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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR YOUNG ADULT MEN AT
TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH IN
FORT VALLEY, GEORGIA

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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A DISCIPLESHIP
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PREFACE

I give all praise, honor, and thanksgiving to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who died to pay the penalty for my sins that I might be saved and embrace the hope of attaining eternal glory. It is He who gave me daily strength and talent to complete this project.

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Gregory Moore

Fort Valley, Georgia

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a discipleship curriculum for young adult men at Trinity Baptist Church, Fort Valley, Georgia.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to recruit and enlist young men to participate in the development and implementation of a discipleship curriculum for young men at Trinity Baptist Church. A survey was handed out to all young adult men on the Sunday morning of the first week of the project explaining the goal of the project and how it may benefit them. The number of interested young men was determined by a final question on the survey that asked them to commit to the curriculum implementation process for five weeks. The data from these surveys was recorded by documenting the percentage of young men who agree to commit to the process from the total number of surveys returned. This goal was successful if seven young men agree to participate in the curriculum implementation aspect of the project for five weeks.

The second goal of this project was to evaluate the discipleship knowledge of the young men who agreed to participate in the project. The participants were given a pre-project questionnaire to ascertain their knowledge of discipleship prior to the project. This goal was to have seven participants complete the questionnaire in order to assign a score.

The third goal of the project was to develop an appropriate discipleship curriculum to increase the participants' knowledge of the biblical basis for discipleship.

A group of five Sunday school teachers at the church, using a rubric to determine the biblical fidelity and applicability of the discipleship curriculum, measured this goal. Using the rubric, the teachers evaluated the curriculum based on ten categories: faithfulness to Scripture, relevance to discipleship, relevance to the project, emphasis on prayer and devotions, emphasis on spiritual disciplines, consistency with Christ's work with the disciples, relevance to the church, proper scope, relevant strategy, and practical application. The Sunday school teachers were also asked to add suggestions for improvement. This goal was measured using the Likert Scale, and the values for each response to the rubric were totaled. This goal was considered successful if five out of seven Sunday schools teachers approved the curriculum and agreed the curriculum was useable for the group.

The fourth goal of this project was to implement a five-week discipleship curriculum with the young men recruited. Participants were taught the curriculum to increase their knowledge and commitment to discipleship. The participants were given a post-project questionnaire to ascertain their knowledge and commitment to discipleship at the end of the project. The questionnaire was the same questionnaire administered in the second goal of this project. The data from this post-project questionnaire was recorded in the form of post-test scores into a dependent t-test for paired samples. The benchmark of success was a positive statistical increase in the participant's knowledge and attitude towards discipleship.

Ministry Context

Trinity's history of ministry to males has been relegated to young boys and teenagers, but not adult men. The ambassador ministry (a ministry originated to mentor boys and teenagers in the church) formerly assigned older men to young boys for Christian mentoring. Each mentor was charged with challenging his assigned boy or teenager to be diligent in school, stay out of trouble, be respectful, and attend Sunday school and church on Sunday. The ambassadors ceased their mentoring activities well over a decade ago.

They now serve to provide male help with large church events (monitoring at fall festivals, recess at vacation Bible school, setting up chairs and tables for various functions, etc.) and planning an annual Men's Day program. Once a year the ambassadors take young boys from the church on a fishing rodeo and have a picnic with them at a local park afterwards. This has been the extent of their ministry to young males in the church.

An intentional discipleship ministry for young adult men at Trinity has never existed. A men's discipleship fellowship ministry would be the first ministry of its kind with adult men as its target. The closest activity with some semblance of ministry to young adult men would be the deacon ministry. At Trinity, deacons are men charged with maintaining church unity when there are disputes, checking on needs of widows, administering communion, visiting the sick, and providing prayer and devotions during worship. Trinity's deacons look out for the wellbeing of all church members, but they do not intentionally target young adult men for discipleship.

The largest group of spiritually mature (men committed to living their life for Christ) men at Trinity are older men, mostly in their seventies. The church only has about 10 men in the age range of 18-55, but approximately 6 of them participate faithfully in the life of the church. The other men in this age range could best be described as being on the outer fringes of the church family; they attend Sunday worship sporadically but are not active beyond worship attendance. There is a need to intentionally target young adult men to get them actively involved in spiritual disciplines beyond sporadic church attendance.

In 2012, Trinity began a men's Bible study on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. After a year's time, the average attendance is about 6 men per study. The number of men with which it started has remained unchanged. The men that attend are all over the age of 45. There is a need to intentionally target more young adult men to actively participate in Bible study.

Developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum would go beyond

Bible study as a means of training young adult men to be disciples. This design will go much farther in its efforts to assimilate and disciple young adult men and increase the roles they play in the life of the church.

Our annual Men's Day Program in September serves as a day of worship, led by the men of the church. A guest speaker is charged with rendering an inspirational message to all men in attendance. Men of all ages are appointed to play some role in the program. Most of the presentations have to do with giving some kind of spiritual encouragement or advice for men. Subsequent to this service, there is no significant follow up or continued emphasis on discipleship for young men. Trinity needs a prolonged effort to foster spiritual growth in its young men.

Rationale for the Project

The first rationale for this project at Trinity is to reestablish the importance of discipleship among men in the church. Mentoring other young adult men has ceased as a consistent effort and needs to be reiterated and highlighted as a major priority. Trinity men need a deep conviction that such efforts should be an intentional and standard practice on a yearly basis. Developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum could serve as a catalyst for the men of Trinity to get involved in the process of discipling our young men.

A discipleship curriculum was needed to encourage and inspire young adult men towards a life of godliness at Trinity. Too many young men exist on the outer fringes of the church family even though they attend; some attend faithfully. These men need to have their roles more clearly defined so that they can be confronted with their need for spiritual growth (commitment to live for Christ) and their participation in the spiritual growth of others in the church. No organized effort of training and instruction was in place to do this. The church needed to and can improve its effectiveness in reaching young men by having an established and intentional discipleship class with the appropriate curriculum.

A discipleship curriculum for young men could play an important role in the

impact Trinity's annual Men's Day program has on young adult men in the church. It could shift the week's activities from a programmatic activity to being more purposeful in supporting and fostering discipleship. Instead of coming to an abrupt end, the Men's Day celebration could have far-reaching, lingering effects on the spirit and involvement of men at Trinity if continued discipleship training was included.

Implementing a discipleship curriculum increased exposure to the doctrine and process of discipleship to the participants in the project and other men in the church who could get involved after the project. They would be exposed to the biblical patterns of Christ, the apostle Paul, and other mentors in the Bible and develop a conviction the pattern should be repeated without end (Matt 28:19-20). There is a core group of faithful men at Trinity who upon more frequent exposure and understanding of discipleship are very likely to participate and implement discipleship at Trinity.

Definitions and Limitations

Discipling. In his book, *Discipleship Essentials*, author Greg Ogden defines *discipling* as “an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciple to teach others as well.”¹

Disciple. Ogden defines *disciple* as “one who responds in faith and obedience to the gracious call to follow Jesus Christ. Being a disciple is a lifelong process of dying to self while allowing Christ to come alive in us.”²

Discipleship. In the book *Life-Changing Small Groups*, Bill Donahue and the Willow Creek Small Groups Team, define *discipleship* as “living as Christ would if He

¹Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Connect, 2007), 18.

²Ibid., 24.

were in my place; a life transformation and dependence on the Holy Spirit.”³

This project was limited to fifteen weeks, which included two weeks of recruiting and enlistment of men for the project, one week administering and having participants complete a pre-project questionnaire, four weeks to develop the curriculum and have it approved, five weeks to implement and teach the curriculum, two weeks to evaluate the project, and one week for writing conclusions.

The potential participants was limited to no less than 7 men, no younger than 18 and no older than 55 years of age. Efforts will be made to solicit men who are not in the “inner core” of Trinity.

Research Methodology

The first goal of this project was to recruit and enlist young men to participate in the development and implementation of a discipleship curriculum for young men at Trinity Baptist Church. The first two weeks of the project consisted of recruiting and enlisting at least 7 young adult men between the ages of 19 to 55 to participate in the research project. A survey was handed out to all young adult men on the Sunday morning of the first week of the project explaining the goal of the project, the duration and start date of the project, the curriculum of the project and how it would also benefit them. The number of interested young men was determined by a final question on the survey that asked them to commit to the curriculum implementation process for five weeks. The data from these surveys was recorded by documenting the percentage of young men who agreed to commit to the process from the total number of surveys returned. This goal was deemed successful if seven young men agreed to participate in the curriculum implementation aspect of the project for five weeks. Trinity is a small congregation; therefore, seven participants would be considered reasonable.

The second goal of this project was to evaluate the knowledge of the young

³Bill Donahue, *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 24.

men who agree to participate in the project. In week 3 of the project, a pretest questionnaire survey was given to the participants who agreed to participate to ascertain their knowledge of discipleship. Each questionnaire from the participants was given a score based upon their answers and that score was entered into dependent t-test for paired samples. This goal was deemed successful if seven participants completed the questionnaire and were assigned a pre-project dependent t-test score for paired samples.

The third goal of this project was to develop an appropriate discipleship curriculum to increase the participant's knowledge of the biblical basis for discipleship. This goal was measured by a group of five Sunday school teachers at the church using a scoring rubric to determine the biblical fidelity and applicability of the disciple curriculum developed. Using the rubric, the teachers evaluated the curriculum based on ten categories: faithfulness to Scripture, relevance to discipleship, relevance to the project, emphasis on prayer and devotions, emphasis on spiritual disciplines, consistency with Christ's work with the disciples, relevance to the church, proper scope, relevant strategy, and practical application. One teacher was assigned to lead the evaluation and to return each teachers completed rubric. This goal was measured using the Likert Scale, and values for each response to the rubric were totaled. This goal was successful when all Sunday Schools teachers approved the curriculum and agreed the curriculum was useable for the group.

The fourth goal of this project was to implement a six-week discipleship curriculum to the young men recruited. Participants were taught the curriculum to increase their knowledge and commitment to discipleship. The participants were given a post-project questionnaire to ascertain their knowledge and commitment to discipleship at the end of the project. The questionnaire was the same questionnaire administered in the second goal for this project. The data from this post-project questionnaire was recorded in the form of post-test scores into a dependent t-test for paired samples. The benchmark of success was a positive statistical increase in the participant's knowledge and attitude towards discipleship.

CHAPTER 2
THEOLOGICAL BASIS

**Commission to Perpetuate Gospel
Ministry through Discipleship**

Matthew 28:18-20 is the great commission given by Christ to the apostles to make disciples of all nations. This commission established that the continuance of Jesus' ministry would be executed through the repetition of discipleship training. In this passage, Jesus commanded the apostles to perform and adhere to the process of discipleship that he used to gain their allegiance and faithfulness to the gospel. It was then that their obligation to repeat the process of discipleship with other willing participants began. Dale Allison comments that the prophecy of all the families on Earth being blessed through Abraham (Gen 12:3) comes to fulfillment in the mission of the church when Jesus commanded the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations.¹ The book of Acts (2:42-27) records that the apostles employed discipleship training as the method by which to make disciples of all nations. Matthew 28:18-20 says,

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.²

It is clear from these passages that Jesus commanded the disciples to go and do to others what he had done to them. He disciplined the twelve and then he called them to disciple others. Christ's example, method, and command established repetitive

¹Dale Allison, *Matthew*, The International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 547.

²All Scripture references are from the 1769 Authorized Version Red Letter Edition, unless otherwise noted.

discipleship as the mission of the New Testament Church for the perpetuation of the gospel. He did not refer them to the examples of any other great godly men or women from the Old Testament, He specifically referred to the example they learned firsthand, from him.

