short-term, relief-oriented programs (food and clothing assistance) than in longer-term, more 'development-

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<sup>64</sup>Manuel Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 103.

<sup>65</sup>See pp. 74-75 of this dissertation for further information related to the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) study.

<sup>66</sup>See p. 76 of this dissertation.

oriented' ministries."<sup>67</sup>

In addition to these important relief-oriented ministries, churches that wish to reach the Hispanic community should consider other ministries that may be more labor intensive. Three programs, in particular, have the potential for making the greatest impact on the Hispanic community in this country: educational programs, Christian translators, and counseling teams.<sup>68</sup>

### **Educational Programs**

First, churches should consider housing educational programs, including English as a Second Language (ESL) and tutoring programs for school-age students. Since many Hispanics stay out of the cultural mainstream of this country because of language barriers, churches that teach English as a Second Language can provide an empowering tool for the Hispanic community. Currently, only 18.6 percent of the churches surveyed in *The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations* study provide English as a Second Language classes.<sup>69</sup>

Newly-planted Hispanic churches can easily provide this ministry to the community they are trying to reach. Training can be obtained through the church's

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<sup>67</sup>Sherman, "The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations."

<sup>68</sup>For additional types of programs that have been effective in a Latin American church, see Yamamori and Padilla, *The Local Church, Agent of Transformation*, 304-306. For general ideas for servant evangelism projects, see Steve Sjogren, *101 Ways to Reach Your Community* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001).

<sup>69</sup> Sherman, "The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations."

denomination, a local university, or books on English as a Second Language.<sup>70</sup> The Iglesia Bethesda Metodista (Bethesda Methodist Church) in Bethesda, Maryland, also partners with local schools, other churches, and the public library to provide ESL classes.<sup>71</sup> This church's program:

ofrece clases gratuitas de inglés durante todo el año. Está en capacidad de atender a cien adultos y emplea la ayuda de cinco maestros, cuatro de ellos hispanos y un anglo. Varios de los maestros reciben un pequeño estipendio. Se ofrecen tres niveles de instrucción. El nivel uno se dirige a las necesidades de los que hablan muy poco inglés o nada. Hay tres clases diferentes de principiantes con destrezas variadas. El nivel dos se concentra en composición básica, y el tres se ofrece a los que ya pueden leer y escribir en inglés de manera práctica. El programa ofrece los tres niveles de inglés en clases que van de 4:30 a 6:00 de la tarde, los martes y jueves por la noche. Los miércoles por la noche se reúnen únicamente las clases del primer nivel, de 7:30 a 9:00 de la noche.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>An important website that can provide ESL teaching tips, lesson plans, and resource lists is "Everything ESL" [on-line]; accessed 14 April 2005; available from [www.everythingESL.net](http://www.everythingESL.net); Internet. An example of a denomination providing ESL resources is The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. This denomination offers resources for training and for teaching English as a Second Language using the book of Mark (see <http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.238436/k.CBC8/ESL.htm>). For more formal training, contact your local university. Most colleges have at least some baccalaureate-level courses available in teaching English as a Second Language.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid. For more information about this church's ESL ministry, see Edward R. Davis, "Ministerio de ESL en Washington, DC" [on-line]; accessed 13 April 2005; available from [http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/BethesdaSpanish\\_final.pdf](http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/BethesdaSpanish_final.pdf); Internet.

<sup>72</sup>Edward R. Davis, "Ministerio de ESL en Washington, DC" [on-line]; accessed 14 April 2005; available from [http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/BethesdaSpanish\\_final.pdf](http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/BethesdaSpanish_final.pdf); Internet. This church "offers free English classes all year long. It has the capacity to help 100 adults and employs five teachers, 4 of whom are Hispanics and one Anglo. Several of the teachers receive a small stipend. Three levels of instruction are offered. Level one is directed towards the needs of those who speak little to no English. There are three different beginner's classes of varied capabilities. Level two is concentrated in basic composition, and the third level is offered in a practical manner to those who already can read and write in English. The program offers the three levels of English in classes from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Wednesday, only the first-level classes meet from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m."

In addition to language problems, Hispanics in the United States typically have a lower education level than their black and white counterparts. Churches can make a lasting contribution to the Hispanic community by providing tutoring programs for school-age Hispanics.<sup>73</sup> Only 15.4 percent of the surveyed churches in “The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations” study currently have a tutoring program. Churches wishing to begin this type of ministry should consider partnering with local schools and other community programs, such as GED training, in order to bolster the tutoring they are able to provide. Not only will tutoring programs help the students be successful in the classroom; these programs will also have a lasting impact on the Hispanic community as they teach young Hispanics the value of education.

### **Christian Translators**

Next, while ESL programs are helpful in the long term, churches should seek to provide Christian translators to accompany Hispanics to schools, medical appointments, and other types of appointments until they learn English. By being available at these important appointments, these translators can share in the most important decisions of the Hispanic family and can help them see how God can work and move in their lives. For example, the Christian translator who accompanies a Hispanic to a doctor’s appointment may be called upon to relay critical information related to a health problem the person may be having.

By being available at that moment, the translator, who is already trusted by the

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<sup>73</sup>“Los hispanos de EE. UU. tienen nivel educativo inferior a resto de población, dice informe” and G. Patricia De la Cruz and Roberto R. Ramirez, “The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 2002” (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2003), 4.



Hispanic, will be able to discuss God's purposes in our lives. Christian translators are usually called upon in the most important moments of the Latino person's life. While churches provide these ministries solely out of love for the person, the translator can take advantage of these teachable moments to share verbally about the God who offers complete salvation. Thus, social ministry can be a bridge to evangelism in the most positive sense.<sup>74</sup>

### **Counseling Team**

The church that will reach Hispanics should also be willing to form a team of counselors who can minister to its community. This ministry will, perhaps, be the most labor intensive of all the programs suggested here, but it is necessary. For these counselors to be effective, they must be a part of the community so that they can understand the reasons behind the needs, as John Perkins has pointed out above.

These counselors are needed to address many problems that Hispanics face.

One extreme example of why counselors are necessary is that Hispanic girls are more

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<sup>74</sup>The National City Christian Church in Washington, DC, offers interpreters as a part of its ministry as well as providing document translation. See "National City Christian Church" [on-line]; accessed 14 April 2005; available from <http://www.nationalcitycc.org/ministries/Hispanic.htm> for more information about this church.

The Iglesia Bautista Getsemaní (Gethsemane Baptist Church) in Bloomfield, Kentucky, and the Iglesia Bautista de Georgetown (Georgetown Baptist Church) in Georgetown, Kentucky, also offer this ministry. In both cases, the ministry is usually for the members of the church but is open to the community as well. The pastors and members of these churches have translated in a variety of situations, including doctor's appointments, school admission meetings, childbirth, etc.

In addition, Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, and the International Church of the Four Square Gospel in Las Cruces, New Mexico, are two churches that provide translation during church services and other activities held at the churches. For more information, see Amy L. Sherman, "The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations" [on-line]; accessed 5 April 2005; available from [www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf](http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf); Internet.

likely to commit suicide than black and white young females.<sup>75</sup> The counselors could also help with other situations that are particular to the Hispanic context. For example, the migrant nature of many Hispanics leads to broken families and/or families separated by great distances. These problems cause great anxiety for many Hispanics, given that the family is one of the cornerstones of the Hispanic community.<sup>76</sup> Social responsibility in the Hispanic community includes attempting to change the society that will affect individuals for the better.<sup>77</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The cross was both horizontal and vertical in its structure and in its spiritual dimension. Nowhere in the Bible does it tell Jesus' followers to be either vertically-aligned with the Father or be horizontally-aligned with their fellow human beings. To the contrary, it says to do both. Of course, it is only when we have the vertical relationship right with the Father that we can hope to have our horizontal relationships in their correct state, but we must do both. Millions of Hispanics are waiting to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. We must plant churches that will minister to their needs in a responsible

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<sup>75</sup>“Niños hispanos en EE.UU. se enferman más y reciben peor atención médica.”

<sup>76</sup>For further discussion of the importance of the family in the Hispanic culture, see p. 18 of this dissertation.

<sup>77</sup>One Hispanic church that is currently operating a counseling center is Centro Cristiano, in Houston, Texas. The Centro Cristiano is a pre-dominantly Hispanic church with 400 attendees. Its services are offered to members and to the community at large. They also refer to other agencies for help when they are unable to provide the counseling needed. For more information, see Amy L. Sherman, “The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations” [on-line]; accessed 5 April 2005; available from [www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf](http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf); Internet.

manner. As E. Stanley Jones explains: “An individual gospel without a social gospel is a soul without a body, and a social gospel without an individualized gospel is a body without a soul. One is a ghost, and the other is a corpse.”<sup>78</sup>

In summary, the church that desires to reach Hispanics should:

1. Be motivated by God’s love and the Bible’s teachings to incorporate social ministry into their ministry strategies
2. Realize that social ministry and evangelism are equally important in the ministry of the local church
3. Participate in social ministry in such a way that dependency is not created

In this way the church will fulfill its biblical mandate to evangelize and to minister to the social needs of its members and the local community.

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<sup>78</sup>Miles, “Church Social Work and Evangelism as Partners,” 53.

## CHAPTER 4

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR HISPANIC CHURCHES

While many Hispanic leaders recognize the need for more trained leadership, few have seen this aspect as being a key to church planting.<sup>1</sup> A few small, private, independent training centers or Bible institutes exist in different places in the country.<sup>2</sup> One of the most noted places of training for Hispanic leaders in the United States is the Baptist University of the Americas in San Antonio, Texas, which was granted accreditation in 2003.<sup>3</sup> Much more must be done, however, to train leaders who will lead

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<sup>1</sup>For example, see Justo L. González, *The Theological Education of Hispanics* (New York: Fund for Theological Education, 1988), and Manuel Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993). Both of these books address the need for more theological education for Hispanics. Neither deals specifically with the need for theological education in order for more church planting to occur. This author has found only one institute that has effectively linked training to Hispanic church planting. In Texas, one local leader started a center with the goal of training leaders to plant Hispanic churches. In the year 2000, students of Otto Arango's centers started 100 new congregations. For more information, see Daniel Sanchez, "Starting Churches in the Hispanic Community," in Richard H. Harris, *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2002), 178.

<sup>2</sup>For a list of twenty-five Hispanic Bible institutes, see Amy L. Sherman, "The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations" [on-line]; accessed 9 April 2005; available from <http://www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org/articles/HispanicSurveyReport.pdf>; Internet.

<sup>3</sup>"Accreditation, Certification, and Recognition" [on-line]; accessed 29 November 2003; available from [www.hbts.edu](http://www.hbts.edu); Internet. This school has undergone several name changes in its history. It was formerly known as the Hispanic Baptist Theological School but changed its name after receiving accreditation.

newly planted churches and plant more churches for the 35 million Hispanics in the country.

As the Hispanic population increases, more churches will be needed to reach unchurched Hispanics. In Texas one leader related, ““Because demographics tell us that the state of Texas is rapidly becoming a predominantly Hispanic state, we must have trained, qualified Hispanic pastors and laypersons to carry the gospel to the multitude of Spanish-speaking people in Texas.””<sup>4</sup> This statement is true throughout all of the United States. In Tennessee, for example, a group of nine students graduated in 2002 from a seminary extension program. The program was begun because Chuy Avila, a leader among Tennessee Baptist Hispanics, recognized that

such a training center was needed because of the many Hispanics moving to the state who needed churches. Those churches required trained leaders, he said. And Hispanic church leaders need not only to study in Spanish, their first language, but to learn theology which is presented considering the cultural norms and backgrounds of Hispanics.

Hispanic pastors and church planters could be hired from other states, especially Texas and California, said Avila. But the money isn’t available to hire enough pastors and church planters. And they probably wouldn’t stay in Tennessee.

Developing Baptist pastors and church leaders from current church leaders is the only way to reach the TBC [Tennessee Baptist Convention] goal of providing 150 Hispanic Baptist congregations to Hispanics in Tennessee by 2010, explained Avila.

“We need to invest in the laypeople” he said, which is “building them” and “building the future.”<sup>5</sup>

The goal is a healthy Hispanic church in the United States; the problem is that we need more trained leaders to develop these healthy churches. We need church

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<sup>4</sup>Mark Wingfield, “Hispanic Baptist Theological School Reaching Unchurched ‘Jose and Maria.’” [on-line]; accessed 20 October 2002; available from [http://www.baptiststandard.com/2002/1\\_7/pages/hispanic.html](http://www.baptiststandard.com/2002/1_7/pages/hispanic.html); Internet.

<sup>5</sup>Connie Davis, “Spanish language seminary extension holds first graduation,” [on-line]; accessed 19 November 2002; available from <http://www.tnbaptist.org/>

planters who have a real vision for developing the leadership to sustain the church. The first step to achieve a healthy Hispanic church in the United States is church planting so that the millions who do not know the Savior can be reached with the Good News of Jesus Christ. For church planting to be successful in the Hispanic context, it must include social ministry. Last, if the planted churches are to grow to maturity, leaders must be trained to minister to them. If not, the church may be planted, but theological aberrancy will be imminent. As Justo Gonzalez notes:

Hispanics need more, not less, academic and intellectual tools. While theological education must continue at all levels, we must take care not to fall into the trap of thinking that because most of the Hispanic constituency has had few educational opportunities a mediocre education suffices for ministry among them.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter will discuss leadership development, the third part of this dissertation's proposed missiological response. The premise is that for healthy churches to develop from the needed Hispanic church plants, leaders must be trained to minister in them. Attention, therefore, will be given to the rationale for Hispanic leadership development, pedagogical insights for programs, and the types of leadership development needed to develop a healthy Hispanic church model. The discussion will include effective models of leadership development for both the laity and clergy. Suggested programs will be recommended for church-based programs and for formal education.