Discipleship is the way this passage suggests the church should go about multiplying the number of believers and creating a Christ-centered world. John Nolland comments that the literal discipleship of the twelve apostles by Christ was unique and unrepeatable, but it does embody the pattern of discipleship which is the relevant issue at hand.³ Keener notes that Christian discipleship is historically similar to the Jewish sages who customarily taught their students through a form of discipleship. The difference being that Christians would not disciple others unto themselves rather they would disciple them unto Jesus Christ.⁴

Empowered To Make Disciples

Christ promised to empower the apostles to be effective in discipleship ministry. In Matthew 28:18, the disciples are encouraged to perpetuate the ministry because Christ would support their efforts with spiritual power that would guarantee success in spreading the gospel. Christ had the authority to give the command to make disciples and he had the ability to help the disciples carry out those orders.⁵ Before his death on the cross, Christ submitted to self-imposed limitations of the flesh. After his resurrection, He released his power (Acts 1:8) to the disciples and they gained confidence in Christ's messianic power to assist them in every scenario to share the gospel.

Jesus knew the disciples would be faced with opposition from authorities who

³John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1265.

⁴Craig Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 718.

⁵Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: B & H, 1992), 431.

wielded great power. The apostles needed the confidence of being commissioned by a power that was without limits and superior to any opposition they might face. All human authority, regardless of rank, has limited authority compared to God. Armed with this knowledge, the apostles could perpetuate the gospel ministry through discipleship without fear of being defeated by an authority or power greater than Christ. This set the stage for the continuation of their ministry of discipleship despite human opposition. Christ's authority worked to increase their confidence in perpetuating the gospel through discipleship.⁶ The apostles' subsequent success (Acts 2:41-47) supports the thesis that the perpetuation of the gospel is to be through discipleship training. Indeed, Christ empowered discipleship training to be successful.

Christ's commission to the church is supported by the fact that he has supreme power in heaven and Earth. Persons going through discipleship training should be informed and frequently reminded that success in making disciples of Christ ultimately lies the hands of Christ. Apprehension about engaging in discipleship can be disposed of when the disciple is convinced that God's power ultimately determines the outcome. Discipleship is so vital to the perpetuation of the gospel that Christ promised spiritual power superior to all obstacles that work to hinder success. This truth is supported by the words of the apostle Paul when he states in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." It should be concluded from Matthew 28:18 that God justifiably expects success in the spreading of the gospel because he has supplied superior power to overcome all obstacles to successful discipleship.

Discipleship as a Missionary Endeavor

Having established His authority and power over all hindrances to the

⁶D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 595.

propagation of the gospel, Jesus encouraged his disciples to “Go ye therefore” (Matt 28:19). Now that they were endowed with power, it was time for them to go make disciples and numerically increase the number of adherents and ensure the gospel ministry’s continuance into the future. It was time for the disciples to become missionaries of the gospel. Keener comments that “going” is one of the components of making disciples for Jesus, one that helps explain discipling the nations.⁷

Going was not a signal that God had ended his outreach to the Jewish nation. Keener concludes that Jesus nowhere provoked or revoked the mission to Israel but merely added a new mission revoking a previous prohibition against some forms of fellowship (i.e, forbidden foods) with Gentiles. In Acts 1:8, Jesus clearly directed the disciples to be witnesses “in Jerusalem and in all Judea.” The church at this time was a predominantly Jewish Christian community and they needed to be encouraged in evangelizing Gentiles.⁸ Dale Allison concludes that Christ’s resurrection marked the end of the exclusive focus on the Jewish nation and officially gives way to the Gentile mission.⁹

Going to make disciples intimates that the power God gives is a “missionary power” that should drive all believers to make disciples. Therefore, those who receive spiritual power should have a gospel mission and constantly be involved in missionary and discipleship activity: “You shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). Witnessing involves living as a faithful disciple and helping other believers to mature spiritually.

Candidates for discipleship training should be made cognizant of the fact that the power God gives them is intended to be used in some form of direct or indirect

⁷Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 719.

⁸Ibid., 720.

⁹Allison, *Matthew*, 547.

discipleship. They should be informed about the purpose of God's power, which is ultimately the mission of making disciples to spread the gospel from generation to generation.

Now that the power to perpetuate the gospel and the mission for the power has been explored, the next passage deals with some specifics of discipleship. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus says the church is to engage in "teaching all nations whatsoever I have commanded you."

Perpetuating Discipleship through Teaching

The command Jesus gave to the apostles was to teach persons all over the world what He had taught them. The method Jesus used to teach them was discipleship. Discipleship had the potential to exponentially increase the number of committed believers in the world because of the pattern of one disciple becoming two disciples and two disciples becoming four disciples through training and so on. The main focus was for believers to duplicate themselves through discipleship.¹⁰ Getting new believers to stay in the church would require in depth training and nurturing.

Discipleship is designed to place truths deep down such that the recipient embraces the truths with deep conviction and thus seeks to persuade others to follow Christ. Effective and passionate teaching is important in convincing new believers to embrace the truths of the gospel. The success of great teaching is evident when observing the success (Acts 5:14) of the gospel ministry of the apostles throughout the book of Acts. They indeed perpetuated the gospel throughout their region of influence and employed the discipleship model and much teaching to do it. Craig Bloomberg postulates that if new converts are not faithfully and lovingly nurtured in the whole

¹⁰Bloomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

counsel of God's revelation, then the church has been disobedient to the complete process of discipleship.¹¹

Comprehensive Discipleship Perpetuates the Gospel

Planting deep truths into the heart of new believers today requires a comprehensive process of discipleship. Much quality time must be spent with new believers outside of Sunday worship to provide them with a living example, informal teaching of God's Word, developing Christian disciplines, engaging them in godly conversation, and working in ministry together. The goal of discipleship is to get the disciple to become like his teacher.¹² In this way, disciples create new generations of witnesses for Christ.¹³ The importance of the aforementioned strategies is that they were used by Christ on the apostles. In his comments on Matthew 28:20, Nolland points out that the time came for the disciples to teach on Christ's behalf. But though they are now teaching on Christ's behalf, they are discipling disciples who in turn would end up doing what the apostles were taught to do by Jesus. Just as Jesus empowered the apostles, he would also be with future disciples in a new way.¹⁴ This promise should embolden churches to intentionally engage in the ministry of discipleship to propagate the gospel.

The church today would do well to implement discipleship. The methods used to gain influence with people are basically the same since the beginning of mankind. The discipleship model has successfully worked in the establishment and perpetuation of the church for over 2,000 years and continues to work today to spread the gospel. The evidence of church growth and longevity all over the world are an undeniable testament

¹¹Ibid., 433.

¹²Carson, *Matthew*, 596.

¹³Ibid., 599.

¹⁴Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1270.

to the success of discipleship. Continued commitment and sacrifice will be required to continue the success of discipleship in the future.

Committed Disciples Perpetuate the Gospel

Discipleship required tremendous commitment and sacrifice on behalf of disciples. Jesus eased the apprehension about the rigors of discipleship by making the promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even until the end to the Earth” (Matt 28:20). The Lord is so intimately invested in the perpetuation of the gospel that he promised to be with the disciple maker to insure their success and confidence. This is powerful evidence that the Scriptures support the practice of discipleship for the perpetuation of the gospel. God will not be absent or at a distance in this endeavor. The salvation of souls which Jesus died for and the multiplication of the gospel ministry are at stake. The spirit of God abides in the disciple maker to strengthen the disciple but also to convict the heart of those who are discipled. This means that God works through the disciple in supernatural ways. Discipleship is spiritual business and thus requires supernatural action beyond the scope and capability of the disciple. One’s supernatural God is infinite, thus the church can depend on him for assistance until the end of this age.

Unceasing Discipleship Perpetuate the Gospel

The perpetuation of the gospel through discipleship is to be done indefinitely. Jesus does not foresee a time when his command will become needless or outmoded.¹⁵ Again, Jesus promised to be with the church in this endeavor until the end of the age (Matt 28:20). There is no date set by the Master for the end of discipleship as long as men live in this age. Therefore the church is to continue without cessation and without seeking a worldly method by which to assimilate new believers or to foster spiritual

¹⁵Carson, *Matthew*, 599.

growth in other believers than through discipleship. Christ promised his assistance in this endeavor until his return because he wanted the church to use this method until his return. Only by teaching what Jesus taught does the church become an extension of Christ's ministry.¹⁶ The first installment on the extension of Christ's ministry occurs in the book of Acts, which will now be explored.

Disciplines that Perpetuate the Gospel Ministry

The analysis of the list of specific activities of the early church in Acts 2:41-42 support the thesis because they were employed to perpetuate the gospel ministry. The apostles guided new believers by including them in the ministry of fellowship, table fellowship, Bible study, and prayers in an effort to help the new believers become disciples of the gospel ministry.

The church in Acts engaged discipleship by recruiting, enlisting, and training disciples to proliferate the gospel. William Larkin notes that J. A. Bengel concludes his commentary comments on the book of Acts this way, "Thou hast, o church, thy form, it is thine to preserve it, and guard thy trust." Preserving the form of the church is done by examining Luke's portrait of a spirit filled community in the book of Acts.¹⁷ He reports on a Christian community steeped in activities designed to disciple new believers.

The form of the church in Acts is clearly one supremely focused on the activities that served to perpetuate the gospel "in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and eventually to the uttermost parts of the Earth" (Acts 1:8). The disciples formed this process through the activities of preaching the gospel, establishing small groups of believers, training those believers to be disciples of Christ, and encouraging them to continue the ministry of discipleship. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit empowered the

¹⁶Allison, *Matthew*, 547.

¹⁷William J. Larkin, *Acts*, The IVP New Testament Commentary, vol. 5 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1995), 61.

disciples and converts with continuing commitments to the activities of gospel ministry.¹⁸

Larkin contends that overall the contemporary application of Acts 2:41-42 for today is to devote oneself to the apostles' teaching of evangelism and edification. The apostles' teaching technique was essentially the discipleship training they received from Christ. They knew no other method of propagating the gospel than the activities they were introduced to by Christ. The specific activities they implemented in the first church mirrored the activities the disciples learned from Christ. Those activities built a sense of family belonging and resulted in the adoption of shared values. The core of those values was love for Christ and the ministry of the gospel to new converts. New converts become disciples in the context of fellowship.

The Discipline of Fellowship Perpetuates the Gospel

To begin, the activity of fellowship (Acts 4:42) and breaking of bread was a sharing of possessions to meet needs and sharing of fellowship through common meals.¹⁹ Fellowship around shared meals was an activity designed to meet the need of food for some, but more importantly to build a sense of family with shared values and concerns. Fellowship was important to the goal of the converts becoming a part of the family of disciples for Christ. The core of the shared values developed through the activity of fellowship was the communication and spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ in both formal and informal settings. Prayer was also a major component of fellowship.

Witherington described the apostles' fellowship by using the term *koinonia* which means "fellowship." The disciples were said to be devoted both to teaching and sharing meals and prayers (Acts 2:42).²⁰ Discipleship activities were encapsulated in

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical*

fellowship. In the context of Acts 2:41-47, *koinonia* means participation in sharing in communion and common goods with someone else. It can entail not just spiritual activities such as prayer, but also physical food or other goods in common.²¹

The activity of fellowship diminished divisions of economic status, restrictive diets, cultural barriers, and ethnic differences. The activity of fellowship provided a discipleship community where all things were shared toward the common goal of spreading the gospel and making disciples. All the aforementioned were activities Christ did with the apostles as tools to build a discipleship community and continue the gospel ministry. The book of Acts reveals that the disciples continued Christ's ministry on a larger scale using the same activities they engaged in with Christ to disciple future generations.

Table fellowship also played a role in the process of discipleship. The activity of sharing meals stirred up heartfelt gladness in terms of just being a part of a divine fellowship. No doubt Jesus ate many meals with the disciples, which served to strengthen their bond of fellowship. In this way, the activity of table fellowship forged relationships among those committed to perpetuating the gospel. The phrase "they were sharing in the food" implies a substantial meal, which it is said they ate with gladness and sincerity of heart.²² Many observers of this divine fellowship would want to be a part of this little appetizer of the fellowship to come in heaven.