### **Rationale for Hispanic Leadership Development**

John Maxwell said in his book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* that

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baptistandreflector/2002B&R/09-18/br09-18-3.htm; Internet.

<sup>6</sup>González, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*, 79.

“Everything rises and falls on leadership.”<sup>7</sup> This maxim is true in Hispanic churches as well. If the Hispanic churches that are planted are not thoroughly grounded in good theology by a well-trained pastor, then the future of the Hispanic church in America, as a whole, is on shaky ground.

Hispanic ministers recognize the need for more trained workers. For example, Carlos De la Barra has been a Hispanic missionary of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for seven years. Prior to this assignment, he pastored Hispanic churches in South Carolina, Kentucky, and Indiana for seven years. In his experience he has noted an extreme lack of trained leaders, and in particular, of trained Mexican pastors. According to De la Barra, more Mexican pastors need to be trained for the ministry because they are the largest sub-group within the Hispanic population, but due to educational deficiencies, they are underrepresented in the number of trained pastors. In summary, De la Barra believes that more Hispanic pastors of all nationalities must be trained to meet the increasing demand for churches in this burgeoning population.<sup>8</sup>

A lack of trained leaders in the Hispanic church may affect the entire Hispanic community as well. Conde-Frazier writes that as the Hispanic population continues to soar, the Hispanic church will be in “a key position as a positive contributing factor in the life of Latinos in the United States. If however, the leaders of the church do not receive the theological training necessary to contextualize its ministry so that it responds adequately to the complexity of issues affecting the well-being of this group, then their

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<sup>7</sup>John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998).

future stands to be adversely affected.”<sup>9</sup> Hispanic leaders must be trained so that they can effectively minister in their churches and communities. In addition to the general need for more trained Hispanic ministers, specific reasons for developing Hispanic training programs are the need for Hispanic scholars and the need for Hispanic denominational workers.

### **Need for Hispanic Scholars**

Because of the mere size of the population, Hispanics will continue to influence both the church and culture of this country. We need more Hispanics who are willing to go the extra mile to prepare themselves as biblical scholars so that their influence will be positive. These scholars should represent the Hispanic community at the cultural roundtable of this country.

While Hispanic scholars are needed as representatives in the general cultural conversation in the larger culture of the United States, the Hispanic community itself also needs more biblical scholars. Allan Figueroa Deck writes that, “Until now there have been few professional United States Hispanic theological voices. Virgil Elizondo, within the Roman Catholic tradition, and Justo González and Orlando Costas, within the Protestant tradition, are among the few who come to mind.”<sup>10</sup> Manuel Ortiz agrees. He says, “There is a great need for theological and ecclesiastical leaders who will give

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<sup>8</sup>Carlos De la Barra, interview by author, Louisville, KY, 9 April 2005.

<sup>9</sup>Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes in Massachusetts: Their Mission, Educational Philosophy and Pedagogy” (Ph. D. diss., Boston College, 1998), 5.

<sup>10</sup>Allan Figueroa Deck, *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the U. S.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), ix.



proper guidance to the Hispanic community.”<sup>11</sup> New scholars are needed that can deal with the issues of second- and third-generation Hispanics and can influence them to be the Hispanic ministers that the church desperately needs.

### **Need for Hispanic Denominational Workers**

Without the high number of newly-planted Hispanic churches, many denominations would be losing members.<sup>12</sup> Since Hispanic churches are maintaining the lifeline for so many denominations, it is imperative that there be ample representation of Hispanics on the boards of denominational entities and on denominational staffs. In addition, these Hispanics should not be recruited just to meet imaginary quotas of Hispanic participation. Nor should the participation of these Hispanics be limited to only the Hispanic department of the denominational staff. They should have a voice at every level. Hispanic denominational workers, however, must be trained. In particular, they must be trained in the denominational structures of the different churches in the United States. If not, the Hispanic church will continue to function without a denominational perspective and most likely will eventually depart from the denominations that started them.

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<sup>11</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 144.

<sup>12</sup>For example, see the statistics from the Assembly of God in chapter two. Statistics for other denominations can be found in Andres Tapia’s article “Growing Pains,” *Christianity Today* (6 February 1995): 38-40. In this article, the author makes the bold statement that “several denominations that show overall impressive growth records would actually post no or negative growth if their Latino growth numbers were not included in the statistics” (38).

## The Bible and Education

It would be incorrect to posit the need for leadership development in Hispanic churches based solely on the overwhelming need for leaders. The Bible clearly teaches that Christians are to be taught and trained “to obey all that” Jesus commanded (Matt 28:19-20). While examples of teachers and students exist in the Old Testament, this study will focus on Jesus’ teaching.<sup>13</sup>

Jesus, as the Master Teacher, provides many pedagogical strategies that can be followed today. First, His teaching reflected “flexibility and an intense attention to individual persons.”<sup>14</sup> He also “tailored His responses to the particular audience.”<sup>15</sup> Jesus “taught with active example and with an enormous amount of flexibility, displaying sensitivity to the situation. He took advantage of teachable moments and expected those who followed Him to experience changed lives.”<sup>16</sup> The Master Teacher indeed knew how to communicate “to the heart by addressing [a] person’s self-perception and life experiences.”<sup>17</sup>

Pazmiño outlines five additional principles from Jesus’ teaching that are worthy of emulation in general educational settings and in educational environments for

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<sup>13</sup>Biblical examples of teacher/student interactions from the Old Testament include Jethro and Moses in Exod 18; and Nathan and King David in 2 Sam 12. For further information on these educational experiences, see Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit, eds., *The Christian Educator’s Handbooks on Adult Education* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 17-19.

<sup>14</sup>Kenneth O. Gangel, “Biblical Foundations for Adult Education,” in *The Christian Educator’s Handbook on Adult Education*, ed. Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 14.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

Hispanics:

1. *Jesus' teaching was authoritative.* Jesus taught as one who had authority (Mark 1:27), a fact demonstrated by his actions and words. His authority was authenticated by the content of his teaching and by who he was as a person. The content of his teaching was the revelation of God, for he spoke with the words of God the Father (John 14:23-24). In addition, Jesus' life and ministry authenticated the authority of his teaching.
2. *Jesus' teaching was not authoritarian.* While being authoritative, Jesus' teaching was not forced or imposed upon his hearers (John 6:60-69). Jesus specified the costs and demands of discipleship and encouraged his followers to make personal commitments of their choosing. Once having delivered the message, he allowed the individual to confront the truth and come to his or her own conclusions.
3. *Jesus' teaching encouraged people to think.* Jesus stimulated serious thought and reflection in his teaching content. He expected his hearers to carefully consider their response to the truths he shared. In response to many inquiries, he did not provide simple, ready-made answers to life's problems. Jesus expected his students to search their minds and hearts in relation to his teachings and to consider the realities of life. In encouraging others to think for themselves, Jesus posed questions and allowed for questioning.
4. *Jesus lived what he taught.* Jesus incarnated his message faithfully in his life and ministry. Before commanding his disciples to serve and love one another as he had loved them (John 13:12-17, 34-35), Jesus demonstrated the full extent of his love by washing his disciples' feet. He then further demonstrated his love by laying down his life for his friends (John 15:12-13). No one had ever personified or embodied instructional content as much as Jesus.
5. *Jesus had a love for those he taught.* Jesus loved his students, his disciples, in a way that indicated the deep longings of every heart for an intimate relationship with another person and with God. This relationship of love with Jesus was also characterized by an equal concern for truth as the Master Teacher communicated it.<sup>18</sup>

Each of these characteristics of Jesus' teaching can be appropriated by those wishing to teach Hispanics. As we will see in the pedagogical section below, the first three characteristics mentioned by Pazmiño, however, are of special significance as they

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>18</sup>Robert W. Pazmiño, "Jesús: The Master Teacher," in *Introducing Christian*

relate to the issue of authority between the Hispanic teacher and the Hispanic student. The Hispanic teacher must teach as Jesus taught by encouraging the students to ask questions and to think critically.

### **Pedagogical Insights for Hispanics**

Before looking at specific types of training for Hispanics, it is important to recognize that some people may ask why we should have *Hispanic* theological education. Do Hispanics not have the ability to take the information taught in English-speaking and upper middle class-focused seminaries and apply it to their own cultural context? While many Hispanics have indeed been able to accomplish this feat, others believe the lack of relevance in the seminaries will ultimately separate them from the community to whom they will be ministering.

For example, Orlando Costas, who was one of the foremost Hispanic theological practitioners in this country, “expressed frustration at the adequacy of his seminary training when immersed in an inner-city ministry in the Midwest.”<sup>19</sup> Regarding his seminary experience, he states in his book *Christ Outside the Gate*, “There I found ample studies in history, theology, pastoral care, and communication theory, but I was not given help as a Hispanic pastor to deal with the educational, economic, political, and cultural oppression that our community was suffering.”<sup>20</sup> The traditional seminary left Costas unprepared to minister in the Hispanic context.

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*Education*, ed. Michael J. Anthony (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 114-15.

<sup>19</sup>Benjamín Alicea-Lugo, “Salsa y Adobo: Latino/Latina Contributions to Theological Education,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 52, nos. 1-2 (1998): 136.

<sup>20</sup>Orlando Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982), 169, quoted in Benjamín Alicea-Lugo, “Salsa y Adobo,” 136.

The lack of relevance in the schools' curriculum is not the only deterrent to Hispanics obtaining the training they need in most formal educational settings. Their own cultural distinctiveness can affect how they learn and how they will eventually transmit what they have learned to others. Ralph Casas deals with this subject as it relates to Latino/a learners in Southern California. He suggests

that a successful pedagogy is one that utilizes the resources derived from the local community. The goal is to develop an indigenous ecology of education capable of fashioning a holistic, multiple, or many identity. The task is to develop a curriculum compatible with the epistemological framework and cognitive learning styles of Latino/a immigrants and their children. Pedagogy grounded in indigenous epistemology—one that respects the social construct of reality and cognitive framework of the learner—is superior because it informs and upholds the core identity of the learner and improves the ease with which he or she moves into and out of dominant and subaltern cultures.<sup>21</sup>

The pedagogy needed to train Hispanic leaders in this country will depend on their cultural distinctives.

While it is impossible to impose a set of cultural characteristics upon every individual of a cultural group, there are certain common cultural traits that can influence the Hispanic's learning experience. Villafañe mentions several of these characteristics. First, the Hispanic values emotions. For them, "Life is to be heroic; feelings/emotions are to be accepted in a wholistic response to life."<sup>22</sup> Second, in the Hispanic context, personal relationships are valued "above abstract principles and institutions."<sup>23</sup> This characteristic means that Hispanics will seek to maintain personal relationships at all

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<sup>21</sup>Ralph Casas, "‘Making Face, Making Heart’: The Spiritual Foundations of an Indigenous Pedagogy" *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 9, no. 2 (2001): 18.

<sup>22</sup>Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Social Ethic* (New York: University Press of America, 1992), 15.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

costs, especially familial relationships. This quality transfers over into another characteristic: “communal consciousness permeates all of life.”<sup>24</sup> Persons and relationships are valued in the Hispanic culture.

The Hispanic also suffers from what Villafañe terms the “paradox of the soul.”<sup>25</sup> This trait reveals itself in that the Hispanic is both “Realist and Idealist, one can be both without confusion or confinement.”<sup>26</sup> Related to this worldview is how the Hispanic views life itself. The *fiesta* (party) spirit of the Latino culture appreciates that “life is a gift and worth living.” In fact, “unity, liberation, transcendence and joy is to express and impress all of life.”<sup>27</sup>

These cultural characteristics of most Hispanics affect how they learn in a variety of manners. For example, the ideas of personalism, community, and family all permeate the way Hispanics relate to one another. Below, I will explore how this characteristic influences the educational environment in that Hispanics are field-dependent. Later, I will also examine how social factors, acculturation and mobility issues, and the teacher/student relationship will affect the pedagogy needed when teaching Hispanics.

### **Field-Dependency**

First, “Hispanic Americans tend to be field-dependent, which means that they rely to a great degree on their peers and surrounding environment to help them make

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

sense of their experiences.”<sup>28</sup> The implications of this field-dependent way of processing information are that “Hispanic Americans tend to be more emotionally responsive and empathetic to others as opposed to detached, aloof, and reflective.”<sup>29</sup> They also will normally possess a “more holistic and visual approach to reality as opposed to an analytical and verbal orientation.”<sup>30</sup>

The pedagogy of those persons teaching Hispanics should take this characteristic into consideration. For example, rote memorization and lecture-oriented teaching are not the most conducive methods of instructing Hispanics. The teacher, instead, should develop methods, such as role-playing, that capitalize on the emotional nature of Hispanics and allow the students to involve their whole person in the task at hand. Since Hispanics tend to be more visual, the teacher should also employ different visual aids to emphasize the content being taught. Last, the teacher should incorporate group activities into his or her teaching style so that field-dependent Hispanics can use peer interaction in the learning process. These teaching methods will allow the Hispanic learner to feel engaged and to learn more effectively.

### **Social Factors: Age, Gender, and Education Level**

Second, certain social factors affect how the Hispanic will learn. Age, gender, and level of formal education “have been found in certain Hispanic-American

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<sup>28</sup>Norman G. Wilson, “Pedagogical Expectations of Hispanic Americans: Insights for Leadership Training,” *Christian Education Journal* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 68.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

populations to correlate significantly with several prominent personality characteristics.”<sup>31</sup> For example, one study revealed that these “socio-anthropological variables” influence “tendencies to be submissive versus dominant, trusting versus suspicious, self-accepting versus apprehensive, and self-sufficient versus dependent.”<sup>32</sup> In other words, the social factors of age, gender, and level of formal education will have an effect on whether the Hispanic is submissive or dominant, trusting or suspicious, self-accepting or apprehensive, and self-sufficient or dependent.

For example, a Mexican male immigrant will likely show signs of submission to an older Hispanic male who is of the same general level of education. Due to the apprehensive characteristic of his nature, this same Mexican male immigrant, however, may also show submission to a female, older or younger, who has more education than he. For example, Conde-Frazier noted that “women are represented in strong numbers at Bible institutes. They are directors and teachers whose authority is as respected as that of their male counterparts.”<sup>33</sup> The fact that there are respected female directors and teachers in these institutes is probably due to them being more highly educated than the male students.

In addition, the debate regarding maleness (*machismo*) and femaleness (*hembrismo*) has a significant impact on pedagogical goals in the Hispanic context. *Machismo* has generally been associated with male dominance while *hembrismo* is traditionally linked to female submissiveness. *Machismo* should not, however,

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Conde-Frazier, “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes,” 224.



automatically be understood to be oppressive to women.

For some, “the traits associated with it are seen as compensation for feeling [sic] of inferiority and have been condemned by researchers as close to pathological.”<sup>34</sup> For others, *machismo* is “a desirable combination of virtues of courage and fearlessness in man—the head and protector of the family, responsible for their well being and defender of their ‘dignidad y honor.’”<sup>35</sup> In both the positive and the negative view of *machismo*, however, “traditional Latin American family women hold a subordinate role and status.”<sup>36</sup> This characteristic may make the female student less likely to object to the teacher or to other classmates who are male.

While extensive discussion of the reality of these characteristics is outside the scope of this dissertation, “the importance of their role in relation to pedagogical expectations of Hispanic Americans cannot be overemphasized.”<sup>37</sup> The teacher of Hispanic students should take the role of these variables into consideration in the educational enterprise. For example, the teacher may need to encourage overly passive females to answer questions forthrightly and participate in class discussions. The same may be true of students who have not had many educational opportunities. They will probably be shy about responding verbally in class. The teacher can greatly aid the learning process by taking the variables of age, gender, and level of education into

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<sup>34</sup>Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 14. For further study on this subject, consult Eugene A. Nida, *Understanding Latin Americans* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1974). This book, while somewhat dated, is a foundational text in the study of Hispanics.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid. “Dignidad y honor” can be translated as dignity and honor.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Wilson, “Pedagogical Expectations for Hispanic Americans,” 69. *Machismo* has generally been associated with male dominance while *hembrismo* is traditionally

consideration while teaching.

### **Acculturation and Mobility**

When considering the pedagogical needs of Hispanics in this country, another area of interest is “the sedentary versus mobile character” of this culture in the United States.<sup>38</sup> Hispanics tend to be much more mobile than any other population group in this country. The 2000 Census revealed that of 4,927,309 people who moved in California in the preceding five years, 4,421,362 of them were Hispanic.<sup>39</sup>

The migratory nature of many Hispanics in this country may affect how and when they will learn. For example, they may not be willing to commit to a long-term program of study since they may be moving soon or their work circumstances may necessitate a change in schedule.

An area where the lack of assimilation could affect pedagogy is related to the language skills of some Hispanics. Depending on the length of time they have spent in the United States, some may prefer that classes be taught in English, in Spanish, or in a mixture of the two languages. Teachers will be wise to consider their audiences when planning educational programs and curricula.

It may seem that Hispanics in the United States would eventually adapt their

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linked to female submissiveness.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 70.

<sup>39</sup>“Hispanic Origin Population 5 Years and Older” [on-line]; accessed 8 April 2005; available from <http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t25/tab06.pdf>; Internet. Statistics from other states bear out this reality as well. In Texas, 2,583,041 people had moved in the last five years and 2,359,228 of them were Hispanic. Even in states where the Hispanic population is smaller, the trend of more-mobile Hispanics continues. For example, in South Carolina 19,197 of the state’s 29,520 mobile persons were Hispanic.

learning style to the typical lecture-type of teaching that is commonly used in post-high school settings in this country. While acculturation issues should be considered by the teacher of Hispanics, usually learning “styles tend to be stable over time and in diverse settings.”<sup>40</sup> Thus, even though Hispanics adapt to the culture of the United States in many ways, the general way that they relate and process information typically stays the same. For example, one study among Latin women revealed that while “significant accommodations to the host culture were observed, the findings suggested that Latinas still tend to prefer the relational styles which have been shown to predominate in Hispanic-American work environments, i.e., trusting, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships.”<sup>41</sup>

While this study focused on the work environment, a study focused on the educational context of Hispanics would likely have the same result. The outcome mentioned in the study was due to the Hispanics’ need to receive input from others. As we saw above, this characteristic is referred to as “field-dependent” in the educational setting. Most Hispanics, even ones who have lived in this country for many years, will typically maintain their same way of relating and processing information and will require a more interactive learning environment.

### **Teacher/Student Relationship**

In the Hispanic context, the relationship between an authority figure and a

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid. Here, Wilson refers to a study published in the following article: Maria J. Gomez and Ruth E. Fassinger, “An Initial Model of Latina Achievement: Acculturation, Biculturalism, and Achieving Styles,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 16, no. 2 (1994): 190-205.

subordinate is influenced by “the cultural and socio-political reality.”<sup>42</sup> Conde-Frazier describes how the “caciquismo” and “caudillismo” forms of authority have influenced the pedagogy in the Hispanic church:

“Caciquismo” and “caudillismo” are the words used by the participants to describe the model of authority that has existed in the church. The word “cacique” was the name used by the Tainos to refer to a prince, a noble or any leading inhabitant of a small town or village. Caciquismo refers to the tendency to have chiefs or persons in whom resides authority and therefore everyone yields to their authority and no one questions. “Caudillismo” refers to the practice of having caudillos or commanders of an armed troop to whom one responds with the faithfulness of a soldier taking orders.<sup>43</sup>

These two types of authorities in the socio-political arena have influenced the authority in the Hispanic church. In the Hispanic learning environment, “this means that the interpretation of the word which the teacher or pastor/teacher gives is not questioned because it is accepted as authority.”<sup>44</sup>

This characteristic of Hispanics is not helpful in the educational environment. The teacher must learn to allow the students the opportunity to express themselves and to learn to think critically. One teacher interviewed by Conde-Frazier admitted, however, that the task is not easy:

Sometimes, because of the respect people have for the pastor, they assume the attitude that if the pastor said it, that’s the way it is and they put a seal on it. In the classroom one needs to give space so that they can think and express themselves and lift their questions without feeling threatened by the authority of the pastor. I have to try to avoid having a paternalistic attitude of resolving everything for them and saying everything without allowing them to find their own words to express themselves . . . this is a challenge for me.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Conde-Frazier, “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes,”143.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 143-44. The Tainos are a tribal group of the Caribbean.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

The goal is for the teacher to learn to encourage critical thinking in Hispanic students without feeling like his/her authority is being challenged. This task will be difficult for both teacher and students.

### **Types of Leadership Development**

Development of Hispanic leaders is needed at all levels of church involvement. Both the laity and the clergy need to be trained in the practice of ministry and in the Christian life as a whole. Since the time of the Reformation, the evangelical church has believed in the priesthood of all believers, and this emphasis on the priesthood of the believers translates into a necessary emphasis on Christian education for all believers.<sup>46</sup> Padilla says, “Desgraciadamente, este énfasis desapareció poco a poco en las generaciones posteriores y se volvió otra vez a una educación teológica para una elite pastoral exclusivamente.”<sup>47</sup> The Hispanic church must reclaim the emphasis on religious education for all.

Below, I will focus on different methods of lay leadership development and clergy development. A key strategy for both types of leadership development will be mentoring, but attention will also be given to more formal methods of training the clergy.

### **Lay Leadership Development**

Mentoring is a very effective way of training lay leadership in the Hispanic context. First, it provides the relational aspect that the field-dependent Hispanic learner

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<sup>46</sup>C. René Padilla, ed., *Nuevas Alternativas de Educación Teológica* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación, 1986), 121.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid. “Unfortunately, this emphasis, little by little, disappeared in later generations and it returned again to a theological education only for the pastoral elite.”

needs. In addition, mentoring is effective in the Hispanic context since “nearly all leaders [of Hispanic churches] emerge from the local church.”<sup>48</sup> Many times, those being mentored (mentees) will become part of the clergy, but mentoring is a good starting point for all lay leadership development. Ortiz describes the mentoring process:

Pastors take under their wing young men and women in whom they see a gift for ministry. Usually these are young people who exhibit abilities in the youth group. Little by little the pastor gives them counsel and responsibility. First the young people use their gifts outside the youth group (e.g., leading a song service or teaching Sunday school); then they receive additional responsibilities designed to stretch them. If they want to preach, they are often assigned to speak in street meetings—which challenge them to keep their message simple and to overcome their fear before groups.<sup>49</sup>

These mentoring sessions help train the laity to participate in the ministry, and indeed, to be ministers in their local congregations.

This mentoring process, however, should not be limited only to those members who may become members of the clergy. Every church should have an equipping strategy to train all of its members “to observe all that” Jesus commanded (Mat 28:20). Indeed, this task of disciple-making is one of the primary objectives of the church. Lawless explains that “this entire process—taking believers from theological foundation to practical living—is biblical discipling. . . . This process of discipleship is never-ending and life-changing.”<sup>50</sup> All members of the church must be trained to apply the truths of God’s Word to their everyday lives.

To ensure that a church is training its members to live out their faith daily, Lawless offers several questions the church should ask itself:

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<sup>48</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 141.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, 131.

1. Are we teaching our members theologically? Are we challenging them to know God and who they are in Christ? Is their foundation solid?
2. Do our members know the purposes of the church? Are we training them to fulfill those purposes individually and corporately?
3. Do our members show their Christian faith in all areas of their lives—in their personal walk, in their home, in the church, and in their workplace? Are we teaching them to live out their faith in all of these areas?
4. Are our members committed to reaching the world for Christ?
5. In general, are we producing disciples through evangelism that results in baptisms and teaching that leads to obedience?<sup>51</sup>

These questions, though not designed specifically for the Hispanic church, were formulated, however, to help any church fulfill its biblical responsibility of discipleship. The church must train its members so that they can know the victory that is theirs in Christ: “No one would think of putting an untrained civilian at the controls of a state-of-the-art warplane, but we think nothing of sending troops into spiritual warfare without a proper understanding of God’s arsenal to live victoriously.”<sup>52</sup> The Hispanic church in the United States must train, equip, and disciple its laity.

In addition to mentoring, churches may develop their own programs for training the laity in their church or they may avail themselves of already-prepared resources.<sup>53</sup> Care must be taken, however, in using already-prepared programs. First, teachers and pastors must evaluate whether the material reflects the theology of their church. In addition, if these programs are translations of English materials, the church

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<sup>50</sup>Chuck Lawless, *Discipled Warriors* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 48.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 49.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 105.

<sup>53</sup>A model training program for the laity will be provided at the end of this

will need to evaluate whether they are culturally appropriate for the Hispanic context and make appropriate adaptations.

For example, the Spanish version of *Experiencing God* has been used effectively in many Hispanic churches, but a Hispanic church in this country would need to make adaptations, among other things, to the class schedule. A thirteen-week Bible study may be too long in settings where there is much migration. In addition, depending on the church, members may not be accustomed to studying five days during the week as this study requires. Thus, the thirteen weeks may need to be extended to allow more time to complete the homework. While translated and other prepared materials can be useful resources for the Hispanic church, care must be taken so that members find relevant information and do not become frustrated in the course of study.

### **Clergy Development**

As we saw above, training the laity is an important component of the ministry of the local church. Indeed, it is a reflection of the evangelical's historical belief in the priesthood of the believer. The clergy also must be trained, however. In this section, we will explore the informal and formal training of the Hispanic clergy.

**Informal training of the clergy.** While I mentioned mentoring above as a way to train lay leaders, it is also an effective method, particularly in the Hispanic context, for the training of clergy when formal education is not required by the denomination for ordination. In the Latino setting,

Hispanic churches historically have trained their own leaders. Mentoring often takes place without much deliberate planning. It is usually pragmatic, sensible and



appropriate for the immediate need. But because effective mentoring requires a great deal of time and energy, many have not made the effort to provide new leaders with the proper tools for ministry.

If more churches practiced mentoring in a deliberate form, their new leaders would be much more effective, and the cause of Christ would be multiplied in the world. Mentoring is essential to providing the church with well-prepared leaders. It can take place in the process of church planting, church growth and leadership development. Seminaries and Bible institutes are helpful aspects of a leader's development, but they cannot be substitutes for mentoring. Mentoring is a personal undertaking by the pastor, elder, servant-leader or well-equipped layperson who will train others for effective ministry. It is pastors preparing pastors, missionaries developing missionaries, and evangelists training evangelists.<sup>54</sup>

Manuel Ortiz interviewed several Hispanic pastors from different denominations to obtain their opinion on leadership training within the church. One of these pastors, Reverend Luis Cortés of the American Baptist Convention, agrees with the statements above. He related to author Manuel Ortiz that he thinks most training in the church can be described as “learning as you go and do.”<sup>55</sup> He says, “Most of the key leaders have arisen naturally from within church ranks. As a church becomes involved in ministry, it recognizes potential leaders by their interest and involvement.”<sup>56</sup> Ortiz summarizes Cortés' thoughts on the mentoring process:

Pastors take the young leaders with them and give them responsibilities and supervision. There is some personal counseling involved, but it is not intensive. Most of the learning occurs in the course of being together. It is not really planned, but happens as a response to ministry needs. Debriefing times help to bring home important lessons and principles.<sup>57</sup>

Mentoring is of the utmost importance in forming new Hispanic pastors.