The Discipline of Prayer Perpetuates the Gospel

The activity of prayer was important to the continued perpetuation of the

Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 161.

²¹Ibid., 160.

²²Richard Longenecker, *Acts*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. James Montgomery Boice and Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 291.

gospel because prayer maintains the believers contact, dependency, and passion for gospel ministry. Larkin refers to the modern growth of the Korean church as a praying church and thus shows that the maxim is indeed true: “The vitality of the church was a measure of the reality of their prayers.”²³ The activity of prayer produced the vitality disciples needed to promote the spread of the gospel against resistance to Christian doctrine. Prayer also fueled hope in the promises of the gospel ministry. Jesus taught the disciples to pray with expectation when he taught them to say, “Thy kingdom come” (Matt 6:10). Acts 2:42 is evidence the disciples trained church members to pray as they were taught to do by Christ. Their expectation of prayer focused on the reward of receiving the gospel and living in the eternal kingdom of heaven. Expectation of heavenly reward encompassed in the activity of prayer was a powerful persuasive force for believing in and spreading the gospel message. It was essential to inform the disciples that the reward would be exponentially greater than their sacrifice. Larkin comments, “With constant intimacy, exultant joy and transparency of relationship they enjoyed the graces of Messiah set salvation in a true anticipation of his banquet in the kingdom.”²⁴ Larkin believes that today’s growing churches manifest the same pattern of celebration, joining in large gatherings for worship and instruction, sharing in cell groups, and meeting in home groups for fellowship and nurture.²⁵

In his analysis, Longenecker notes that the apostles taught the early church to engage in the activity of prayer just as Jesus taught the apostles to pray. He also set up the parallelism between prayer in the life of Jesus and prayer in the life of the church.²⁶ Jesus prayed passionately (Matt 26:36) and continuously, and called on the church to pray

²³Larkin, *Acts*, 61.

²⁴Ibid., 62.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Longenecker, *Acts*, 290.

without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17). The activity of prayer strengthened the early church's resolve to be faithful to perpetuate the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ.

The Discipline of Teaching Perpetuates the Gospel

Another significant activity of the first church was teaching. Howard Marshall comments, "The apostles were thoroughly trained to communicate the gospel message because of their companionship with Christ. They may have been regarded as in a special since the guardians of the traditions about Jesus as the church grew and developed."²⁷ That tradition would be the method of discipleship Jesus used to train the original apostles. Jesus spent a great deal of time teaching the disciples what God's will was for them and for all mankind (Luke 11:1).

The apostles' teaching in Acts established a model that should be employed by the church today. They implemented teaching by taking advantage of informal moments as Peter did when many observers sought an explanation for the miracle of speaking in tongues on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-17). They took advantage of formal learning as well (Acts 11:26). Informal and formal training were important to the extent that the doctrine of the gospel ministry and the implementation of discipleship worked together to provide comprehensive training. The truths of discipleship gave way to the application of discipleship. This was gospel instruction at its best!

The Discipline of Witnessing Perpetuates the Gospel

In Acts 2:47, the state of the early church at Jerusalem is triumphant evidence of the effectiveness of the apostles' activities: "The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." God worked powerfully through the apostles' activities to assimilate converts into the church. This is a powerful reminder to all parishioners that

²⁷I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 5 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1980), 88.

God is ultimately the source of successful conversions, no matter how diligent they are to the activities involved in discipleship. Emphasis in discipleship must always be placed upon the power of God, and without his involvement there is no chance of success (John 15:5).²⁸ Once the Holy Spirit, however, intercedes in the process of discipleship, it is up to new believers to witness and apply what they learn toward others.

Those who experienced training were expected to become disciples/witnesses. The command in Matthew 28:20 to “teach all nations” in tandem with the evidence in the book of Acts makes it clear that the church is a missionary church. The whole church, and each member of it, must take up this task. Those who received the apostles’ teachings were expected to become witnesses. William Larkin concludes that the Great Commission lays an obligation on the Christian church to be a missionary church and to be obedient to respond to Christ’s command to make disciples.²⁹

Larkin comments further on the involvement of new believers by pointing out that the goal of witnessing involves new believers arriving at a personal knowledge of the facts of the gospel and their significance: “The apostles, as eyewitnesses of the saving events, were witnesses in a unique sense. All those who became acquainted with the facts appropriate the truths of the gospel also qualify as witnesses.”³⁰

Part of discipleship training had to do with teaching and showing believers that the perpetuation of the gospel ministry is not optional! Being a witness in some way is mandatory. Luke does not mention any optional ministry activity for individuals with cross-cultural interests and churches with surplus funds. The Great Commission is the primary task of the Lord left to his church. The church must always be a missionary

²⁸Longenecker, *Acts*, 291.

²⁹Larkin, *Acts*, 41.

³⁰Ibid.

church. The Christian must always be a world Christian.³¹ I. Howard Marshall believes the most important and immediate task for the disciples was to act as witnesses to Jesus from Jerusalem to the end of the Earth. The spread of God's rule was to take place by means of the disciples empowered by the Holy Spirit to persuade current and new believers to carry on the gospel ministry. The final command of Jesus before he left the disciples was for them to personally get involved in spreading the gospel. Marshall writes, "The immediate task of the disciples was to act as witnesses to Jesus from Jerusalem to the end of the earth."³² The time had come for the church to begin gospel ministry and to be faithful in it until Christ's return.

Longenecker agrees that the discipleship tradition was to be passed on to future generations. The apostles' teachings undoubtedly included a compilation of the words of Jesus, his ministry, passion, resurrection, and a declaration of what the gospel meant for man's redemption, all of which was thought of in terms of a Christian tradition that could be passed on to others.³³

While it is well established that the book of Acts is the beginning of the gospel ministry of the church, Howard notes that the end of Acts does not mark the completion of the task of discipleship, but simply the completion of the first phase.³⁴ Discipleship is the work that needs to be done until the return of Christ. It should be seen as briefly announcing the tasks that need to be completed before "the restoration of the world." That task was witnessing in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, "and to the end of the Earth."³⁵ Witnessing is an activity of discipleship and an unending mission for today and

³¹Ibid., 43.

³²Marshall, *Acts*, 63.

³³Longenecker, *Acts*, 289.

³⁴Marshall, *Acts*, 65.

³⁵Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 110.

until Christ returns. It is programmatic in the sense that it alludes to a worldwide mission.³⁶

Discipleship in the Old Testament Book of Exodus

While the book of Acts and indeed the entire New Testament provide a clear mandate for the worldwide mission of discipleship, there are examples of discipleship in the Old Testament. In Exodus 18:13-26, Jethro's advice to Moses on how to efficiently teach the Israelites God's Word to resolve disputes and to apply to their daily lives will now be explored. The method Jethro advised Moses to use to resolve disputes and to teach God's Word to the Israelites has strong parallels and similarity to discipleship in the New Testament. Moses was to choose and train men of godly character to instruct the people on how to apply God's Word to various circumstances of their daily lives. This Old Testament model of discipleship would become a perpetual process used for centuries by the Israelite nation.

After 400 years of slavery in Egypt, God anointed Moses to lead the Israelite nation to freedom. When God set Israel free to journey to the Promised Land, Moses had the monumental task of imparting the knowledge of God's Word and teaching the people to be obedient to God's will. In short, he had the tremendous responsibility of discipling a nation!

In the context of Exodus 18:13-26, Moses was the monarchial leader of Israel and the single source of information for the people to obtain the will of God for various disputes and settlements in daily living. Brevard Childs points out Moses statement to Jethro in Exodus 18:16: "I make known the statutes of God and his instructions" to the people.³⁷ The people needed to know what to do in order to settle their disputes

³⁶Ibid., 111.

³⁷Brevard Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1974), 330.

according to God's desires. They went to Moses "to seek God's will" (v. 15). Peter Enns discerns that they had no clear way of knowing God's will apart from Moses.³⁸ This single access to God's will through Moses soon become problematic.

Looking below the surface of the story, the problem exposed here is not simply the overwhelming task placed upon Moses as the single source of God's will, but the people's lack of personal knowledge of God's Word.³⁹ The people needed broader and more frequent access to instruction in the ways of God.

Because of the enormous number of people with disputes, many waited in line all day for a settlement as Moses was the only judge for the entire nation. The long wait kept them from their occupations and served to exacerbate emotions over their disputes. The Israelite nation desperately needed a vastly broader and more efficient way of receiving direction from God's Word to settle their multitude of disputes. Brevard Childs concludes that the settlement of civil disputes in this passage by the statutes and instructions of God established the need for an efficient system to disseminate justice to the Israelite nation.⁴⁰ J. A. Motyer suggests that Deuteronomy 1:9-18 should be read as a parallel in terms of arrangements that were made for the Word of God to be made available down to those considered to be the least among Israelites so that daily life could be ordered according to what the Lord had revealed through Moses.⁴¹

Jethro Suggested a System that Was a Form of Discipleship

Jethro's advice to Moses started a system where judgment by God's Word

³⁸Peter Enns, *Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 377.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Brevard Childs., *The Book of Exodus* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1974), 325.

⁴¹J. A. Motyer, *The Message of Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Intervarsity, 2005), 170-71.

would be administered to the people by choosing godly men committed to teaching the people to live and settle disputes according to the statutes of the Lord. The argument for discipleship in this passage is centered on Jethro's advice to Moses to appoint other godly men to teach and judge the people according to God's Word. It can be assumed that this system could continue in perpetuity.

Jethro's advice to Moses meant that other faithful men had to be appointed and disciplined to properly do the work of judging. The same concern for justice under God emerges in Jethro's advice on the choice of qualified men to share Moses' responsibility. The judges were to be "God-fearers," trustworthy, and men of integrity (Exod 18:21-23).⁴² Historically, Israelite men were appointed to leadership because of their age or birth order regardless of their spiritual maturity. These appointed judges were expected to have characteristics that were essentially the same as the disciples in the New Testament. Douglas Stuart exclaims they were to be trustworthy judges at the "inferior" level below Moses and be capable men who hated dishonest gain."⁴³ He also points out that the Israelite judiciary was to be appointed on the basis of honesty and ability rather than by reason of being born into a hereditary role.⁴⁴ The fact that judges were chosen based on their spiritual status is evidence that men were chosen who had been taught and learned obedience to the Lord. The work of discipleship has to be done by men knowledgeable in the law of God and committed to propagating that knowledge to the people with integrity and honesty. Thus Moses became the court of last resort or supreme court of Israel. According to Douglas Stuart, he remained a judge but delegated what

⁴²Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 331.

⁴³Douglas Stuart, *Exodus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman: 2006), 417.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 418.

would have been most of his caseload to subordinates.⁴⁵ Childs observes that the judicial reorganization resulted in preserving Moses' strength and in establishing peace among the people.⁴⁶ Looking into later Israelite history, he also concluded that in the period after the settlement of the land, Israel accommodated her legal practice to the common procedure of having civil cases decided by arbitration before the elders at the gate.⁴⁷ Thus, the discipleship model of teaching men to teach other men about the Word of God in the Israelite nation became well established.

Longevity and Success of the Discipleship Model in the Old Testament

Exodus 18:13-26 reveals an Old Testament model that perpetuated the Word of God among the Israelites for generations; discipling men and training them to teach the people to accept and live according to the Word of God. This method was used for centuries until the New Testament when Jesus called and trained disciples to propagate the New Testament gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. It is imperative that Christian ministry be passed forward in an organized fashion. This can not be accomplished chaotically.⁴⁸

Jesus trained and subsequently sent out seventy disciples (Luke 10:1). Their job was to share the gospel with everyone and disciple those who embraced it. As it was with the judges Moses appointed, the disciples also brought some matters to Christ's attention when they felt inadequate to address them (Matt 17:19). The parallels of discipleship in the Old and New Testament methods of propagating God's Word to a broad audience are very similar. In both cases men were called to dedicate their lives to

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 331.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Charles R.Eerdman, *The Book of Exodus* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revel, 1946), 86.

giving their people instruction in God's Word. Exploration of this type of dedication and sacrifice found in the book of 2 Timothy will now be explored.