Mentoring is often the first step of preparation for Hispanic pastors. Usually,

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<sup>54</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 165-66.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 132-33.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 133.

in the Hispanic context, the would-be ministers must prove themselves in the local church before expecting the church to approve them for more formal training. As Ortiz writes, the “pattern of proving one’s calling in the context of the local church is usually the recommended process for approaching the ministry in the Hispanic community.”<sup>58</sup> Justo González agrees. He says, “Hispanic ministers do not follow the route of choosing the ministry, going to seminary, being ordained, and then becoming ministers, which is typical in the white church. Most of them are already in ministry when they decide they need further education.”<sup>59</sup> Because most Hispanic ministers begin their education in the local church, intentional mentoring by the pastor is an ideal way of training these present/future ministers.

**Mentoring process.** The mentoring process should have a few guidelines that will aid both the mentor and the mentee in the development of skills. First, I will consider three biblical examples of mentoring. Then, I will look at some characteristics that good mentees should possess. I will then present some guidelines that will help the mentor supervise the mentee during the process.

Several examples of mentoring exist in the Bible. Lawless mentions a few:

From Moses and Joshua, to Jesus and the disciples, to Paul and Timothy, mentoring was a foundational strategy of discipling. Jesus—the model Mentor—called His disciples to “be with Him” (Mark 3:14; Acts 1:21-22), and their being with Him caught the attention of the pagan world (Acts 4:13).<sup>60</sup>

Ortiz agrees that the Bible provides ample example of the need for mentoring. He says,

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>59</sup>González, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*, 68.

<sup>60</sup>Lawless, *Discipled Warriors*, 122.

God provided mentoring for his leaders throughout Scripture. Joseph and Moses were not only Egyptianized, they were mentored in various ways by others. Jethro visited Moses; Aaron was provided as a “designated hitter” as well as a tutor for Moses; David learned from Saul, from the child playing in the courts to the king designing the temple and leading Israel.<sup>61</sup>

In this section I will follow Ortiz’ lead by focusing on the mentoring styles of Jesus, Barnabas, and Paul in order to gain some viable biblical principles of mentoring.

Jesus began his mentoring process by choosing his twelve disciples. He did not choose the disciples based on their special gifts, likeability, ability to work with others, etc. In other words, He did not choose the disciples based on criteria that most humans would use. Ortiz explains that “Jesus selects the unqualified and gives them his Spirit. . . . His practice was to call people first to himself and then to the world (Lk 5:10).”<sup>62</sup> We, too, must be vigilant not to rely solely on human wisdom for choosing mentees. We must also look for mentees that have been first called to Jesus.

Another characteristic of Jesus’ mentoring style is that he empowered the disciples “to carry on a similar ministry” to His.<sup>63</sup> For Jesus,

The preparation begins with observation of [his] ministry; then he empowers them to carry on a similar ministry (Mt 10:1), and he sends them out (Mt 10:5). This process continued right up to the conclusion of his earthly ministry. He called them to go and make disciples because all authority was available through him (Mt 28:16-20).<sup>64</sup>

Tim Elmore explains that Jesus “furnished laboratories” for his disciples. He did not require them to complete various workbooks and specially-designed programs before sending them out. He “gave them safe places to experiment in ministry. . . . He pushed

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<sup>61</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 169.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.,170.

them into involvement.”<sup>65</sup> Jesus’ mentees continued the ministry that He began, and as a result, Christianity has spread around the globe.

Barnabas, Paul’s mentor, also provides some biblical patterns of mentoring that are worthy of emulation. When Barnabas needed help guiding the new congregation in Antioch, he called Paul to come and help him, and thus became “Paul’s link to ministry . . . making it possible for Paul to observe and serve.”<sup>66</sup> The personal qualities of Barnabas made him an ideal mentor. He was a “man of integrity, sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. . . . Paul was mentored by a man prepared by God for the missiological task.”<sup>67</sup> Mentors must take care to see that they are spiritually ready to teach someone how to minister. It will take much self-reflection and the ability to make changes in oneself when necessary to mentor effectively.

Another interesting dynamic of the Barnabas-Paul mentorship occurs when they have a disagreement regarding John Mark’s participation in the second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-40). The disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was “sharp” (Acts 15:39), and it was time for the mentor and mentee to separate. The mentoring relationship did not remain in ruins however. Barnabas had done such a good job of mentoring Paul that they both entered into new mentoring relationships: Barnabas with John Mark and Paul with Silas. The multiplication of ministry now is valuable: “Paul is

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Tim Elmore, *Intentional Influence* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2003), 63.

<sup>66</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 170.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

now sent out, but has begun to serve and mentor with another disciple.”<sup>68</sup> Mentees should continue the model and become mentors themselves.

As he mentored Silas and others, Paul worked alongside his mentees. He “does not just speak to others about growing and serving; he functions with them (1 Thess 1:1; Phil 1:1) and displays the grace apportioned to him.”<sup>69</sup> Perhaps Paul’s most recognized mentoring relationship was with Timothy. He mentored him “by colaboring, observing what God is doing and then sending him to do the significant service of God.”<sup>70</sup> In addition, just as Paul became a mentor after leaving his mentor, Barnabas, he believed that the process should continue. He counseled Timothy to entrust what he has learned from Paul “to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). The mentoring process should always be a multiplication strategy of ministry.

In choosing mentees, several characteristics should be present. As we saw above, Jesus did not use worldly wisdom to choose his disciples. He was able to see into the hearts of the men and call them unto Himself. As was also stated above, we should emulate this characteristic of Jesus, as much as possible, in the choosing of mentees. We should not rely solely on how successful *we* think the person might be as a minister; we should also note what God is doing in the person by observing the potential leader in the ministerial context. He or she should demonstrate through participation in the local church that he or she would be a good person to mentor.

Bobb Biehl provides a list of nine characteristics to look for in the “ideal

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

protégé.” Speaking to potential mentors, Biehl says that the ideal protégé will be:

1. Easy to Believe in  
Your ability to believe in a protégé is very important. To believe that she/he is a person worthy of the investment of your life energy and to believe in his/her future potential.
2. Easy to Like and Spend Time with, Naturally  
Regardless of the kind of person you find most attractive as a protégé, look for someone you like naturally and enjoy being with both formally and informally.
3. Easy to Keep Helping  
In a mentor-protégé relationship, the mentor is typically more others centered than the protégé. The protégé often forgets to say, “Thank you.” He or she may be too caught up in their own insecurities and concerns to remember even basic courtesies, like a simple “Thank You!”
4. Like Family  
You like her/him or naturally [*sic*] and want to see them do well. Start to see her/him as family. Make a heart commitment to stay deep friends for the long term.
5. Is Teachable  
Is the potential protégé teachable? Are they eager to learn? Do they seem eager to learn from you? If the protégé is teachable and eager to learn, your natural energy level and interest in helping towards her/his full potential is great. If, on the other hand, they seem resistive or unteachable, your interest in continuing to mentor them over time will be drastically reduced.
6. One Who Respects/Admires You  
Do you sense a natural respect and admiration from the protégé? A natural respect? A natural deference? If so, chances are they will be an eager student.
7. Self-Motivated  
Will the protégé take the initiative in seeking you out and following through, or will you have to constantly prop them up, cheer them on, or get them out of a depression? What you are looking for, ideally, is a protégé that is self-motivated, one that will consistently seek you out, take the next step, want to grow, want to learn, want to stretch, and want to reach their full maturity.
8. Comfortable with, and to, You  
If you find the protégé threatening, chances are it’s not the right protégé for you. If, on the other hand, you sense that, for some reason the persons finds you extremely threatening to a point where he or she cannot think clearly (distracted) or talk confidently, or if some other form of obvious intimidation manifests itself, you may want to consider a different protégé.

9. Someone Who Will, or Won't Make It, Without Me

Sometimes the protégé God lays on a mentor's heart is the person who will not make it if someone doesn't care. Many mentors are far more naturally attracted to the person who may not make it if someone doesn't care for them than they are to "super leaders."<sup>71</sup>

These characteristics deal almost exclusively with the relational aspect of the mentoring relationship. In the Hispanic context, the relationship between mentor-mentee will be important. The mentee will need the positive relational aspects of the association, and Biehl's list of mentee characteristics will aid the mentor in choosing correctly.

Ortiz also provides a list of characteristics that may be observed in likely candidates for mentoring. Most of these characteristics relate to how the mentee will work:

1. *Willingness*. A potential leader must have an appetite to learn, a willingness to follow, an openness to new possibilities, and a desire to grow.
2. *Moldability*. How teachable are the potential leaders? Can they trust God and others with their lives? If so, they are probably open to change and to new or old ideas. They are likely able to submit to authority and be convicted of sin.
3. *Servant attitude*. Willingness and moldability need to be integrated with the biblical attitude of servanthood.
4. *Urban crosscultural attitudes and abilities*. Because the urban context is where the second-generation Hispanic leader will minister, he or she must possess sufficient urban crosscultural attitudes and abilities.
5. *Team orientation*. Another important characteristic is the need to consider team-oriented ministry. A person should seek others with whom to work. In the city it is crucial to value the organism of the church and move toward a nonclergy-dominated team.
6. *Flexibility*. Serving in changing communities, contextualizing into multicultural dynamics, and working with people from different socioeconomic strata require

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<sup>71</sup>Bobb Biehl, *Mentoring* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 122-25. In the interest of space, the full description of each mentee characteristic is not included. For further information, see the pages mentioned above in Biehl's *Mentoring*.

flexibility.

7. *Visibility*. The missionary or pastor should be able to observe that God has gifted potential leaders in a visible way for the task of leading and serving. They bear some visible quality of leadership. . . . Visible leadership qualities include charisma, followers, attitude, appearance, administrative ability, multifaceted personality, willingness to serve others and visionary aptitude.
8. *Biblical commitment*. To be an effective servant of God, a leader must exhibit biblical leadership.<sup>72</sup>

While every potential mentee may not have mastered each of these components, there should be evidence of a majority of these characteristics in the person's life. Since most Hispanic clergy begin by proving themselves in the local church, it should be easily observable when a potential candidate for mentoring evidences these characteristics.

Certain guidelines can be helpful for the mentor in the relationship with his/her mentee. The first step of the mentoring relationship is modeling the desired behavior.

Furthermore, Tim Elmore says the mentor must be a "PROVIDER":

- P Purposeful: You must connect with people to help them grow.
- R Relational: You must be a warm and approachable people person.
- O Objective: You must see their strengths and weaknesses.
- V Vulnerable: You must model transparency as you share your life.
- I Incarnational: You must model the truths you teach.
- D Dependable: You must be someone others can count on and trust.
- E Empowering: You must develop people with confidence and competence.
- R Resourceful: You must harness any resources and tools to pass on.<sup>73</sup>

The mentor must develop situations whereby the mentee can observe his mentor demonstrating good leadership skills and then encourage the mentee to participate and

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 160-64. Italics original. In quoting these characteristics, I did not include Ortiz' entire explanation of each characteristic. Instead, I provided the key statements to explain each characteristic which provide a synopsis of Ortiz' ideas. For further information, see the pages mentioned above in *The Hispanic Challenge*.



eventually lead the ministry.

Once the mentored person has viewed his mentor in different situations, he should be encouraged to minister himself. As Ortiz says, “Young leaders need to practice what they have been learning from observing the pastor at work.”<sup>74</sup> Supervision of the mentee at this stage is critical because important skills and habits are being developed that could affect the church either positively or negatively in the future. The mentor “must observe his young people closely to identify personality traits that need healing or restructuring under the lordship of Christ.”<sup>75</sup> Some guidelines for supervision are as follows:

1. Begin with acts of ministry that will not produce ego trips and puff up the individual to the point of grieving the Holy Spirit. Emerging leaders should be deeply aware of the sovereign God’s involvement in salvation and service, and humility should result. Also, as responsibilities increase, we should monitor their levels of anxiety and fear of failure, which can cause them to avoid or postpone getting involved.
2. Observe attitudes as they relate to submission and authority, and attitudes toward service that call for seemingly unimportant or behind-the-scenes tasks. Do they view setting up the chairs or cleaning the restrooms as someone else’s job, or do they willingly pit in as the Lord’s servants? Attitudes toward family should be noted and evaluated. Many emerging leaders will come from hurting families with a history of poor relationships. They must be encouraged to love and honor their families, even when they disagree with their approach to life.
3. Watch their teamwork. Are they lone-ranger types, or do they work well with others? Leaders must be able to work well on a team. The ability is best learned by watching others and then by practicing it themselves at various levels of ministry. Those with no role models or previous team experience will have greater difficulty accepting and delegating responsibilities and maintaining an overall spirit of cooperation.
4. Observe their stewardship as they accomplish their tasks. Note the quality of the work and how long it took. Are they responsible and accountable for their use of time and

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<sup>73</sup>Elmore, *Intentional Influence*, 39.

<sup>74</sup>Ortiz, *The Hispanic Challenge*, 156.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 156.

resources? How well do they evaluate their own accomplishments? Young leaders who are truly concerned about their calling will strive to take responsibility for their assignments. And as they mature, they can take on more responsibility.<sup>76</sup>

Again, the mentee will probably not be able to complete all of these tasks satisfactorily in the beginning. These guidelines, however, will aid the mentor in determining areas of weakness upon which the mentoree needs to improve.

**Bible institutes.** Training for the clergy can occur in an informal setting (e.g., mentoring) or in a formal setting (e.g., Bible institutes and seminaries). In this section I will discuss theological training for the clergy in formal educational settings. In Hispanic circles, most pastors find Bible institutes to be more accessible to them than seminaries.

Conde-Frazier describes these institutes:

In the Hispanic diaspora, the kerygma is carried out by the pastors and teachers of the congregation. Through their preaching and teaching, they facilitate a meaning making process. In turn, the teaching and training of these leaders is carried out by the Bible Institutes. Bible Institutes or "*institutos*," are a widely used form of theological education in the Hispanic community. They are a grassroots or community based training program for church leaders. The class schedule, cost and entrance requirements of Bible Institutes are adapted to the reality of the Hispanic community.<sup>77</sup>

Catholic diocesan schools and Protestant Bible institutes provide more accessible theological education for the Hispanic community than do the established educational institutions accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).<sup>78</sup> These grassroots training centers "are inexpensive, are located in the barrio, are

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 156-57.