Limiting Worldly Indulgences Essential to Successful Discipleship

An examination of 2 Timothy 2:2-4 reveals that discipleship is important to the perpetuation of the gospel that the disciple avoid worldly indulgences and entanglements that would detract from the effective implementation of discipleship. The apostle Paul informed Timothy that the reality of the discipleship process involved the need for self-sacrifice to avoid excessive involvement in worldly affairs for discipleship to be done properly.

Paul encouraged Timothy to avoid excessive worldly and personal engagements so that his primary focus remained on discipling faithful men to train others to be future disciples. He reminded Timothy to stay focused on fundamental Christian truths that were essential to be handed down.⁴⁹ The value of the gospel to all people was of such significance that it was to be preserved at all costs and handed down without being compromised by false doctrine.⁵⁰

Avoiding Worldly Indulgences to Focus on Sound Teaching

Timothy was encouraged to recruit men of character by emphasizing sound teaching of the gospel. The idea was that sound teaching, by its nature, would attract men with a godly disposition. Sound teaching was what godly men were hungry for, therefore it was important to provide a steady diet of it.

Sound fundamental teaching was the strategy that Paul used successfully on the churches he planted. Sound teaching was critical because Timothy would have to

⁴⁹E. F. Scott, *The Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1936), 100.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 101.

entrust the gospel ministry to those he disciplined after he left to assist Paul in his missionary work.⁵¹ If the disciples altered the gospel message due to poor training or lack of competency, they would have done great damage to the gospel message. Lack of competent and sound teaching in churches today results in diminished focus and activity in the gospel ministry simply because it is not being taught or it is being poorly taught.

Timothy was tasked to preserve the gospel, giving sound teaching to as many godly men as possible so the message could spread widely and take root in many hearts. This would guard against the danger of the gospel message and ministry being abandoned due to the lack of competent and committed disciples. Thus, whenever men of high spiritual standards were found, Timothy was to commit the treasure of the gospel to their trust.⁵²

Avoiding Worldly Indulgences to Give Priority to Disciple Trainees

The necessity to thoroughly and comprehensively train other disciples required Timothy to limit his involvement in business ventures and political controversies of the day. Discipleship was to be entered into with the understanding that significant time had to be invested in those being trained. Men who were being disciplined were to be given first priority in terms of missionary ministry. Timothy had to avoid all unnecessary distractions to ensure extensive training and successful transition in church leadership because disciples eventually carry on in their leader's absence.⁵³ Paul exhorted Timothy to employ the kind of self-denial and privation required to provide adequate time to

⁵¹William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 504.

⁵²John Calvin, *The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, Calvin's New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 306.

⁵³Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, *The New International Biblical Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 240.

disciple faithful men to teach sound doctrine.⁵⁴ Teaching, however, was not enough. Disciples needed to prepare themselves for the rigors of discipleship.

The disciple needed to predetermine that he would sacrifice to make himself available to God and his disciples. Paul emphasized the quality of single-minded devotion to duty.⁵⁵ This highlights that Timothy and those he discipled needed a time of personal spiritual preparation before engaging in the process of discipling others to perpetuate the gospel.⁵⁶ Discipleship was a labor of sacrifice and was to be entered into with great awareness and preparedness to bear the costs. Well-rounded disciples required well-rounded training which could not be done on a part-time basis.

Avoiding Worldly Indulgences to Give Comprehensive Training

Timothy had the task of giving faithful men a comprehensive understanding and application of the gospel. This required his undivided attention as he apparently only had a limited amount of time before he was to join Paul in ministry. Comprehensive instruction of the gospel was important so that the men trained to teach others would themselves be competent and likewise train others in a thorough and comprehensive manner.⁵⁷ Paul expected Timothy to lay down a foundation of sound teaching as a tradition. It was to be the same tradition that Paul had established with Timothy and that Jesus had established with the disciples. Sound teaching was a vital part of the spread and continuation of the gospel ministry.⁵⁸

⁵⁴I. Howard Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles* (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 727.

⁵⁵Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 492.

⁵⁶Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 505.

⁵⁸Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 726.

One important reason for the single-minded attention to discipling faithful men to teach was the presence of opponents who taught perverted versions of the gospel. The true teaching is preserved by passing it to responsible believers who would preserve it unchanged. Timothy needed to take time to be comprehensive and thorough avoiding all unnecessary worldly distractions so that his disciples could discern the difference between false doctrine and the true gospel.⁵⁹ Many church workers today have so many other social and community obligations on their agenda that adequate ministry to new believers is difficult to attain. The apostle Paul's solution to inadequate ministry was for disciplers to be military-minded.

Avoiding Worldly Indulgences by Employing Military Type Discipline to Discipleship

In 2 Timothy 2:4-5, Paul used the illustration of the habits of a soldier and an athlete to emphasize the discipline required for effective discipleship. The discipler had to persevere in being disciplined himself if he wanted to inspire spiritual growth in others.⁶⁰ Military imagery is common in Paul's writings (2 Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:10-17) and especially in the context of struggling against enemies of the gospel, which is vividly portrayed in Paul's missionary journeys.⁶¹ Christ is portrayed in the role of commanding officer, and those called to suffer for the gospel are considered to be professional soldiers under his authority.⁶² Distractions caused by demands to attend to matters of buying and selling would be examples of a soldier neglecting his duty. Buying and selling are certainly not sinful, but they do detract from the soldier's attention to his military

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 507.

⁶¹Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 241.

⁶²Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 492.

duties.⁶³ The soldier's first task should always be to please the commander, who expects the soldier's complete attention to the military objective to be accomplished.⁶⁴ Believers must take care to examine where they place their primary allegiance. If their primary allegiance is to the gospel ministry, all other discretionary activities take a back seat to the work of discipleship.

Paul also used the metaphor of athletes who disciplined themselves to train in order to qualify for the Olympic games. The point is to stress the importance of self-discipline for effective ministry.⁶⁵ The purpose of self-restraint is to give undivided attention to carrying out the commander's orders.⁶⁶ The Christian soldier's only goal and purpose is to please his Lord. A large part of pleasing the Lord is avoiding being tangled in daily affairs to focus on the Lord's affairs.⁶⁷

When everyday life becomes an entanglement to ministry, when the pursuit of life apart from ministry results in God's displeasure, when believers are no longer willing to suffer the pain to which all Christian soldiers are called, then they are no longer good soldiers and no longer please the one who enlisted them.⁶⁸ There is a need for commitment and the readiness for the acceptance of a demanding way of life by the Christian leader. Discipleship is a call to readiness for the stiff routine that characterizes military life.⁶⁹ Once a soldier enrolls under a commander, he leaves his home and all other affairs and

⁶³Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 729.

⁶⁴Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 493.

⁶⁵Ibid., 494.

⁶⁶Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 729.

⁶⁷Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 508.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 728.

thinks only of war.⁷⁰ The perpetuation of the gospel ministry must be approached as a full-time task by all who desire to see the church grow.

All Believers Should Avoid Excessive Worldly Activities

In 2 Timothy 2:4, Mounce believes Paul opens the ministry of discipleship to all believers when he uses the phrase “no one entangles himself.” He directly implies that any believer who teaches and trains others must avoid becoming entangled in pursuits apart from ministry!⁷¹ Ultimately, those who aspire to disciple others should reflect on the fact that as Jesus suffered and persevered to bless believers they should also be willing to suffer on behalf of those they choose to disciple.⁷²

Timothy was in a position to carry on apostle Paul’s ministry. In order to do so, he had to possess the dedication and focus Paul employed in his missionary work.⁷³ Missionary work was conducive to being gainfully employed. It was essential for Timothy not to be preoccupied with the burdens of worldly endeavors and the rewards that they brought.⁷⁴ On a contemporary note, it is important for pastors and ministers to be content with a living wage to avoid the allure of profitable but time consuming business opportunities.⁷⁵ Complete attention must be given to the perpetuation of the gospel message and gospel ministry, no matter what opportunities present themselves.

⁷⁰Smail, *The Second Epistle of Paul*, 307.

⁷¹Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 509.

⁷²Ibid., 511.

⁷³Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 488.

⁷⁴Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 729.

⁷⁵Ibid.

Enduring Suffering to Propagate the Gospel Ministry

The suffering that Paul had endured, Timothy would also endure. Those who Timothy disciplined would also experience the same suffering. Suffering inherently carried with it the possibility that some disciples would walk away from the mission. Timothy had to have endurance in the face of suffering because suffering so easily turns one's attention away from the greater mission of God.⁷⁶ There was a need to teach disciples that the mission was more important than the suffering. The goal was to please the master at all costs. "Entrusting" the gospel was not simply a matter of a tap on the shoulder; it would require Timothy to teach and model the faith (1:11-12; 3:10-17).⁷⁷ He had to model the faith even in the midst of suffering.

Although the training process Paul described in 2 Timothy 2:2-4 does not directly mention future generations, it does reveal a clear biblical strategy for the continuation and expansion of the gospel ministry.⁷⁸ His message is to be regarded as a tradition to be habitually passed on.⁷⁹

Some maintain that this metaphor may lend itself to Paul suggesting the professionalization of the clergy or at least to discourage ministers from engaging in the world of business.⁸⁰ Again, the perpetuation of the gospel is a full-time ministry.

⁷⁶Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 500.

⁷⁷Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 491.

⁷⁹Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 725.

⁸⁰Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 493.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOCIETAL MENTORING

Michael Banutu- Gomez writes, “Modeling leadership is really a tradition societies have practiced for centuries as they passed along expertise to succeeding generations.” Social exchange by means of personal relationship is a deeply rooted behavior in most societies.¹ The practical skills and confidence seen in society at large are a direct result of exemplary leadership passed down for generations.

Mentoring has historically been known as apprenticeships. It is not done solely on behalf of developing skills in the apprentice, but more so to benefit a particular company. Apprenticeships have been the main means for gaining a vocation for centuries. Fostering the development of employees, mentors pass on corporate culture, increase company loyalty, and promote organization norms.²

The history of the church reveals that one of Christ’s greatest endowments to the church was the gift of twelve men trained for leadership.³ No work is more rewarding to a missionary than developing leaders for the survival and health of the new churches they plant. One of a missionary’s main goals should be the development of faith in promising young people who can, in time, lead the church.⁴

¹Michael B. Banutu-Gomez, “Great Leaders Teach Exemplary Followership and Serve as Servant Leaders,” *Journal of American Academy of Business* 4 (2004): 146.

²Carolyn W. Kern, “Mentoring Work Values: Implications for Counseling,” *Educational Gerontology* 24 (1998): 351.

³Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 144.

⁴*Ibid.*, 152.

Positive Impact of Mentoring in Schools and Workplaces

Thomas Smith and Richard Ingersoll examined whether first-year teachers who participated in induction activities such as mentoring, or collaborated with other teachers, were more or less likely to stay with their teaching jobs the following year.⁵ If mentoring programs succeeded in increasing the retention of beginning teachers, this could lead to a reduction in school staffing problems, which in turn could have a positive impact on school performance.⁶

The assumption underlying Smith and Ingersoll's analysis is that high rates of first-year teacher turnover are a concern, not only because they contribute to school staffing problems and perennial teacher shortages, but because this form of organizational instability is likely to be related to organizational effectiveness.⁷ They found that having a mentor in one's field reduces the risk of teachers leaving at the end of the first year about 30 percent. Only 3 percent of all beginners who entered teaching in the 1999-2000 school year received none of their measured induction or mentoring supports. Their predicted rate of turnover at the end of the first year was more than 40 percent.⁸

Teacher retention increases when there is an effective mentoring program available. Beginning teachers who were provided with mentors from the same subject field and who participate in collective mentoring activities, such as planning and collaboration with other teachers, are less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave the teaching occupation after the first year of teaching⁹.

⁵Thomas M. Smith and Richard M. Ingersoll, "What Are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?" *American Educational Research Journal* 41 (2004): 684.

⁶Ibid., 685.

⁷Ibid., 687.

⁸Ibid., 705.

⁹Ibid., 681.

The experience of new teachers without a mentor is just the opposite of those who were paired with mentors. This is especially consequential for new entrants, who upon accepting a teaching position in a school often left to their own devices to succeed or fail within the confines of their own classrooms. An experience described by some as being lost at sea.¹⁰

Data indicates that school staffing problems are to a large extent the result of a “revolving door: large numbers of teachers leave their jobs long before retirement.”¹¹ During the past two decades, teacher mentoring programs have become the dominant form of teacher mentoring/induction.¹²

The number of studies that have been completed on the benefits of mentoring seem to provide support for the hypothesis that well-conceived and well-implemented teacher induction or mentoring programs are successful in increasing the job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention of new teachers. There is a strong link between participation in induction programs and reduced rates of turnover.

Different schools have varying levels of commitment to mentoring which has a direct effect on the success of the program on new teachers. Finally, mentoring programs themselves differ along the same dimensions. For example, they vary as to whether they include training for the mentors; how much attention they devote to the match between mentor and mentee; the degree to which mentors are compensated for their efforts, either with a salary supplement or a reduction in other duties; and whether an effort is made to provide mentors who have experience in teaching the same subjects as their mentees.¹³

The preceding information is encouraging to the prospect of experiencing

¹⁰Ibid., 682.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 683.

¹³Ibid.

benefits of mentoring with young men at Trinity Baptist Church. They experience the same type of being “lost at sea” when there is no one to guide them in living a Christian life in a world that is fiercely secular. The conclusions about improved worker performance should be transferable to some extent if young men can be paired on a reoccurring basis with older men who are committed to living their lives for Christ and transferring Christian morals to young men at Trinity.

The key to mentoring young men at Trinity will be finding men committed to righteousness and simultaneously committed to a process of transferring Christian values to other men. Careful observation and perhaps an in depth survey to determine the disposition of a potential mentor to mentoring should be employed to increase the probability of selecting mentors who possess the values and commitment essential for successful mentoring.

Judith Busch has documented the positive demeanor mentees have towards their work when they are paired with a veteran mentor on the job:

Compared to those without mentors, mentees are happier in their work even if they worked long hours, are more productive in their careers, and are promoted more quickly. They are rated higher by superiors and their earnings increase faster than non mentored coworkers. Mentees are also more likely to become mentors when they reach upper management levels.¹⁴

Busch concludes that there is a prominent benefit consistently seen in employees who have been mentored: “The most often mentioned benefit was seen in the career and intellectual growth of the mentee.”¹⁵

Mentees learn faster as a result of isolated one-on-one communication and instruction as opposed to learning by trial and error. Learning can occur quicker when less responsibility is placed on the new employee while they are being trained by their

¹⁴Judith W. Busch, “Mentoring in Graduate Schools of Education: Mentors’ Perceptions,” *American Educational Research Journal* 22 (1985): 257.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 264.

mentor. Improved attitudes and promotion for leadership are additional benefits.¹⁶

While mentoring has overwhelming positive outcomes in the workplace, implications need to remain realistic. Inflated expectations about the outcomes of professional relationships increase the probability of failure unnecessarily.¹⁷

Additionally, mentoring positively impacts the fulfillment of the mentor. Developing fulfilling team camaraderie with the mentee is reward in itself for mentors. Everyone is pleased to make friends to satisfy the human longing for relationship. Mentors benefit from the relationship by enabling redirection and rejuvenation of energies, and by nurturing and sharing their wisdom with a younger adult.¹⁸ Mentors who instruct new colleagues on methods to improve their success experience their own sense of fulfillment by observing the improvement in the quality of the mentee's work.¹⁹

More positive outcomes of employee mentoring in this research lend strong support that a mentoring program for young men at Trinity has great potential for fostering a commitment to Christian living into the future and possible appointment to leadership positions in the church. Expectations, however, need to be realistic; there are many variables with each mentee and mentor that will result in varying degrees of successful mentoring.

The research also reveals improved sense of fulfillment for the mentors when they observe improvement in the mentor's job performance. This would serve as an unexpected benefit to potential mentors at Trinity. It could be conveyed to potential mentors that they can expect personal spiritual growth in the process of mentoring as a

¹⁶ Kern, "Mentoring Work Values," 352.

¹⁷Joe W. Lund, "Successful Faculty Mentoring Relationships at Evangelical Christian Colleges," *Christian Higher Education* 6 (2007): 384.

¹⁸Kern, "Mentoring Work Values," 352.

¹⁹Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 112.

means of persuading them to participate.

A distinction must be made between teaching values and teaching skills. Skills result from hands-on instruction but values must be seen and observed. The benefits and outcome should be discussed to further emphasize their benefits. Mentoring values in the workplace are different from mentoring job skills. Individuals need to see values in action and be able to discuss their benefits.²⁰ Michael Banutu-Gomez puts emphasis on the importance of morals: “Morality is a characteristic that can be passed from a veteran employee to new employees in business education. Effective leaders instilled values through deeds as much as or more than through words.”²¹ Teaching values necessitates having a mentor who is also known for having exemplary values. Mentoring programs can focus on both specific skill behaviors to perform as well as personality dispositions of the faculty member. It is important to note that every senior faculty member is not a born mentor.²²

Carolyn Kern focuses on the broad impact of mentoring when she writes, “Mentoring can lead individuals to gain important life values that make the workplace more productive and contribute to a better society.”²³ Mentoring improves the overall production of the workplace and more broadly makes society a better place.

The end goal for mentoring young men at Trinity is the transference of Christian values. Secular mentoring discovered the transference of moral values almost as a byproduct of mentoring, but at Trinity it would be hailed as the only goal that truly matters despite other unforeseen benefits.

²⁰Kern, “Mentoring Work Values,” 356.

²¹Banutu-Gomez, “Great Leaders Teach Exemplary Followership,” 149.

²²Lund, “Successful Faculty Mentoring,” 385.

²³Kern, “Mentoring Work Values,” 349.

Mentoring Promotes and Inspires Leadership

Many contemporary articles and books on mentoring stress that the need for mentoring has never been greater. Companies have realized that their employees in leadership positions can languish in the realm of mediocrity, uncertainty, and lack of direction which ultimately hurt the company's production. As a result, many companies invest in some form of mentoring to connect new employees in leadership positions with veteran employees to help build their expertise and ability to perform effectively in the workplace. David Stoddard writes, "It always helps to find a person who has already been at the stage of life where you are and has learned through the trials of life, as well as its triumphs."²⁴

Mentoring has been linked to better career advancement, more career development opportunities, higher levels of career maturity and greater overall job satisfaction by protégés. A mentor is generally considered to be an individual of higher status who is willing to invest time, interest, and support to a subordinate person over an extended period of time. The term "mentor" is often used interchangeably with the term "role model."²⁵

Mentoring relationships are strongly correlated to career success. A study by Kimberly McDowall-Long found that protégés (persons being mentored) tend to "advance more quickly in their careers, feel more satisfied in their careers, and express positive psychosocial coping skills."²⁶ Mentors have been found to have a particularly positive impact on the careers of protégés who feel isolated due to minority status or

²⁴David Stoddard, *The Heart of Mentoring* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2003), 22.

²⁵Kimberly McDowall-Long, "Mentoring Relationships: Implications for Practitioners and Suggestions for Future Research," *Human Resources Development International* 7 (2004): 519.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 522.

disability.²⁷ These outcomes of mentoring on protégés are easily compatible to the notion of them being emboldened and prepared to take on leadership positions in the workplace. These positive outcomes of mentoring should be transferable to aspiring young adult males who participate in the Men’s Discipleship Ministry at Trinity.

McDowall-Long also touts the positive effect mentoring has on the psychosocial development of protégés. Psychosocial outcomes enjoyed by mentored individuals in non-dysfunctional relationships included, but are not limited to

higher academic achievement, improved self-concept, greater demonstration of relationships, improved sense of individuality, better psychosocial adjustment to career and life transitions, higher self-esteem, improved self-efficacy, the development of protective psychosocial characteristics and better acceptance of non-traditional careers.²⁸

The mental frame of mind plays a monumental role in the development of leadership characteristics in the workplace. The positive psychosocial outcomes of mentoring McDowall-Long list inspire protégés to be future leaders in the workplace.

Mentoring Supplies Visionary Leadership for Companies

The goal of mentoring for companies is to build leaders in a way that encourages them to be future visionary leaders for the company: “In an ever-changing business environment, companies need to strive constantly to build a reliable supply of talent, not only to fill executive vacancies but to achieve their future vision.”²⁹ The best way to guarantee future executive leadership that is effective is to allow veteran executives to show young executives how to lead, develop, and implement a vision for the company.

There is leadership, and there is visionary leadership. Men in the church need

²⁷Ibid., 527.

²⁸Ibid., 523.

²⁹Robert P. Gandossy and Verma Nidhi, “Passing the Torch of Leadership,” *Leader to Leader* 40 (2006): 39.

a clearly communicated visionary goal that serves as inspiration for them to attempt to do extraordinary ministry for Christ. Mentoring can help the church instill an expectation of visionary leadership among men being disciplined for future leadership. Biblical support for the need of a vision among believers is found in Proverbs 29:18: “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Mentoring can help young men with little or no vision to become strong visionaries for the congregation.

Mentoring Builds Confidence in Future Nursing Leaders

Kathleen Dracup and Christopher Bryan-Brown expound upon the mentoring process nurses go through to become expert employees and future leaders in their units. Dracup and Bryan-Brown use the word “preceptor” (term used in the medical field for one training a medical student) to describe the role of a mentor. They conclude that the mentee passes through five levels of development during the mentoring process: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert.³⁰ The necessity of reaching the goal of being an expert nurse is absolutely critical to quality patient care and hospitals have found that mentoring plays an essential role in the development of that expertise and proficiency.

Preceptors help new nurses deal with the uncertainty of the clinical setting that is inherent to gaining proficiency. Dracup and Bryan-Brown point out, “The preceptor has learned perceptual distinctions that may be difficult for the novice to understand or for the preceptor to teach.”³¹ However, over time in a mentoring relationship, the novice is better able to perceive subtle distinctions that cannot be taught in a classic classroom setting. Mentoring is an essential part of training that enables nurses to develop perceptual distinctions that move them from novices to expert leaders in their profession.

³⁰Kathleen Dracup and Christopher Bryan-Brown, “From Novice to Expert to Mentor,” *American Journal of Critical Care* 13 (2004): 449.

³¹Ibid.

Subtle nuances can come into play when discipling men in the church because of the uniqueness of each individual being disciplined. Men who are called to disciple other men should be able to respond and react appropriately to the different personalities they encounter in the mentoring process. They have to know how to treat every man fairly while not necessarily treating every young man the same. Mentors have to be cognizant of the subtle distinctions that necessitate a different approach for each man. It behooves mentors to know that the path to leadership is different for everyone.

“Coaching” Brings Out Hidden Leadership Capabilities

David Vendenburgh elaborates on the effectiveness of another training process that is related to mentoring, called “coaching”: “Inspiration (motivation) is not the solution because it evaporates too quickly. People quickly go from motivated to unmotivated.”³² He concludes that something additional beyond conveying information or inspiration is needed and that something is “coaching”:

Coaching is an ongoing relationship between two people in which one of those people is entirely dedicated to helping the other person accomplish their agenda. . . . Coaching closes the gap between the intentions of an individual and actually completing their intentions.³³

How often do young men come or return to the church expressing their good intentions to live for Christ only to slip back into their worldly ways shortly afterwards? Coaching can serve as a great hope of helping more young men in a discipleship ministry to be successful in maintaining their intentions of living for Christ and helping other young men aspire do so as well.