<sup>77</sup>Conde-Frazier, "A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes," 2-3.

<sup>78</sup>The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is the most recognized accrediting agency of seminaries and similar post-baccalaureate institutions in North America.

controlled by Latino/as, and have flexible requirements.”<sup>79</sup>

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier wrote about two of these *institutos* in her Ph.D. dissertation entitled “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes in Massachusetts: Their Mission, Educational Philosophy and Pedagogy.”<sup>80</sup> She began with the assumption that “there is a relationship between the theology of the mission of the church, the vision of ministry it prepares persons for, and the pedagogy used in Bible Institutes.”<sup>81</sup> In examining these institutes, she concluded:

The Bible Institutes are the community of the poor engaging theirs and their neighbor’s suffering through their ministries. In their learning process they seek to integrate correct doctrine with correct action. However, as a first generation immigrant community, they lack an understanding of the socio-political and economic structures as well as critical theological tools for questioning and re-interpreting the scriptures in light of their own experiences and insights.<sup>82</sup>

What Conde-Frazier suggests is that while these *institutos* are providing a valuable service of training many Hispanic leaders, they are also limited in what they can provide. They are not seminaries; they are small, unaccredited Bible institutes.

When evaluating Hispanic Bible institutes, it is important to examine their curriculum and who determines it. Many times, the curriculum will be determined, or at least influenced, by the denomination or church governing and supporting the institute. Conde-Frazier notes that these relationships are of utmost importance since they can influence every area of the institute: “The relationship that Bible Institutes have to a sponsoring body will determine to what extent the Bible Institute will be self determining

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<sup>79</sup>Benjamín Alicea-Lugo, “Salsa y Adobo,” 73.

<sup>80</sup>Conde-Frazier, “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes.”

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 208.

[*sic*] in relation to curricula, theology and relationships with other institutions for the purposes of availing themselves of additional resources.”<sup>83</sup> Three specific governing relationships are mentioned by Conde-Frazier: Governance by a Latino denomination, governance by a “dominant culture” denomination, and governance by a local congregation.

When an institute is linked to a Latino denomination that is organized by and for Hispanic churches, the institute is

accountable to Latinos. The process of discussion and reflection of educational issues as they relate to the mission of the church, can be initiated and carried out by and for Latinos. The authority is in their own hands and this increases the possibility for change and implementation of new ideas.<sup>84</sup>

This type of relationship allows the institute to be in the hands of other Latinos who, supposedly, will be in touch with the needs of the Hispanic community.

A second relationship that occurs between institutes and their sponsoring bodies is when a “dominant culture denomination such as, the Assemblies of God,” operates the institute.<sup>85</sup> Conde-Frazier notes that this type of relationship is often the most suffocating to the Hispanic Bible institute. In this arrangement,

Latinos are a minority in an ecclesial structure that does not necessarily represent their interests. Making changes in the Bible Institute structures based on the experiences and interests of Latinos is less likely to occur. Curricula, textbooks and relationships with outside resources must comply with denominational policy which may or may not serve the needs of Latinos. This can limit the possibilities of exposing Latino institutes to Hispanic theological thought unless it is recognized and sanctioned by denominational authority. Latinos have limited authority and limited options for affecting change within this structure.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 225.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 226.

<sup>85</sup>Conde-Frazier, “A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes,” 226.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

This type of governing structure will keep the power in the hands of non-Latinos who will not necessarily have the knowledge or the concern to provide the best training.

In contrast to working with a Latino or “dominant culture” denomination, the third type of governing structure occurs when an institute that relates directly to a local church

holds the greatest potential for change [in curriculum or structure] because the congregation is free to make its own adaptations and establish any relationships based on their experiences and assessment of needs. The process is totally controlled at the local congregational level and is dependent therefore on the congregational polity.<sup>87</sup>

This type of Bible institute will be the most flexible of the three types of structures. It will also most likely have the least influence since its programs are directed at the needs of one local congregation.

Conde-Frazier is correct in noting some of the restrictions necessitated by working within denominational structures. She does not recognize, however, that governance by a Latino denomination may be as restrictive as governance by a “dominant culture” denomination. Even though the institute would be governed by other Latinos, all denominations have structures and certain beliefs that would direct the type of curriculum the institute would have. She is negligent also in not recognizing the positive attributes of working within the framework of a certain denomination.

While not the most important benefit, working with a denomination may provide financial resources that would be unavailable otherwise. Second, institutes that are affiliated with a particular denomination may have limited liability in the case of an accident on the campus or some type of malpractice by a professor. Most denominations

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<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

will have guidelines and insurance policies in place to protect the institute.

A further benefit of working with a recognized denomination is the opportunity to work with Latino ministers trained by that denomination. A denomination that has trained Latinos to minister within its denominational structures may employ these ministers to provide Latino-based education and educators for its next generation of ministers. It is not negative to have institutes that teach certain denominational doctrines and beliefs and train ministers specifically for a particular denomination. Every institute will have certain core beliefs that will be taught to its students and will guide the choice of curriculum, textbooks, and teachers. This reality is true of every institution, whether denomination-controlled or not.

In regard to the curriculum itself, many options exist for the formation of the curriculum of a Bible institute. As Conde-Frazier noted, the governing body will have much influence on the type of curriculum. She mentions, however, five areas that should be included in the curriculum:

The first area is the practice of faith. This would include personal journeys that reflect how the Spirit is at work helping to interpret new situations and ministerial practice. This relates to theological reflection and the practical skills. It involves critical reflection about the orthopathos of the people and hopefully moves toward orthopraxis. The second area is the [W]ord of God—biblical courses, preaching and teaching. The next is interpretations of the Word by the community of the faithful across its history or theology and church history. These two areas cover the orthodoxy of the community. This would be followed by the critical reading of reality or the social sciences. The fifth area is one's learned experience or the "community text." Both of these inform the ministry so that in combination with the other areas, orthopraxis may begin to take place.<sup>88</sup>

Emilio Núñez also makes some suggestions for theological curriculum based on his more than forty years of experience in theological education in Latin America. He

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid., 214.

says that curriculum should be in agreement with the school's philosophy of education while also responding to the needs of the students:

Para Núñez la renovación del currículo presupone una filosofía de la educación teológica formulada a la luz de la Escrituras y consciente del contexto histórico, cultural, social y eclesiástico donde se espera que sirvan los graduados. El currículo tiene que ser un fiel reflejo de esa filosofía y orientarse hacia una meta específica. No debe ser una imitación servil de otros forjados en otras latitudes. Tampoco debe ser inflexible ni inmutable. Por el contrario, debe cambiar conforme vaya transformándose la realidad en que vivimos y actuamos.<sup>89</sup>

The suggestions of Conde-Frazier tend to be more specific, while Núñez' suggestions deal more with the philosophical background of the curriculum. Núñez' main contribution to this discussion is his attention to the idea that the curriculum should reflect the educational philosophy of the institution and should have a specific goal. Both Conde-Frazier and Núñez, however, are helpful in determining the content and nature of curriculum for Hispanic Bible institutes. Below, I will give a suggested curriculum for a Hispanic Bible institutes that will incorporate some of the suggestions of these two authors.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Padilla, *Nuevas Alternativas de Educación Teológica*, 127. "For Núñez a curriculum renewal presupposes a philosophy of theological education formulated by the light of Scripture and conscious of the historical, cultural, social and ecclesiastical context where it is expected that the graduates will serve. The curriculum must be a faithful reflection of this philosophy and should orient it itself towards a specific goal. It should not be a slavish imitation of other [curricula] formed in other latitudes. Neither should it be inflexible or unchangeable. On the contrary, it should change according to how the reality in which we live and act is transformed."

<sup>90</sup>At first glance the suggestions by these two authors may not seem to be particularly "Hispanic" in nature. The reader will notice in both authors' works, however, that a common thread is the idea that the content and the curriculum should be specifically Hispanic. For Conde-Frazier, it is including "one's learned experience or the 'community text'"—something that is forged out of joint experience in the Hispanic community, "A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes," 214. For Núñez, it is that the curriculum should not be "a slavish imitation of other [curricula] formed in other latitudes," *Nuevas Alternativas de Educación Teológica*, 127.

In summary, it is important to recognize the great influence the various Bible institutes are having on Hispanic ministry in this country. According to the National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education, “the majority of Pentecostals (78 percent), other denominations not listed on the survey (59 percent), non-denominational (53 percent), and Baptists (52 percent) have attended Bible institutes.”<sup>91</sup> As Alicea-Lugo noted above, these institutes “are inexpensive, are located in the barrio, are controlled by Latino/as, and have flexible requirements.”<sup>92</sup> They provide access to theological education for Hispanics and are the foundational training ground for many Hispanic pastors.

**Seminaries.** The importance of Bible institutes is in direct contrast to the impact more recognized educational institutions are having on the Hispanic community. Justo Gonzalez, states in his seminal work of the 1980s, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*, that during that time, “in New York City alone, there are approximately six thousand Hispanics studying in about forty Bible Institutes.”<sup>93</sup> At the same time, “in the entire Mid-East area, which includes New York, there [were] only one hundred Hispanic students at graduate schools accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.”<sup>94</sup>

Granted, the Hispanic constituency has increased in accredited seminaries in

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<sup>91</sup>Edwin I. Hernández and Kenneth G. Davis, “The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education,” *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 8, no. 4 (2001): 39. This “bilingual 302-item survey” sent to Hispanic religious leaders “explored demographics, personal experience, educational struggles, and attainment of educational aspirations. It included items relating to Latino/a culture, gender, and religion. . . . The number of usable returned questionnaires was 1,923” (37).

<sup>92</sup>Benjamín Alicea-Lugo, “Salsa y Adobo,” 73.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., quoting Gonzalez, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*, 3.



the past fifteen or twenty years, but they are still underrepresented in the most recognized accrediting agency of theological schools, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). As of Fall 2003, there were 2,863 Hispanic students in all ATS schools, including Roman Catholic schools. This figure, while including many non-evangelical students, is a mere 3.6 percent of the total ATS student population.<sup>95</sup> In addition, the population of Latino students is not increasing as quickly as the population in the United States.<sup>96</sup>

Programs such as the Hispanic Theological Initiative and the Hispanic Summer Program exist to aid Hispanics seeking theological education. The Pew Charitable Trusts funds the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI) which “provides a group of outstanding Latino/a students with fellowship support for up to three out of five years in accredited, doctoral programs.”<sup>97</sup> The Hispanic summer program (HSP) is “an accredited, graduate, ecumenical series of courses offered at participating seminaries in various parts of the country. . . . At present, approximately half of all Latinos and Latinas pursuing academic doctorates in religion are alumni/ae of the Hispanic Summer Program.”<sup>98</sup> The original problem, however, still exists: there are not enough Hispanic scholars being trained in accredited institutions.

Many reasons exist to explain why Hispanics are underrepresented in formal

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., quoting Gonzalez, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*.

<sup>95</sup>“Association of Theological Schools” [on-line]; accessed 23 March 2005; available from <http://www.ats.edu/download/factbook/chapter2/tab2-13.pdf> and <http://www.ats.edu/download/factbook/chapter2/tab2-10.pdf>; Internet.

<sup>96</sup>Edwin I. Hernández, Kenneth G. Davis, and Catherine Wilson, “The Theological Education of U.S. Hispanics,” *Theological Education* 38, no.2 (2002): 72.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., 74-75.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 75.

seminaries. The first reason is financial. The National Survey of Hispanic/Latino Theological Education (NSHLTE) “indicated that the greatest barrier to theological degree completion for Hispanics was related to finances.”<sup>99</sup> For example,

Latina/o religious leaders who were also doctoral students at the time of the survey (323) considered financial difficulty to be the single greatest barrier to finishing their program: 72 percent identified lack of financial aid as a key barrier; 42 percent reported that, although still in the program, they could not afford it; 30 percent considered financial indebtedness a “substantial barrier”; for 29 percent their family’s dependence of their full-time work was a barrier.<sup>100</sup>

As Hernández and Davis explain, “Financial struggles are not unique to Hispanics, but do disproportionately affect them. Despite recent advances, socioeconomic difficulties facing Latinos/as, and their tendency to have larger families, mean they are still poorer as a group than other U. S. residents.”<sup>101</sup>

A second reason for few Hispanics in ATS schools is lack of flexibility in the programs. First, few schools make an effort to address the lack of English skills among the Hispanics who are in most need of training. Besides the fear of not being able to understand and complete assignments, many Hispanics have a fear of taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam that many seminaries require for entrance. The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education revealed that ministers from “all denominations showed a high level of interest for classes held in Spanish.”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Hernández and Davis, “The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education, 43.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., 44. According to a report released in 2003 by the Census Bureau, 22.6 percent of Hispanics live below the poverty level compared to 9.1 percent of whites. Alemayshu Bishawa and John Iceland, “Poverty: 1999” [on-line]; accessed 4 April 2005; available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-19.pdf>; Internet.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., 55.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary attempted to address these issues when it began its Hispanic Master of Divinity. This fully-accredited program is taught completely in Spanish, and no TOEFL score is required for admission. When it began in 2004, it was the only Protestant ATS-accredited seminary with such a program.

In addition to the language problem, lack of flexibility in regard to entrance requirements can also be a deterrent to Hispanic students. While many Hispanic students have completed 4-year degrees at Bible institutes, these unaccredited degrees are not recognized by most ATS schools.