John Whitmore, in his book *Coaching for Performance*, stresses the fact that “underlying all coaching is the belief that people possess more capability than they are

³²David VanDenburgh, “Coaching for Leaders,” *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 2 (2007): 55.

³³Ibid.

expressing.”³⁴ Coaching begins with the belief the person being coached has all the needed knowledge and ability. Convincing young men at Trinity they have much more to offer than they are presently can certainly serve as an inspiration for them to lead in the church.

Coaches Help People Reach Their Goals

David Vendenburgh writes, “Coaches are specialists in helping people reach the completion of a goal. The chances of actually following through with decisions to change behaviors can often be slim, but coaching greatly improves the odds.”³⁵ In a men’s discipleship ministry, it is essential for men to understand they are the critical factor in helping other men develop the aptitude for spiritual leadership in the church. Knowing that they, personally, may be another man’s only hope for spiritual transformation helps them become a disciple for Christ. VanDenburgh cites research that indicates leaders who want to improve their leadership skills are more successful when they involve the people they live and work with in helping them to do it.³⁶

A coaching process that utilizes the powerful relationships that surround the person makes the mentoring process achievable for Trinity given that discipling men in the congregation needs to be completed by other men in the congregation (Prov 27:17).

Intentional Mentoring for Leadership

In observing the training of priests in the Episcopal Church, Gortner and Dreibelbis concluded that many priests espoused to lead because of their mentor’s intentional method of fostering leadership. For many priest, mentors went beyond a kind

³⁴John P. Martinson, “Coaching Religious Leaders,” *Reflective Practice* 27 (2007): 87.

³⁵VanDenburgh, “Coaching for Leaders,” 55.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 56.

of laissez-faire method of mentoring by modeling. The authors write in detail how mentors were quite intentional in their practice of

encouraging their protégés to attempt new things, pushing them to perform in new areas they had not tried, allowing them exposure to people’s criticism but not letting them dangle in the wind, reflecting on events and experiences in a way that invited new insights, provided some interpretation that allowed for new perspectives to emerge, and inviting their protégés to attempt new patterns of thought and behavior.³⁷

The heart of the gospel never changes but strategies for reaching and developing young men in the church do. Mentoring leaders to have an innovative mindset in terms of strategic outreach initiatives in the future will be important to the success in discipling young men in the church.

Another suggested approach to mentoring given by Walter Wright is just to let natural leadership capabilities emerge. He believes mentors are resources to assist persons in their own self-directed leadership development. This means that the mentoring agenda is driven by the mentee not the mentor. Wright writes, “There is no best model of mentoring. What is important is trust, honesty, belonging, encouragement and hope.”³⁸ This suggests that persons or organizations should not be dogmatic about one model or formula for mentoring but always expect variations with any method. If the church finds that their system of mentoring men is not producing desired results, they should not hesitate to try other options.

Mentoring Leaders in Theological Institutions

Ian Payne, in an article, “Reproducing Leaders for Mentoring,” proposes that theological educational institutions can play a significant part in producing the leaders the church needs by mentoring their students more effectively:

³⁷David T. Gortner and John Dreibelbis, “Mentoring Clergy for Effective Leadership,” *Reflective Practice* 27 (2007): 74.

³⁸Walter C. Wright, *The Promise of Relational Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 377.

Mentoring new leaders is a necessary and exciting task for theological and developmental reasons, and theological educators must know and use the power of mentoring, as an essential element of transformative education, if their students are to be transformed.³⁹

He reasons that the respect theological students have for their instructors lends itself to the opportunity for inspirational mentoring. Coupled with the fact that students are usually on campus for two or three years, all the factors are in place for the faculty at theological institutions to make a significant impact in preparing their students to be church leaders.

A potential parallel to Payne's idea about mentoring theological students for church leadership does exist in the church; that parallel is young men who regularly attends Sunday school, Bible study, or a small group study. They are prime candidates for mentoring because a potential mentor would have frequent exposure to them. If the mentor is taught to view his class or group as a potential platform for mentoring beyond class time, some young men in the class can perhaps be discipled and someday serve as future church leaders.

When commenting on making a lasting influence on others, Bob Russell writes, "We need to look beyond just dynamic, charismatic personalities, and be aware of individuals who have the character to inspire others to follow."⁴⁰ This view assumes that one must recognize persons who possess a natural ability to lead. Mentors may not always need to be concerned with inspiring their mentees to be church leaders; they may only need to encourage some followers to use their natural God-given abilities to benefit the church. Trinity may very well have young men who have natural leadership abilities that do not need to necessarily be developed but rather need to be guided. Stuart Briscoe suggests pastors should encourage those who do well on small projects in the church for

³⁹Ian Payne, "Reproducing Leaders through Mentoring," *Journal of Christian Education* 52 (2009): 51.

⁴⁰Stuart D. Briscoe and Bob Russell, "Lasting Influence," *Leadership* 24 (2003): 25.

the express purpose of motivating them to aspire to higher levels of leadership: “It’s a matter of giving those who have proved themselves in small things opportunities to prove faithful in larger things.”⁴¹

In the business world, Gandossy and Nidhi identify imperatives for developing the talent of high performance leaders for companies. They conclude that senior leadership must foremost emphasize mentoring as an imperative, model the company’s commitment to leadership training, and have ongoing involvement by senior leadership: “Senior leadership must make leadership development a top priority and have developed and demanded that their executives follow suit.”⁴² Using these imperatives, General Electric promotes nearly 85 percent of its leaders from within.⁴³ Intel is also another company that places a premium on developing internal talent.⁴⁴

Commitment to developing internal leadership of young men at Trinity will take a firm commitment by the pastor and other church leaders. It may, to some extent, need to become a part of the church’s culture for it to become accepted as an imperative. The pastor and current church leaders will need to be a “broken record” on the issue for church culture to embrace mentoring as a normative practice.

Obstacles to Successful Leadership Development

Gandossy and Nidhi conclude that many organizations jeopardize the success of their leadership development programs by adopting a one size fits all training approach and additionally they do not enforce accountability for managing and monitoring the

⁴¹Ibid., 25.

⁴²Gandossy and Nidhi, “Passing the Torch of Leadership,” 40

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., 43.

delivery of the development programs:⁴⁵

Unclear roles, unclear responsibility, and frequent changes to the original process all decrease the probability of mentoring being inspiring and effective. Lack of a disciplined approach toward succession management or tolerance of substandard execution can seriously injure the organizations' efforts at leadership continuity, talent development, and retention of key individuals.⁴⁶

Mentoring programs should avoid strict formality. Formal relationships tend to focus on short-term goals, and protégés participating in formal mentoring programs may not perceive a commitment to them as individuals on the part of the mentor, but rather, to the program. Another potential consequence is that mentors in formal programs may perceive that their protégés are low-performers who have been assigned to a mentor in order to improve their work performance.⁴⁷

Perhaps men's discipleship should not be attempted unless the plan for its implementation is clear and the people appointed to faithfully administer the ministry can be held accountable for their responsibilities as mentors.

Positive Impact of Mentoring on Leadership

Robert Gandossy and Verma Nidhi have found that top performing companies used mentoring (they refer to as the process of succession) in preparing future leaders. Companies that maintained a stellar performance and endured through the twentieth century had one essential ingredient; a culture of succession management. They preserved their core by developing, promoting, and carefully selecting home-grown managerial talent.⁴⁸ They found that the best companies adopted leadership development as a strategic priority and provided a range of experiences to enhance the capabilities of

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 44.

⁴⁷McDowall-Long, "Mentoring Relationships," 529.

⁴⁸Gandossy and Nidhi, "Passing the Torch of Leadership," 38.

their future leaders for their “destination jobs.”⁴⁹ Home Depot is a successful company that is committed to building its internal talent bench. The upward progress of each employee’s career is guided by a structured assessment and developmental programs to ensure the best talent is recognized and developed.⁵⁰ In general, Gandossy and Nidhi found that visionary companies were six times more likely than other companies to promote insiders to CEO.⁵¹

Research reveals a litany of benefits that mentoring provides for its employees who diligently participate in the process. Mentees benefit from improved career maturity, higher salaries, better job performance, career satisfaction, and more rapid promotion rates relative to unmentored employees.⁵² Mentors also improve their protégés’ career opportunities by providing challenging assignments, information, advice, and skill building.

In the field of medicine, many medical students report being inspired to choose a particular specialty as a result of interactions with mentors.⁵³ The consequences of failing to train and prepare future leaders for companies can be damaging to the company’s performance. A top leader’s departure from a company can take a heavy toll on employee engagement, business performance, and shareholder value. The crisis is magnified in the absence of any comprehensive succession strategy and program.⁵⁴

Mentored leaders in the church illustrate the positive impact mentoring has on congregational leadership. Rick Lowery writes,

⁴⁹Ibid., 42.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 37.

⁵²McDowall-Long, “Mentoring Relationships,” 523.

⁵³Ibid., 524.

⁵⁴Gandossy and Nidhi, “Passing the Torch of Leadership,” 38.

Our whole congregation felt the spiritual impact of having more than 30 men in discipling relationships. Men I'd never heard from before were calling me at the office and asking Bible questions. People who had problems with commitment in the past were signing on to do needed ministry. Men who'd stayed in the background stepped forward to lead.⁵⁵

Clergy under the guidance of decisive, network savvy, and reflective mentors were more likely to become more decisive, assertive, and self-confident in their own practices of ministry, resulting in a greater benefit of congregational vitality and mission.⁵⁶

Mentoring to Develop Successful Skills and Discipline

Mentoring clergy has been shown to enhance and develop skills and discipline for effective church leadership. According to David Gortner and John Dreibelbis, the influence of mentors promotes decisiveness

in decision making, willingness to seek council from others, effective networking, spiritual self-care, and practical and personal proclamation of the gospel. As a result of mentoring, priests in the Episcopal church become more self-reliant and less dependent in their approach to ministry and leadership.⁵⁷

Priests mentored in the Episcopal Church reported becoming more adept at having the proper perspective on various situations because of the wisdom gained from veteran priests:

Nearly 65% of priest with mentors indicated that they learned from their mentors how to take perspective on situations. More than 43% gained further skill in theological reflection, another form of perspective-taking. Next in importance were some of the most common skills expected of clergy: pastoral care and leading worship. Nearly 42% of mentored clergy indicated learning skills in pastoral care, and 29% learned how to lead worship.⁵⁸

The resultant improvement of skill in the preceding figures clearly show the positive impact mentoring has on a priest's skills and leadership in their congregations.

The improvement in the performance in company leaders, nurses, and now

⁵⁵Rick Lowry, "Mentoring that Produces Mentors," *Leadership* 24 (2003): 45.

⁵⁶Gortner and Dreibelbis, "Mentoring Clergy for Effective Leadership," 80.

⁵⁷Ibid., 68.

⁵⁸Ibid., 78

clergy establish firm justification for launching a mentoring program for a wide variety of organizations. The establishment of a men's discipleship curriculum that focuses on disciplining men to grow in their relationship with Christ, grow in care and concern for the spiritual state of other Christian men, and leadership in the church, stands on well-established research that predicts positive outcomes.

Kent Butler and other researchers studying African American males who had been mentored found that in addition to learning survival skills, young men acquired skills for developing character, maturity, and responsibility under the supervision of adult role models.⁵⁹ One participant in their study said, "These wonderfully imperfect men instilled in me that I have a responsibility and an obligation to support and encourage my community, especially African American boys and men."⁶⁰ Butler also found that mentored young men developed the skills and focus to improve the probability of their achievement. There was a positive effect on achievement declines so often associated with young African American men in education.⁶¹

La Vant, Anderson, and Tiggs postulate that improving skills and performance of African American men in college requires some form of creative intervention, and mentoring has been found to be the most effective⁶² Mentoring provides the important psychological formation of positive self-esteem, especially among young males who come from troubled homes and depressed communities. Lanker and Issler discovered that these troubled young men demonstrated a deep desire for mentoring because they

⁵⁹Kent Butler et al., "Mentoring African American Men During Their Postsecondary and Graduate School Experiences," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 91 (2013): 421.