Another reason why there are few Hispanics formally pursuing education is the lack of relevance they sense at the educational institutions. First, some feel that there is racism in the schools. The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education (NSHLTE) reported that 38 percent of the responders “said that they overheard faculty make inappropriate remarks about minorities . . . and virtually all respondents felt that they were not prepared by seminary to minister to their own people because the seminary did not include adequate attention to Latino culture, church, and community needs.”<sup>103</sup>

This problem, coupled with financial limitations, is a primary reason why many Hispanics decide to abandon the idea of formal theological education. For them, “it is more productive and cost effective to be mentored by a minister in the community, attend community-based Bible Institutes, and learn the lessons in the school of hard knocks.”<sup>104</sup>

Part of this lack of relevance is due to the fact that “few Latino/a role models

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<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup>Alicea-Lugo, “Salsa y Adobo,” 141.

or mentors are available.”<sup>105</sup> For example, in 2000, “there were [only] 91 Hispanic faculty, of a total of 3,286 (or 2.7% of all faculty)” in ATS schools.<sup>106</sup> This lack of mentors for students that are field-dependent is detrimental to the idea of training more Hispanics in these formal educational institutions.

For Hispanics to gain the training that they need at recognized, accredited schools, the schools must address the problems mentioned above. Until then, these issues “deter entrance and success for Hispanics in the academy, and the result is poorer preparation of future ministers and theologians.”<sup>107</sup> Hernández, Davis, and Wilson offer some suggestions for institutions that desire to provide training for Hispanics:

1. Institutions should set specific, quantifiable goals for improving low racial/ethnic representation with realistic timelines for their attainment. One such goal might be, for example, “By the hundredth anniversary of our school the percentage of Latino/as graduating will be at least proportional to the Hispanic population of our denomination.”
2. Schools should establish accountability procedures for measuring progress toward the attainment of more inclusive participation of Hispanics in theological education.
3. As we have noted, Bible institutes and diocesan training programs educate a large portion of the Latino/a religious leadership. Seminaries could enhance their effectiveness within the Latino/a community by developing creative venues for relating to these informal institutions. ATS member schools can enter into dialogue by facilitating student transfers, offering faculty development programs, sharing library resources, facilitating the transfer of credits, and developing mutually beneficial growth strategies.
4. Schools can enhance or introduce Latino/a presence by establishing visiting professorships to attract Latina/o scholars to teach and thus provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and experiences across the campus. This is particularly important for institutions that do not have any Latino/a

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 72.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

faculty.

5. Schools should review the curriculum and field education opportunities to ensure that all students represented with the institution can find a voice in the educational experience. Faculty should critically examine their pedagogical approaches to determine whether they primarily reflect values that emphasize individualism and competition, as opposed to community and collaboration, or that limit bibliographic references to white authors, as opposed to including works by racial/ethnic authors. Institutional hospitality will increase as faculty address the values and histories of Latino/as and other racial/ethnic communities and the contributions they make to theological discourse and religious life.
6. Institutions need to facilitate the learning of the faculty, administration, and staff about the various communities represented in the school or the church/denomination and thereby increase their ability to articulate and integrate the unique contributions of Hispanics and other racial/ethnic communities. This effort should include an examination of the institution's educational culture to determine ways in which it enhances or impedes theological education for racial/ethnic students. These efforts would ameliorate one of the greatest barriers minorities experience in graduate education: an environment in which they lack support and affirmation.<sup>108</sup>

### Summary

Accredited seminaries need to consider these suggestions and make changes that are appropriate for each institution. Bible institutes provide fundamental training for a majority of the Hispanic clergy. The advantages of these institutes are that they are:

accessible because they are typically small and inexpensive, offer night classes, and are located in large urban areas. Therefore, the enrollment and attendance are easier for pastors and religious leaders who are poor, who work days, and who are highly urbanized. Furthermore, such institutes do not usually require a bachelor's degree for admission. Most will enroll individuals with no more than a high school diploma, and a few will waive even that requirement.<sup>109</sup>

Despite the advantages of Hispanic Bible institutes, they are also limited. They can not

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<sup>108</sup>Hernández, Davis, and Wilson, "The Theological Education of U. S. Hispanics," 76-77.

<sup>109</sup>Hernández and Davis, "The National Survey of Hispanic Theological

provide “academic credibility” through which “Latinos/as gain access to positions from which they can truly effect change.”<sup>110</sup> For this reason, “despite all the accomplishments and advantages of Bible institutes . . . , Hispanic religious leaders must not limit their intellectual development to them.”<sup>111</sup>

The Hispanic community needs formally-trained scholars with “academic credibility” who can address theological problems and situations both in the Hispanic community and in the greater culture of the United States. The Hispanic population is growing so rapidly that Hispanic churches are literally “springing up” everywhere. Accredited theological institutions can choose to have either an influence on the theology being taught and practiced in these churches or they can choose have a limited impact on the Hispanic community. Because the Hispanic church is growing so rapidly, it automatically will influence the future of the church in the United States, for good or for bad. Formal educational institutions must realize the need to have trained Hispanic pastors and scholars leading these churches, but these institutions must also realize that these ministers must receive training that better prepares them “to minister specifically to their Hispanic community more effectively.”<sup>112</sup>

### **Church-based Training for Laity and Clergy**

I pointed out above that, in the Hispanic context in particular, mentoring is a valuable method of training both the laity and the clergy. Because Hispanic pastors must

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Education,” 40.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., 45.

“prove themselves” in the local congregation before entering more formal training, they must be given opportunity to practice in the local church. Thus, guidelines for mentoring were given above. Mentoring, however, will never provide enough leaders for the Hispanic church in the United States. More classroom-type programs are needed to train these leaders. Thus, the church may couple mentoring with direct training for the laity in a slightly more formal method. Below, I will outline a program, “*Curso de Liderazgo*,”<sup>113</sup> for training the laity in certain components of ministering in the local church. This program could be used for a group of members prior to choosing selected persons for further, more-indepth mentoring. It could also be expanded to include other components, depending upon the needs of each local church.

### **Model Program**

This leadership training program was developed to train potential lay leaders of a small, Hispanic church, but it could be used in any church that has the need for more trained leaders. The course lasts eleven weeks with a graduation ceremony following completion of the course. Each class lasts one hour and fifteen minutes and is conducted entirely in Spanish. Below, I will give the details of the actual program.

Participants must be told from the beginning what is expected of them in order to meet the requirements to graduate from the course. First, the students can miss no more than one class but are expected to be at all eleven classes. Second, the students must complete the homework each week. Third, the students must participate in class discussions. Fourth, the students are required to attend church services throughout

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<sup>113</sup>Translation of course title: “Course of Leadership.”

the duration of the course.

Because many of the students may have never participated in the ministry of the local church, the first two weeks of the course are devoted to the students determining their spiritual gifts. The first week of the class students should complete a spiritual gifts inventory.<sup>114</sup> The teacher should help the students score the inventories in class and then note the results of each student for future reference. In week two, the class will discuss the results of the inventory and what types of ministries could potentially match the giftings of each of the students. The third week of class examines biblical characteristics for leadership and explore such topics as how to have personal integrity, how to confront problems, how to be “reasonably” flexible, how to support other leaders publicly, how to delegate, how to care for your family, and how to be accountable.

After laying the groundwork for biblical leadership during the first three weeks of class, weeks four through eleven were used to train the students in practical aspects of ministry. The topics for each of the weeks were: How to Study the Bible; Worship: How to Direct a Service, Part I; Worship: How to Direct a Service, Part II; How to Prepare a Bible Study, Part I; How to Prepare a Bible Study, Part II; Evangelism; and Methods of Evangelism; and the Practice of Evangelism.<sup>115</sup>

Each week the student must do homework prior to the next class. Because many of the students in a diverse setting may not be accustomed to doing homework, the

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<sup>114</sup>Two common spiritual gifts inventories are “Inventario de los Dones Espirituales” by Larry Gilbert and *Cómo Hallar Sus Dones Espirituales* by Peter Wagner. Larry Gilbert, “Inventario de los Dones Espirituales” [on-line]; accessed 6 April 2005; available from [www.churchgrowth.org](http://www.churchgrowth.org). and Peter Wagner, *Cómo Hallar Sus Dones Espirituales* (Miami: Editorial Unilit, 1997).

<sup>115</sup>See Appendix 1 for teaching outlines of these classes.



tasks required should be generally simple. The goal of each homework assignment is to provoke thought about the next week's topic. For example, the homework for the first week revolves around spiritual gifts. The students are required to read 1 Corinthians 12 and to answer the following questions:

1. To what is the church compared in this passage (vv. 12-17)?
2. Who determined that each of us would become a part of this church (v. 18)?
3. What spiritual gifts are mentioned in this passage (vv. 10, 28-30)? With which gift or gifts do you identify?

The second week's homework was designed to prepare the students for week three's topic: Leaders in the Bible. The students were asked to read the following passages: Matthew 4:10; 6:24; 20:26-38; and Philippians 2:5-11. They also had to answer the following questions:

1. What should be the attitude of a servant/leader of God? What should be his or her attitude toward others? Toward his/her responsibilities?
2. How could you serve God better?
3. What does a servant/leader need to do so that he does not get burnt out in the tasks that the Lord gives him?

Each class requires homework similar to what is mentioned above for the first two weeks of class. In addition, the students are asked to apply the information they are learning by preparing a worship service and a Bible study during the corresponding weeks. For the worship service, for example, the students must choose the songs to be sung and the Bible passages to be read. They also must choose who will pray and who will take up the offering, etc. Later, these planned services should be used in an actual worship service. The homework's practical nature allows the student to demonstrate the knowledge gained even as the class continues.

This type of practical training gives the students the tools they need to be confident in participating in the ministry of the local Hispanic congregation. While the different topics tackled would be common in any leadership training course, the classes will be taught in such a way that makes the information relevant to Hispanics. First, the pedagogical insights mentioned at the beginning of this chapter should be taken into account by the teacher. He or she should be attentive to the method of delivery of class information. For example, the teacher should not rely only on lectures to present the information. In the Hispanic context, this style of teaching only serves to reiterate the authority of the teacher as someone who cannot be questioned. Instead, the teacher of this course should use roleplaying, class discussions, and other interactive methods of teaching that will allow the students to think critically about the subject at hand.

The interactive methods mentioned above will also be helpful to the Hispanic learner who is field-dependent. The field-dependent student processes information by interacting with his or her peers and is usually more emotionally responsive than non-field dependent students. Roleplaying, in particular, during the class will allow the Hispanic student to engage in a more wholistic engagement of the material that will be the most beneficial way of learning.

In addition, the practical nature of this course gives the minister the opportunity to observe if any of the students have the teachable spirit, servant attitude, flexibility, team orientation, willingness and other characteristics that were mentioned above as attributes of a promising mentee. This time of observation will allow for the teacher to become acquainted with the student in a teaching atmosphere and will hopefully lead to more successful mentoring relationships.

## **Formal Education for Clergy**

The value of church-based training, both through training programs and the process of mentoring, is immeasurable. The formal education of the clergy, however, is of utmost importance for the Hispanic church in the United States as well. The most common ways of obtaining this formal education is through Bible institutes and seminaries.

### **Model Programs**

In this section I will suggest two programs, one for a Bible institute and one for an accredited seminary. Both of these programs are currently being used. After providing the details of the programs, I will provide an evaluation of them.

**Bible institute.** Recently, representatives from the Latino community and from the Kentucky Baptist Convention decided to develop a Bible institute for Hispanics.<sup>116</sup> The goal of the institute is to train leaders for the many church plants in Kentucky that are without pastors, as well as to train those pastors who now lead churches but who do not have any type of formal training. The institute's promotional brochure says, "In our Hispanic churches there is a tremendous need for trained leaders. The purpose of the Instituto Biblico Bautista Hispano is to help Christians to get the

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<sup>116</sup>The original task force designated with the task of developing the institute was Grundy Janes, representative from the Kentucky Baptist Convention; Carlos De la Barra, North American Mission Board Hispanic missionary; Jesús Pacheco, North American Mission Board Hispanic missionary; Cristina De la Barra, Latina leader in the state's Women's Missionary Union; Ray Van Camp, representative of a local Baptist association that participates in Hispanic church planting, and myself.

training they need to minister in Hispanic churches around the state of Kentucky.”<sup>117</sup>

While the curriculum development of this institute is still in review, the *Instituto Bíblico Bautista Hispano* is functioning in two locations in the state of Kentucky with a total of approximately thirty-five students during its first three months of operation. The institute is a practical model that could be used with only slight variations in many different parts of the country.

Philosophically, this suggested model bases its structure on training Hispanic leaders in three areas: biblical and doctrinal knowledge, practical application, and spiritual formation. Accomplishing this task requires choosing appropriate professors and setting a relevant course curriculum. While it is better when the professors are Latinos, all professors must be able to teach in Spanish and to be involved in Hispanic ministry in this country. They should also have at least a Bible college degree.

In this model seven classes comprise the year of study in the institute.<sup>118</sup> The first class is a study skills class. The intention of this class is to prepare all students with the study skills necessary to have a successful experience in the Bible institute, regardless of their prior educational attainment. Students who lack basic reading and writing skills in Spanish will be required to take an additional remedial course prior to continuation in the program.

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<sup>117</sup>“Instituto Bíblico Bautista Hispano,” unpublished pamphlet. This text is written in English in the bilingual brochure.

<sup>118</sup>Each class of the institute requires twenty class hours. Course fees should be kept to a minimum. A suggested price for each course is \$25 plus the cost of textbooks.

A second, more advanced year of study can be developed for the next year. An institute certificate should be received after completion of the first year of study. If an institute decides to have an additional year of study, a diploma will be given to the

To fulfill the philosophy regarding providing biblical and doctrinal knowledge, Old Testament, New Testament and theology should be included in the curriculum. In regard to practical application, a course on evangelism and missions should be a component of the curriculum to help students develop those disciplines within their local church. As a part of the missions component, the professor may focus on denominational structures of supporting missions so that these leaders will develop churches that continue the denominational programs. Other practical classes include an elective on either preaching or worship and a church planting course.

The last class of the institute is entitled Personal Development of the Leader. The purpose of this class is to foment spiritual formation by teaching the student how to continue growing in their spiritual walk. This course will also serve as an exit class and will include a component on practical knowledge related to doing Hispanic ministry in this country.<sup>119</sup>

In summary, those desiring to begin a Bible institute should take Emilio Núñez' advice and decide what the primary goal of the school will be. Next, those organizing the institute should design its curriculum to reflect this primary goal. Finally, the schedule and the cost of the institute should be determined based on the target student population's needs. The model above attempts to meet each of these objectives.

**Seminary program.** I mentioned above that The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has developed a Master of Divinity program for Hispanics. While this program is still struggling, it is an ideal model for seminaries to consider. The three primary

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students who complete both years of study.

<sup>119</sup>For course descriptions, see Appendix 2.

benefits of this program are vital. First, all classes are taught completely in Spanish. Second, it does not compromise the quality, accredited education for Hispanics that can only be offered through accredited seminaries. Third, this program focuses upon the needs and the issues of the Hispanic community that the Latino pastor will confront.

This program combines both the theory of theological application with the practical application. It is an identical curriculum to what the school already offers for other students, but this program is no mere translation of the English language curriculum. The primary difference between this program and others offered by the school is that the *Maestría en Divinidades para Hispanos* (Master of Divinity for Hispanics) focuses the content of courses on the realities of Hispanic ministry in the United States. The Hispanic students receive the same quality, accredited education as their counterparts, but with application to the Hispanic context.

The program is offered in one-week intensive courses in January and July. This schedule was designed so that Hispanic ministers could continue to minister in their local setting without moving to the campus. The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education revealed that “Forty-five percent of the men and 54 percent of the women indicated that they were not interested in pursuing a degree if they would be required to move to another city.”<sup>120</sup>

At the current time, no financial aid is available to the students because they are not taking the required number of hours to be considered full-time students.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>Hernández and Davis, “The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education,” 54.

<sup>121</sup>The school requires that all students be full-time in order to receive financial aid.

Eventually, the goal is to build the program so that students take three courses in both sessions, thus qualifying them for financial aid as full-time students and further easing the financial constraints of formal education.

While the courses are not taught by Latinos, they are taught by faculty experienced in ministry in Latin America and Hispanic ministry in the United States.<sup>122</sup> All faculty speak Spanish fluently with little-to-no accent and have the credentials necessary for teaching in an accredited, master-level program. The 91-hour program is as follows:

- Introduction to Old Testament I and II
- Introduction to New Testament I and II
- Beginning Hebrew
- Beginning Greek
- Syntax and Exegesis of either Hebrew or Greek
- Introduction to the History of the Church I and II
- Systematic Theology I, II, and III
- Introduction to Christian Philosophy
- Christian Ethics
- Leadership in Intercultural Contexts or Intercultural Communication
- Personal Evangelism
- Introduction to Missiology
- Introduction to Evangelism and Church Growth
- World Religions elective
- Church and Society elective
- Ministry of Proclamation
- Preaching Practicum
- Formation of the Minister
- Pastoral Counseling elective
- Supervised Ministry Experience
- Five Directed Vocational Electives
- Two free electives.

The positive aspect of this curriculum is that it provides the student with a solid

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<sup>122</sup>Qualified Latino professors will eventually be used as visiting professors for some courses. In the meantime, God has brought several professors to Southern Seminary who have a great amount of experience ministering cross-culturally in the Latin American and United States' Hispanic context.

biblical background while not neglecting the practical components of ministry. On the other hand, it is an extremely long program to be undertaken when only eighteen hours can be taken in a year.<sup>123</sup> At this rate, it would take just over five years to complete the program.

In order to offer more classes, the school should consider offering internet courses or other innovative delivery types of education. The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education revealed that “accredited electronic classrooms drew a very high response rate (97 percent) in the Pentecostal sample, the Baptists (81 percent), non-denominational respondents (80 percent), and Seventh-day Adventists (79 percent).<sup>124</sup> According to this survey, Hispanic theological education offered through innovative delivery systems would have great success.

Offering more classes, either on campus or through an alternative delivery method, would help the students finish their degree more quickly, but it would also allow the students to qualify for financial aid. In addition, all institutions seeking to provide Hispanic theological training should consider developing scholarship programs specifically for Hispanics.

In regard to the curriculum, the program should contemplate the addition of more social ministry and pastoral counseling courses since these are two areas in which Hispanics desire further training. According to The National Survey of Hispanic

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<sup>123</sup>At this time, the school is not offering eighteen hours in this program but that is its goal in the future. One suggestion for the future is to consider offering a Master of Arts degree that will provide adequate preparation with the option of continuing study in the future to complete a Master of Divinity degree.

<sup>124</sup>Hernández and Davis, “The National Survey of Hispanic Theological Education,” 57-58.



Theological Education, “Eighty-seven percent of the Pentecostal respondents, 73 percent of the Baptists, and 70 percent of both mainline Protestant and non-denominational respondents were interested in further social service training.” In chapter three of this dissertation the need for social ministry was explained; now, Hispanic leaders want to know how to do it. In regard to pastoral counseling courses, “nearly all the Pentecostals (94 percent), and most of the Baptists (86 percent) showed interest in pastoral counseling training.”<sup>125</sup> These two areas are great needs within the Hispanic context.

While this program is not perfect, it is indeed unique and should be considered a model for other ATS schools. At the present time it may take as long as five years to complete the program, but at the end of those five years, the student will have an accredited Master of Divinity degree and will have been taught to minister specifically in the Hispanic context of the United States

### **Conclusion**

The future of the Hispanic church will be determined by the quality of its leaders. These leaders must be trained to do what God has called them to do. This training could, and should, take place at all levels. Informally, the local pastor and local congregation can train laity and potential leaders through mentoring and practical training programs. The Hispanic clergy will need additional training in more formal settings, such as Bible institutes and accredited seminaries. These programs should focus on a specific goal, match their curriculum to that goal, and provide flexible training for

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<sup>125</sup>Ibid., 53.

Hispanic pastors that they can afford. Because of the sheer size of the Hispanic population, Hispanic churches will have a growing impact on both the sacred and secular contexts of the United States. The type of impact will depend on the leaders of these churches. Alex Montoya says,

The future of our Hispanic churches will lie in the hands of these men who are not afraid to suffer, who will not mind the pain, ridicule, and deprivation of the Christian ministry. It is not a place for “soft, sissy men.” God will raise up men acquainted with sorrow, suffering, and grief. Upon these the gospel mantle will fall. They and women like them will build the churches of tomorrow. May God make us all equal to the task.<sup>126</sup>

The Hispanic church in the United States needs leaders who are trained to be ministers, to be denominational workers, and to be biblical scholars. Hopefully, many institutes and seminaries will take up this challenge to provide culturally appropriate programs that are of the highest caliber.

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<sup>126</sup>Alex D. Montoya, *Hispanic Ministry in North America* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 134.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The previous chapters of this dissertation have set forth a missiological response to the emergent Latino population in the United States. The response includes church planting, social ministry, and leadership development. Each of these components can be implemented in any area of the country where Hispanics are found, whether it be in a historically-Hispanic area such as California or Texas, or in a pioneer Hispanic area like North Carolina or Arkansas. Given that the Hispanic population in the United States is growing at an unprecedented rate, Christians must act now to plant strong, healthy churches to minister to the Latinos that God has brought to our doorstep. In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the findings of the previous chapters and then outline some suggestions for further research.

#### **Summary**

Chapter 1 of this dissertation explored the demographic data and cultural information related to the burgeoning Hispanic population. The statistics of this chapter served as a springboard for chapters two, three, and four.

Chapter 2 put forth the hypothesis that, because the Hispanic population is growing so rapidly, more Hispanic churches need to be planted. In this chapter, I explored the current state of the Hispanic church, what types of churches need to be planted, and who needs to plant these churches. Following these discussions, I presented

certain impediments to Hispanic church planting, such as bilingualism, multi-nationalism, and education.

In chapter 3, I stated that social ministry is a valuable tool for church planting within the Hispanic culture. The necessity to participate in social ministry is due, in part, to the communal nature of Hispanics. They are concerned about the needs of others and believe the church should be as well. In addition, Latinos, as a whole, have more social needs than their white counterparts, thus making social ministry a genuine necessity for them.

Social ministry should not be based solely on the needs of the persons however. In this chapter, I also examined some of the biblical evidence supporting the Christian's responsibility in this area and provided a historical perspective on how the church has viewed social ministry during the last century. The church must evangelize, and it must do social ministry.

Chapter 4 stated that leadership development must be the third prong of the missiological response to the emergent Latino population. Currently, there is a dearth of Hispanic pastors to minister to the existing congregations in this country. If more churches need to be planted, as is posited in chapter two, more leaders must be trained. They must, however, be trained well, and they must be trained to minister in a culturally appropriate manner.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Several additional areas of further research are related to the missiological response to the emergent Hispanic population. Since the Hispanic church, in general, is yet to come into its own, additional research could help the church deal with the issues it

faces. Suggestions for further investigation include a study of the need for a network of Hispanic Bible institutes, a study of the relationships between Hispanic churches and their denominations, a study of the role of women in the Hispanic church, a study of the theology of the Hispanic church, and a study on how to minister to Hispanic youth in this country.

### **Network of Hispanic Bible Institutes**

First, I would like to suggest that further research be done regarding the Hispanic Bible institutes that currently exist. No comprehensive list exists of these independent educational institutions that are providing a majority of the training for Hispanic pastors. Some questions that should be answered regarding these institutes are: Where are the centers located? What is the age group of the majority of the students? What type of theology is being taught in these centers? In regard to curriculum, is there a prevailing emphasis on the practical aspects of ministry or on the theoretical nature of ministry? Does any spiritual formation take place, or is the institute strictly an academic setting? What is the educational background of the teachers and directors? Last, what organizations govern the Bible institute?

Following the research into the current institutes, I suggest that a network be created by which these centers of education could relate to each other and perhaps even improve what is currently being achieved by these institutes.<sup>1</sup> I am not suggesting that

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Conde-Frazier briefly mentions the need for a network of Hispanic Bible institutes as well in the conclusion to her dissertation. See Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, "A Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes in Massachusetts: Their Mission, Educational Philosophy and Pedagogy" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1998).

this network should serve in any regulatory fashion or as any type of accrediting agency.<sup>2</sup>

The network could serve, however, as a resource for the institutes. Conferences, for example, could be formed where the institute directors and teachers would be introduced to new educational and cultural research affecting the Hispanic population. This network would benefit the institutes and would provide the opportunity for further research into different aspects of these community-based educational bodies.

### **Denominational Relations**

Because many denominations are maintaining their numbers due to the increase in Hispanic churches, it would be interesting to study how these denominations are relating to their Hispanic constituents. Are there Latino denominational staff members, and what are their responsibilities? Does the denomination recognize the importance of ministering to Hispanics or is it viewed as a “side ministry”? Are Hispanics incorporated in the mainstream of the denomination or are they separated? An additional important question is does the Hispanic church have a vested interest in its denomination? Is there anything about remaining in the denomination that benefits the Hispanic church?

In addition, further research should be conducted to determine what will happen if Latinos feel underrepresented in their current denominations. Will they leave

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<sup>2</sup>The Association for Biblical Higher Education already exists for those institutes that are seeking accreditation. This accrediting organization was formerly known as the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC). For further information, see “Association for Biblical Higher Education” [on-line]; accessed 13 April 2005; available from <http://abhe.gospelcom.net/index.html>; Internet.

the denominations and form Latino denominations?<sup>3</sup> Will they simply withdraw, either silently or vocally, from the current denomination and continue to minister as independent churches? The answer to these questions may determine how denominations will function in this country in the future.

These questions, and others like them, should provoke thoughtful responses from the denominations found in the United States. At the current time, denominations seem to be reticent to allow Hispanics to have much influence over any area except their respective Hispanic departments. As González says, “Our promotional materials *boast* of the churches that are growing overseas among people of other cultures and races. But when mission involves bringing different people into *our* fold, right here at home, things are different.”<sup>4</sup>

The Hispanic church in this country will continue to grow in influence. Denominations will do well to seek the input of Latinos at every level of their denominational structures. Building relationships directly with Hispanics and incorporating their insights into the backbone of the denomination may be a solution to keeping Hispanic churches within each denomination.

### **The Role of Women**

Because of the *machismo* that exists in the Hispanic culture, it would be easy to assume that women are not allowed much opportunity to minister in the Hispanic

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<sup>3</sup>For example, some Hispanics within the Southern Baptist Convention have suggested at the last two annual conventions that the Hispanic churches withdraw from the denomination.

<sup>4</sup>Justo González, *Santa Biblia: The Bible through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 54. Italics in the original

church.<sup>5</sup> My experience is, however, that the opposite is true. In the churches in which I have served, both in this country and in Latin America, women have been given the opportunity to teach and serve in various capacities. In certain denominations such as the Assemblies of God, female pastors are also accepted within the Hispanic church.

Given that Hispanic women are serving in various roles within the Hispanic church, it would be interesting to study this occurrence from a cultural perspective. Are the women really respected by Latino men? If they are, what is the basis of the respect? Is it due to the female having more education, or is it due to the woman simply being in a place of authority? Would a man in the same position receive more, less, or the same respect?

In regard to this cultural phenomenon, it would also be intriguing to see how these women manage their other duties as wives and mothers. The Hispanic culture, in general, places great importance on the family, and the wife is usually responsible for maintaining the familial equilibrium.<sup>6</sup> Does this characteristic change when a woman has a place of authority in the church?

Last, I would like to suggest that further research be done related to the roles of women in the Hispanic church from a biblical perspective. Many of the Hispanic female scholars in the church are writing from a feminist perspective.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the women

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<sup>5</sup>For more information on *machismo* (chauvinism), see the discussions in chapters one and four of this dissertation.