⁶⁰Ibid., 422.

⁶¹Ibid., 425.

⁶²Bruce D. La Vant, John L. Anderson, and Joseph W. Tiggs, "Retaining African American Men through Mentoring Initiatives," *New Directions for Student Services* 80 (1997): 52.

were desperately looking for mirrors from which to view themselves in a new and positive light.⁶³ Mentoring helped them to develop a personal view of themselves that provided motivation to pursue admirable goals. Furthermore, young males who were involved in youth ministry and engaged in mentoring relationships with someone in the religious community showed the greatest levels of successful development during adolescence.⁶⁴

Ron Penner records that mentoring promotes the discipline of making sound decisions in students pursuing higher education: “There is less likelihood that persons will fall prey to personal or professional bad decisions or moral failure if such persons are in an open, caring, ongoing mentor relationship.”⁶⁵ The likelihood of frustration and failure is reduced. Mentors introduce mentees to ideas and other persons who can also be helpful and they teach them how to make friends and build relationships.⁶⁶

It has been established that mentoring helps provide mentees with the tools of various personal skills and disciplines that improve the probability of success in college performance, career goals, spiritual formation, and social networking, making mentoring an alluring endeavor for Trinity. Incorporating well-planned and well-executed aspects of mentoring in a men’s discipleship ministry are bound to result in a stronger participation of young men in the life of the church.

Mentoring to Provide Actual Work Experience

To support the thesis, employees who receive “on the job” practical training

⁶³Jason Lanker and Klaus Issler, “The Relationship between Natural Mentoring and Spirituality in Christian Adolescence,” *The Journal of Youth Ministry* 9 (2010): 95.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ron Penner, “Mentoring in Higher Education,” *Direction* 30 (2001): 45.

⁶⁶Ibid.

and guidance from mentors are more likely to develop successful habits and disciplines that result in successful performance. In Dennis Fast's work, "Making Space in Ministry for Mentors," a former mentee remarked,

I recall my own growth that was fueled by many opportunities to serve in a variety of capacities: camp counselor, children's music leader, Sunday school teacher, devotional speaker, drama productions, and, finally, opportunities to preach in my home church in spite of little experience or training. What growth all of that produced!⁶⁷

Implementing practical experience in a mentoring model can help Trinity instill the disciplines and habits in young adult men that are essential for them to be successful disciplers of other men at Trinity.

Providing Work Experience through a Deliberate Process

John Maxwell succinctly describes the process of providing experience to increase the probability that a mentee/protégé will become a successful practitioner of skills they gain from their training experience. He says first the mentor must perform the tasks completely and perfectly so the mentee can duplicate them. Second, the mentor must have the mentee assist him in all tasks possible to maximize skill development. Third, as the trainee gains proficiency, the mentor should take the role of assistant and offer corrective and encouraging suggestions during the process. Fourth, the mentor should remove themselves so the trainee can carry the full weight of their responsibility and experience while receiving encouragement to continue improving. It is important for the mentor to remain with the trainee until they are confident they can perform their job successfully.⁶⁸ The mentoring process is said to be complete when the person mentored can teach someone else how to do their job.⁶⁹

⁶⁷Dennis Fast, "Making Space in Ministry for Mentors," *Direction* 33 (2004): 105.

⁶⁸John Maxwell, *Mentoring 101* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 66.

⁶⁹Ibid.

The preceding process demonstrates that skill development is a deliberate process of presenting challenges to the protégé. A protégé's confidence typically increases at the same rate at which the mentor provides challenges. The assignment of challenging work is essential for both technical skill development and professional identity enhancement. All assignments should conclude with critical feedback and reinforcing praise.⁷⁰

While it is important for mentors to implement a deliberate process for skill development, the mentee can also engage in a deliberate process to increase skill level themselves. Where possible, mentees should visit their mentor's place of work or go on a trip with him and observe the mentor in action. They can invite mentors over to their homes and let them observe typical family life, observe them at their job, or out on leisure activities. Mentors can share constructive observations with mentees in these areas with which the mentees were perhaps unaware.⁷¹

For mentees to gain skill and discipline they must be put in the position of running a program or overseeing a project. During the project they should then talk through their decisions and actions with their mentor and accept their mentor's critique about their responses to crises, discernment of people, and problem solving ability.⁷² The mentee does not have to always wait on the mentor but can initiate specific actions to increase skill and discipline themselves.

A men's discipleship ministry at Trinity will need to incorporate a deliberate process so mentors can logically implement training and so young men being mentored can observe the positive or negative movement in their level of skill and discipline.

⁷⁰Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring* (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2004), 27.

⁷¹Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship as Iron Sharpens Iron* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 105.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 106.

Mentoring to Identify the Right Job for a Mentee's Skills

While a deliberate process for increasing skill and discipline is important, finding the right fit for the mentee plays a major role in development. Mentors should put in ample time for discerning the right job or assignment for their mentee. Giving them a job is not as successful as giving them the right job. A worker can become a star when the right job is found for them.⁷³ Mentors should not be afraid to move their protégés around if they are under-performing in contrast to their level of ability. Skillful mentors tailor assignments to the needs of protégés. They attempt to facilitate growth and development without overwhelming the protégé and setting them up for failure.⁷⁴

Sometimes developing a protégés skill level involves providing world class training by other professionals. Even someone with great personal strengths and a great “fit” will not truly perform to their full potential if he does not have great training. Mentors should make sure their protégés acquire the training they need to be successful if mentors are not qualified to provide the training themselves.⁷⁵

A men's discipleship curriculum cannot account for a mentor's personal observations and discernment of individuals. Mentors need to be informed that they have to rely on their good judgment when trying to find the right ministry for men they disciple in the future.

Importance of Goals in Mentee Skill Development

John Maxwell divulges that mentors must make sure the goals they set for their mentees are appropriate and attainable or else they run the risk of discouraging them

⁷³Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 54.

⁷⁴Johnson and Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring*, 27.

⁷⁵Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 54.

instead of encouraging them.⁷⁶ Mentors should also make the goals measurable so the mentee can be encouraged by their progress or identify areas of weakness. Clearly stated goals will provide the mentee with certainty they know what they are trying to accomplish. Goals should be challenging enough to require the mentee to “stretch” their talents and abilities. Assignments should be incrementally more difficult but not supersede the protégé’s level of ability.⁷⁷

Some mentees strive so hard to please their mentors that they try to be perfectionist. Mentors should always expect excellence, but not even for a moment should they send the wrong message that a protégé should be perfect. Psychologist Thomas Lorch writes “A perfectionist is motivated by a fear of failure and a sense of duty rather than enthusiasm for the creative process.”⁷⁸ The net effect of perfectionism is diminished enjoyment of work and life. The goal is to raise the mentees skill level not to make them perfect.

Trinity’s men’s discipleship curriculum should start out with basic goals such as understanding the role of a disciple, encouraging devotions, public prayer, and participation in bible study, worship services, and outreach events. All of these goals are achievable and attainable and can serve as a springboard to inviting some of the ministry participants to serve in positions that carry greater responsibility.

Conclusion

Practical training, while good, only goes so far. All the training in the world will provide limited success if the mentee is not given the full liberty to do the job. Getting the best people and giving them a vision and training should yield positive results

⁷⁶Ibid., 61.

⁷⁷Thomas Lorch, quoted in Johnson and Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring*, 27.

⁷⁸Ibid., 63.

from mentees.⁷⁹ That is not to say they are being liberated from structure, but rather having freedom to be creative.⁸⁰ Fred A. Manske, Jr., said, “The greatest leader is willing to train people and develop them to the point that they eventually surpass him or her in knowledge and ability.”⁸¹ If the men in the discipleship ministry can adopt this mentality it would create a spiritual leap that could spur miraculous ministry to young men at Trinity.

⁷⁹Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 66.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 67.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 74, quoting Fred A. Manske, Jr.

CHAPTER 4
DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION
PROJECT DESCRIBED IN DETAIL

Recruiting

Week 1

In week 1 of the project, adult men, ages 18 to 55, were asked to complete a discipleship project recruitment survey during the Sunday morning worship service. The survey questions were designed to foster their interest in discipleship and participation with the discipleship curriculum project. The survey specifically explained the goal of the project, to develop and implement a curriculum for a Men's Discipleship Ministry at Trinity Baptist Church. It further informed the potential participants of the duration of the project, which involved five lessons on discipleship to be taught on five consecutive Sundays at 10am. The survey contained a final line that asked for the recruit's commitment to participate. All those who agreed to participate were asked to include their phone number and email address on the form so they could be notified about the start date and the specific classroom to meet in for each lesson.

The survey gave full disclosure that the project was being conducted in order to collect data for a discipleship ministry project to be included as information in a project to be submitted to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Department of Doctoral Studies in Louisville, Kentucky.

Week 2

In week 2 of the project, any men ages 18 to 55 who were not present on the previous Sunday and those who did not complete the survey on the previous Sunday were again asked to complete it at the end of the Sunday morning worship service. A total of

13 surveys were filled out, and 11 of the 13 indicated they would participate in the discipleship curriculum class. They were entered into an email group and a text group for the purpose of communication and reminders each week to attend the class throughout the five weeks of discipleship lessons. Of the 11 who indicated they would participate in the class, 10 attended the classes.

Discipleship Knowledge Assessment Survey

Week 3

In week 3 of the project, a pre-project questionnaire on discipleship was given to the participants at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday to ascertain their knowledge of biblical discipleship. The questionnaire was scored and the results were entered into a pre-project dependent t-test for paired samples to be compared with the post-project questionnaire (containing the same questions) results after the last discipleship lesson.

Curriculum Development

Week 4

In week 4 of the project a Bible study on the subject of “the purpose of discipleship” was prepared for the curriculum using Matthew 9:35-38 as the main passage. The principle point of the lesson was the purpose of discipleship is to minister to other men out of compassion for their condition of being “lost and vulnerable sheep.”

A second Bible study on the “identification of a disciple” was also prepared for the curriculum using Luke 14:25-33 as the main passage. The main point of the lesson was that disciples are identified by their passionate love for Christ and willingness to suffer to complete the mission of reaching other men.

Week 5

In week 5 of the project, a Bible study dealing with the “importance of prayer and devotion in the life of a disciple” was developed for the curriculum using Luke 18:1 and Psalm 18:6 as the primary passages. The main point of the lesson was the necessity

of prayer to combat the frequent challenges of discipleship and the Christian life in general.

Week 6

In week 6 of the project, a Bible study was prepared on the subject of “making disciples the way Jesus did” for the curriculum using Matthew 28:18-20 as the main passage. The main point of the lesson stressed how Jesus engaged in an intentional relationship for the purpose of encouraging, equipping, and challenging the disciples to love others and to grow in their relationship with him.

Week 7

In week 7, a Bible study dealing with “the role of discipleship in the church” was prepared for the curriculum using James 2:15-17 and Luke 6:31-32 as the primary passages. The main point of the lesson stressed that discipleship does not get done unless the church engages in the actual work of discipleship.

Evaluation of the Curriculum

At the end of week 7, five Sunday school teachers were asked to evaluate the completed class curriculum developed on a scoring rubric with ten criteria that assessed the applicability of the curriculum lessons for a Men’s discipleship class. The Likert scale was used to measure their responses which ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Each response was scored and used to determine the teacher’s average opinion about the biblical fidelity and applicability of the discipleship curriculum developed for the Men’s Discipleship class. The criteria considered the curriculum’s faithfulness to Scripture, relevance to discipleship, relevance to the project, emphasis on prayer, emphasis on spiritual disciplines, consistency with Christ’s work with his disciples, relevance to the church, proper scope, proper strategy, and practical application.