<sup>6</sup>See the discussion of the family (*la familia*) in chapter one of this dissertation.

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha: A Hispanic Women's Liberation Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), and Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Yolanda Tarango, *Hispanic Women: Prophetic Voice in the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988). Ada María Isasi-Díaz reveals her feminist goals in the preface



of the Hispanic church in the United States are being influenced by the secular feminist culture of this country. This influence, coupled with feminist theology, could potentially weaken the Hispanic church in this country. The Hispanic church, like other churches, must struggle with this issue and come to a biblical conclusion on the matter.

### **The Theology of the Hispanic Church**

Because of the lack of theologically-trained leaders in the Hispanic church of the United States, it is possible that the theology being practiced in these churches is somewhat simplistic. To understand the current state of the Hispanic church, I would like to suggest that further research be carried out regarding the theology being taught in the church and practiced by its members.

Once an investigation has been completed regarding the current theology of the Hispanic church in this country, I would like to suggest, furthermore, that research be conducted regarding the development of a biblical theology that reflects a Hispanic perspective. I am not suggesting that the Bible's meaning is determined by the culture of the person reading it. I would simply like to posit the idea that the viewpoint of a theological system could be variable while the same historical doctrine is maintained.

For example, Justo González suggests that the Hispanic immigrant reads the Bible in such a way that God's promises regarding the protection of the foreigner become

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to *En la Lucha*. She says, "I hope the *mujerista* [Latina feminist] theology's method and insistence on the validity and importance of Latinas' religious understandings and practices will impact not only theology but also the churches and, through them, society" (xii).

take on a special meaning in the Hispanic's view of God.<sup>8</sup> The theology does not change because the Hispanic recognizes that it is God who makes the promise. The difference is that one of God's attributes, the protection of the foreigner, has taken on a particular significance for the Hispanic, based on his cultural background.

Other biblical stories that the Hispanic immigrant could read with a different perspective include Joseph who "like so many [Hispanics] did not have a very clear idea why he was in Egypt."<sup>9</sup> In addition, the story of Ruth and Naomi can take on a slightly different significance when read through the eyes of a Latino. This story is "the story of a woman who becomes an alien for the sake of her husband, and another woman who becomes an alien for the sake of her mother-in-law. It is the story of belonging in the midst of not belonging. It is, in short, a story of exile and alienness."<sup>10</sup> This type of emphasis is not usually found in theology textbooks that are written from an Anglo perspective.

In addition to González, other Hispanic authors have also made this call to develop a Hispanic theology. Some of their ideas, however, would not be acceptable to the majority of the evangelical church because they rely upon various components of liberation theology.<sup>11</sup> The validity of a biblical theology from a Hispanic perspective,

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<sup>8</sup>González, *Santa Biblia*, 94-96.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, Allan Figueroa Deck, *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992); Ana María Díaz-Stevens and Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo, *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U.S. Religion* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998); and Miguel A. De La Torre and Edwin David Aponte, *Introducing Latino/a Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001). This last book provides an ample annotated bibliography of books related to the development of a

therefore, needs to be further investigated before the Hispanic theology of these authors pervades the Hispanic church in this country with potentially erroneous concepts.

### **Ministry to Hispanic Youth**

The Hispanic population in this country is relatively young compared to the general population.<sup>12</sup> This characteristic of the population means that churches must have an active youth ministry to reach over one-third of the Hispanic population. To accomplish this task, Hispanic churches must deal, first, with the issue of bilingualism. Will the Hispanic church become bilingual in order to minister to the second and third generations of Hispanics? How will the Hispanic church help these youth deal with the issues that come with being bicultural?

Further investigation must be conducted into how churches are reaching the Hispanic youth and what more could be done. The church may need to consider offering separate services for the second and third generations. At the same time, the Hispanic church must mentor these youth in how to minister within the Hispanic community so that the Hispanic churches will not be without ministers in the next generation. More investigation should be done to explore the ways the church can accommodate the needs of these youth while helping them maintain their cultural heritage.

The church must also address the issue of the thousands of youth that come to this country to work. Many of the undocumented immigrants are below the age of eighteen, and they are away from home for the first time. The church must learn to

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Hispanic theology.

<sup>12</sup>Melissa Therrien and Roberto R. Ramirez, "The Hispanic Population in the United States" (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). The Hispanic population consists of 35.7 percent under the age of eighteen compared to 23.5 percent of the white

become the *familia* for these youth while they are away from home. The church can offer guidance into the cultural labyrinth of this country and at the same time teach these young newcomers the biblical precepts that should guide their lives. To accomplish this task, however, further investigation should be carried out to explore the needs of this special group of youth.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, these suggestions for further research have a particular amount of urgency behind them. The Hispanic church continues to grow and will also continue to grow in influence. It will surely impact the Hispanic population, but it also has the potential to have an effect on the entire culture on this country. It is imperative, therefore, that this church be a healthy, vibrant church that successfully reaches the Latino community for Christ and positively influences the way of life for all persons in this country.

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population.

## APPENDIX 1

### CURSO DE LIDERAZGO

#### Teaching Outlines for Weeks 4-11

##### **Semana 4: Como Estudiar la Biblia**

###### *Tarea Preparativa:*

Lectura Bíblica: 2 Timoteo 3:16-17; Salmo 119:1-6, 105-112, 169-176

Preguntas:

1. Por qué un líder necesita estudiar la Palabra de Dios?
2. Explica lo que significa las siguientes frases en 2 Timoteo 3:16.

La Biblia es útil . . .

Para enseñar:

Para redargüir:

Para corregir:

Para instruir en justicia:

3. Memoriza Salmo 119:105, 114. Escribe los versículos abajo.

###### *Metas para la clase:*

- Que los estudiantes aprendan que el aprender es una disciplina que lleva toda la vida.
- Que los estudiantes aprendan la importancia de estudiar la Biblia fuera de la iglesia.

##### **Semanas 5 y 6: Adoración: Como Dirigir un Culto**

###### *Tarea Preparativa:*

Lectura Bíblica: Exodo 15:1-21

Preguntas:

1. Hay una diferencia entre “alabanza” y “adoración?” Explica tu respuesta.
2. Cuál es el rol de la persona quien dirige el culto?
3. Cuáles son algunos elementos que se deben incluir en un culto de alabanza/adoración?

*Metas para la clase:*

- Que los estudiantes examinen los elementos y las emociones que se involucren en un culto.
- Que los estudiantes aprendan a elegir canciones que ayuden a la congregación a adorar a Dios.
- Que los estudiantes aprendan a buscar la excelencia en preparar cultos.

*Para la semana 6, los estudiantes planificarán un culto que demuestre que hayan aprendido como preparar un culto edificante. Este culto debe ser implementado en una iglesia durante el curso de liderazgo.*

**Semanas 7 y 8****Como Preparar un Estudio Bíblico***Tarea Preparativa:*

Lectura Bíblica: El pasaje elegido por el estudiante para contestar la primera pregunta abajo.

- Preguntas: 1. Cuál sería un pasaje bíblico sobre el cual te gustaría prepara un estudio bíblico?
2. Cuáles son tres preguntas que tengas acerca de ese pasaje?
3. Cuál es el tema más importante de ese pasaje?

*Metas para la clase:*

- Que los estudiantes asimilen los diferentes elementos de la preparación de un estudio bíblico: elegir el pasaje, estudiar el pasaje, elegir el objetivo; presentar la información.
- Que los estudiantes demuestren que saben preparar un estudio bíblico con apertura, métodos apropiados, y una clausura que selle el aprendizaje.

*Para semana 8, los estudiantes prepararán un estudio bíblico que incluye todos los elementos enseñados en la clase. Este estudio debe ser usado en una clase actual de estudio bíblico durante el curso de liderazgo.*

**Semana 9****Evangelismo***Tarea Preparativa:*

Lectura Bíblica: Hechos 8:26-40

- Preguntas: 1. Quién inició el encuentro entre Felipe y el eunuco? (v. 26)
2. Cómo empezó Felipe cuando le explicó al eunuco acerca de Dios?
3. Cuáles son tus temores en cuanto a compartir Cristo con otros?

*Metas para la clase:*

- Que los estudiantes se den cuenta que la obra de evangelismo es de Dios, no de los seres humanos.
- Que los estudiantes aprendan que el evangelismo es una responsabilidad de todo creyente.

**Semanas 10 y 11****Métodos de Evangelismo***Tarea Preparativa:*

Lectura Bíblica: Hechos 2:14-42

- Preguntas:
- 1.Cuál es mas importante: evangelizar a través de tu vida o evangelizar *hablando* de Jesús con las personas?
  2. Qué debe ser el enfoque de la visitación? Qué se debe lograr?
  3. Cómo hubieras preferido que te evangelizaran?

*Metas para la clase:*

- Que los estudiantes aprendan que hay varios métodos de evangelizar.
- Que los estudiantes aprendan a tomar en cuenta las necesidades y el “lugar” espiritual en determinar cuál método deben de usar.
- Que los estudiantes exploren varios de los métodos presentados en la clase para agregarlos a sus herramientas de evangelización.

*En la semana 11 los estudiantes tendrán la oportunidad de practicar lo que han aprendido acerca del evangelismo. El profesor debe determinar dónde sería un buen lugar para hacer evangelismo en su área.*

## APPENDIX 2

### COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR MODEL BIBLE INSTITUTE

#### **Study Skills**

This course will be an introductory course to the types of study skills institute students will need in order to complete the program. Students who lack basic skills in Spanish will be required to take an additional remedial Spanish Language class.

#### **New Testament Survey**

The New Testament class is a survey of all books of the New Testament. Students should become familiar with the central themes, author, and key passages of each book. Attention will also be given to how the New Testament relates to the entire canon of the Bible.

#### **Old Testament Survey**

The Old Testament class is a survey of all books of the Old Testaments. Students should become familiar with the central themes, authors, and key passages of each book. Attention will also be given to how the promises God made to the chosen people of Israel relate to the New Testament church of today.

#### **Evangelism and Missions**

This class will explore the biblical rationale for doing evangelism and missions. It will also provide tools for doing evangelism and opportunities to practice evangelistic methods and techniques. The missions component of this class will include specific information regarding the Cooperative Program and the special missions offerings (Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, Eliza Broadus).

#### **Theology**

This class will cover basic instruction in the systematic theology categories of theology proper, christology, hamartiaology, soteriology, and pneumatology. In addition, the theology course should include specific emphasis on Baptist doctrines of the faith using the *Baptist Faith and Message*.



**Elective**

Students will choose to take one of the following classes: Preaching, Worship Leadership, or Church Planting. The preaching class will study various methods of sermon delivery and will provide opportunities for students to present sermons they have prepared. The worship leadership class will examine how to prepare relevant and expressive worship services that are also biblically acceptable. Topics to explore will include the use of song in the Bible and the use of prayer in the Bible and how to apply these to worship in the Hispanic context. The content of the church planting course will be based on the *Basic Training for Church Planters* course designed and published by the North American Mission Board.

**Personal Development of the Leader**

This course will specifically train the leader in spiritual growth and how to conduct himself in different social environments and ministerial contexts in the United States. In regard to spiritual formation, the student will be encouraged to develop a personal plan for continued growth in the future. In addition, the class will include topics such as sexual education, personal presentation, stewardship of family finances, as well as other relevant subjects.

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## ABSTRACT

### A MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENT LATINO POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Twyla Kay Hernandez, Ph.D.  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005  
Chairperson: Dr. Charles E. Lawless, Jr.

This dissertation examines the need for a three-pronged missiological response to the emergent Latino population in the United States. Chapter 1 introduces the need for a missiological response to the Latino population in the United States. It begins with a history of the Hispanic presence in this country, including an in-depth look at the present population configuration. This chapter also examines the cultural idiosyncrasies of Latinos.

Chapter 2 begins with the explanation of the primary response to the Latino population in the United States: church planting. Both the biblical basis for church planting and the demographic need for more Hispanic churches in the country are examined. The chapter also identifies the problems of planting churches and provides an effective model for church planting among the Hispanics of the United States.

Chapters 3 and 4 are complementary to the church planting chapter. Chapter 3 delineates the need for social ministry as a part of church planting in the Hispanic context. In an effort to avoid social ministry for social ministry's sake alone, the chapter begins with a biblical basis for social ministry. The discussion continues with an

examination of different perspectives on the subject. The chapter includes a discussion of how the Hispanic church can biblically participate in social ministry while, at the same time, avoiding becoming a mere social agency. The chapter concludes with suggestions for the types of ministry needed by the Hispanic community.

Chapter 4 discusses leadership development, the third part of the proposed missiological response. The premise is that for healthy churches to develop from the needed Hispanic church plants, leaders must be trained to minister in them. Attention, therefore, is given to the types of leadership development needed to develop a healthy Hispanic church model. The discussion includes effective models of leadership development for both the laity and clergy. Model programs are recommended for church-based programs and for formal education.

Chapter 5 draws the three elements of the proposed missiological response to a proper conclusion. The chapter also includes suggestions for further research in this area.

## VITA

Twyla Kay Hernandez

### PERSONAL

Born: December 26, 1970, Nashville, Tennessee  
Parents: James, Sr. and Barbara Fagan  
Married: José Clemente Hernandez, January 1, 2005

### EDUCATIONAL

Diploma, Fred J. Page High School, Franklin, Tennessee, 1989  
B.A., Middle Tennessee State University, 1993  
M.Div., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999

### MINISTERIAL

Journeyman, International Mission Board, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1993-96  
Minister of Education, *Iglesia Bautista Getsemani*, 1996-2005

### ACADEMIC

Assistant Director of Academic Counseling, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999-2001  
Student Research Associate to the Dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001-02  
Director of Great Commission Ministries, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002-05