A value of “1” was given to a “strongly disagree” response, “2” for “disagree,”

“3” for “disagree somewhat,” “4” for “agree,” “5” for “agree somewhat,” and “6” for “strongly agree.” Since the evaluation contained 10 questions, the lowest score possible was 10 and the highest score possible was 60 points. The average score from the scoring rubric was 57. This was a strong indication from five of Trinity’s Sunday school teachers that the curriculum, in their opinion, was applicable to be used for a men’s discipleship ministry at the church.

Teaching the Curriculum

Week 8

In week 8, a Bible study on “the purpose of discipleship” was taught to the participants at 10am on Sunday morning using Matthew 9:35-38 as the main passage. Ten men attended this class. The lesson was designed to challenge the participants to examine their level of compassion and concern for men who struggle and failure of men to live holy. Great emphasis was put on the need to be emotionally disturbed enough to reach out to help men and assist them in holy living and to also have the same passion to live holy themselves. The lesson pointed to the failure of the Pharisees because of their lack of compassion for “sinners.” They built a reputation of elite religious leaders but not leaders of compassion. Also, the enormity of the task the church faces concerning African American men requires constant passion and energy if any sustained progress is to be realized. Despite the enormity of the task, this lesson included encouragement from Ephesians 3:20: “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” The participants were encouraged to give their best effort in discipling others with the expectation that God would do much more than they imagined would happen.

Class participation and discussion from the participants centered on what men in the church were doing to reach out to young men in the church. Questions were asked about why the church didn’t have a formal organized outreach effort towards young men and suggestions were given about having a possible “fun day” to inaugurate a formal

sustained outreach ministry to young men. Some of the men talked about what they had done to reach other young men in the past and what they were doing presently. Other interesting testimonies by the participants dealt with what Christian mentors had done to stir their personal passion to live for Christ. The lesson on compassion generated self-evaluation among the participants as to whether they felt convicted that they were performing their roles of a disciple. The participants displayed genuine interest by their body language. They leaned forward with anticipation of each point. It was a lively and soul searching study. Seven participants attended the first lesson.

At the end of the lesson, prayer requests were made to all in attendance. Men who were well established members of Trinity were asked to pray for those who were relatively new to the church. This provided an outreach experience for the established members in leading other men to God through prayer. Class adjourned and participants were encouraged to enter worship with an expectation of experiencing God's presence through praise and worship.

All remaining Bible studies in the curriculum were taught at 10am on consecutive Sunday mornings as well. Class discussion and comments were encouraged for each lesson.

Week 9

In week 9 of the project, a Bible study on "the identification of a disciple" was taught to the participants using Luke 14:25-33 as the main passage. Eight men attended the class. The reason this passage was chosen was to emphasize the sacrificial nature of being a disciple and to highlight that following Christ inherently comes with personal sacrifice. The first point in the lesson emphasized the necessity of loving Christ above all others. This devotion is required to avoid being distracted from the mission of discipleship by other commitments and relationships. Disciples are identified by their willingness to forsake other cares for the sake of the gospel ministry. A major thrust of the lesson was to emphasize how Jesus emphatically said in Luke 14:26 that one who

does not love him supremely above all others could not be his disciple.

A second point in this lesson was that a disciple is identified by his willingness to “bear the cross.” Participants were admonished that disappointments and letdowns during the course of discipleship were to be expected and endured as an integral part of the process. Success at growing as a disciple or helping others to grow would come with times of moral breakdowns, abandonment by those being mentored, and even becoming tired and burned out with the process of discipleship.

The final major point in this lesson was that a person who seeks to build anything is wise to consider the cost of the project (Luke 14:28-30). Participants were admonished to avoid underestimating the push back of the enemy and the emotional cost of discipleship. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David were a few biblical characters highlighted to illustrate the physical, emotional, and spiritual struggles they endured to accomplish the missions God commanded of them. Nevertheless, they were all successful by the power of God’s intervention.

Class participation with this lesson was more guarded perhaps because the participants did not have a lot of experience with forsaking all other aspects of their lives to focus on a mission for Christ. Participants did comment and discuss the parallel reality of how they endured hardships and forsook other aspects of their lives to accomplished goals in sports. Some talked about how even their academic performances suffered because they pursued other priorities with greater vigor than education. The question was asked, “Are you willing to make the same sacrifice to be a disciple of Christ and to disciple others for Christ?” There was agreement that without this level of commitment, the goal of spiritual growth and transforming others through discipleship would largely be elusive. Emphasis was placed upon the fact that there had to be a perpetual commitment to the disciplines that helped disciples to endure the hardships of personal growth and outreach to other men.

The participants were very attentive and took notes on points that particularly

impacted them. Some men in the group were asked to read parts of the main passages and other relevant passages as a way of engaging them to participate as well as highlighting Scripture as the authoritative guidance in all matters.

The class ended with prayer requests. Again the participants who were comfortable with praying were asked to pray for the requests made by others in the group. Participants were made aware that by praying for others in the class, they were actively doing something to improve the spiritual quality of their lives. They were engaging in an act of discipleship. At the end of each class, they were asked to review and be familiar with the next lesson prior to class. This was asked with each lesson.

Week 10

In week 10, a Bible study dealing with “the importance of prayer and devotion” in the life of disciples was taught to the participants using Luke 18:1 and Psalm 18:6 as the primary passages. Seven participants attended this class.

This particular study included questions the participants were to answer before attending class as a way of increasing their engagement of the subject matter. Of the 6 who attended this class, 3 had completed the questions. The others looked up answers as the class proceeded or wrote answers they were given during the discussion. Five of the 6 used their phones to look up Bible passages.

The central thrust of the lesson on prayer was that God, through prayer, has provided an outlet for disciples to express their joy, anger, stress, fears, burdens, questions, and even moans and groans for emotions that are illusive to articulate.

Participants were encouraged to pray frequently (Luke 18:1). Because the life of a disciple is a constant challenge, there should be constant prayer to address the particulars of every challenge. The class was informed that constant prayer feeds, strengthens, and renews the disciple’s commitments. Prayer acknowledges the disciple’s weakness and their need for supernatural strength and assistance for growth and ministry to other men. They were directed to read Luke 21:36, which reveals the reward for

prayer is the ability to stand despite spiritual warfare, doubt, and discouragement.

The class was directed to Psalms 18:6 in which David prayed especially in times of stress. Prayer acts as a spiritual pressure valve to release deep-seated emotions. Class members were encouraged to take advantage of prayer as an outlet for overwhelming emotions and burdens. Stress often causes men to make anxious, ill-advised decisions that could hurt them in the long run. They were encouraged to avoid this behavior just by knowing that God already knows the answer to their problem and they simply needed to ask him about the decision he wants them to make. The question was asked, “Has God ever given you bad advice?” They answered with emphatic, “No.” They were encouraged to consult God through prayer constantly and especially in times of distress.

A third point in this lesson focused on James 5:16b: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Class participants were encouraged to seek out prayer partnerships with others who possessed unswerving faith in God for answered prayer. Scripture taught that prayers by such persons get high priority in heaven. Examples were given of how God answered the prayers of righteous men such as Abraham, Joseph, and the Apostles when they prayed. God is aware of weaknesses and stands ready to strengthen disciples when they cry out to him. The key is to cry out in partnership with others who have faith that God hears and answers prayers.

Class participation was lively on this topic as the students were familiar with the practice of prayer. They could all relate to praying in stressful times and some admitted that all too often they only prayed fervently when they were faced with an emergency situation. The point was emphasized that they needed to expand their prayer life to include small group prayer that addressed specific struggles in their lives. Hearing the voice of someone interceding on their behalf acts to furnish them with an ally against their struggle to be a disciple and carry out the work of discipleship. One participant who was most vocal talked about how he felt so much better the moment he rose from his time

of prayer at home. The class was encouraged to avoid the practice of telling people they were going to pray for them and instead learn to pray for them immediately, whether in person or on the telephone.

This class period ran passed the allotted time. Only half of the handout was covered due to multiple comments on prayer by the majority of those present. One of the ways to confirm that discipleship is working is when the participants start to take over the discussion on discipleship. Thus, they were always allowed liberal time to speak if they were so moved to do so. They were directed to finish the lesson at home and then also read the lesson for the following Sunday.

The class ended with prayer requests. A pattern of prayer requests began to emerge from a few of the participants. They requested prayer over and over about a particular struggle they were going through. There was awareness by the group that these men had a specific struggle. It provided proof to the class that discipleship was a great tool to assist these brethren by offering prayer, encouragement, and camaraderie to help them through their personal struggles. This was a watershed moment in the project!

Week 11

In week 11, a Bible study on “making disciples the way Jesus did” was taught to the participants using Matthew 28:18-20 as the main passage. Nine participants attended this class. The main point discussed in this lesson was Christ’s intentionality in making disciples. His activities were planned ahead of time and deliberate. He decided to engage in a “life walk” alongside the disciples in order to encourage, equip, teach, train, and challenge them to love and grow toward maturity in Christ and Christian outreach ministry. It was all planned and well-designed before implementation.

The point was made to the class that discipleship does not usually just happen. The mentor must have some kind of intentional guidance in mind. The commission to make disciples must be carried out knowing that every man comes to Christ on a different spiritual level and with a different set of circumstances. The plan for each mentee must

be developed uniquely as the mentor becomes familiar with their circumstances, strengths, and weaknesses.

Four specific methods Jesus utilized to make disciples were discussed. The first observation was Jesus did not try to mass produce disciples. He met thousands of men, many of whom believed in him, but only trained 12 disciples. Mass production of disciples is highly unlikely and perhaps unrealistic for the church. The focus should be placed upon the few who are willing to be taught and lead by Christian mentors. The class discussed the importance of discipleship ministry at Trinity focusing more on quality than on quantity. The point was made that God is not looking for the biggest church but rather the greatest church.

The second method discussed was the constant fellowship Jesus had with the disciples. They stayed together, walked, talked, ate, worship, prayed, cried, and learned constantly from Jesus. This was the most effective way to ensure the gospel and love for God gets deeply embedded in the lives of mentees such that they would not abandon the gospel ministry in the future. We referred to the book of Acts to find the disciples choosing death over abandoning the gospel ministry of Jesus. The class was admonished that anyone seeking to disciple others must make the sacrifice of time and exposure to a potential mentee. It was suggested that one should talk to their spouse before seeking to disciple someone so there would be agreement between the spouses about the time being given to help another grow in holiness. One participant stated that “every marriage is not strong enough to survive significant attention going towards a non-spouse.” This is perhaps why the apostle Paul suggested singleness for all ministers who are able to do so. Absent a significant relationship, however, one should not expect to have a significant impact on a mentee’s walk with the Lord.

The third strategy discussed was how Jesus spent most of his time with the disciples in places away from the synagogue. The majority of Christ’s time with the disciples was in the community. He taught the disciples that Christianity was a universal

operation and was to be carried out in public places and not only resigned to the physical address of the church. How can disciples develop a vision to reach men in the community when they are not trained in the community by mature believers in the church?

The fourth observation discussed was that Jesus used discipleship to expand the leadership base for the long term and perpetual expansion of the church. He was not just training followers but leaders. Jesus' strategy was to disciple a few good men so they would be able to lead the masses of the future church. He did this through discipleship! The group was challenged to see discipleship as a vital part of the church's future leadership.

The class discussion was lively and laid back at this point in the project. At this fourth lesson the participant's countenance went from one of being inquisitive about discipleship to truly discussing the implementation of it in their lives and in the life of Trinity. They readily accepted the idea that a disciple's life should mimic the life of Christ. One participant made the succinct comment that "Jesus sets the bar for us and he has set it up very high." Lots of discussion centered on the general acceptance that men of God should naturally take it upon themselves to be examples to other men in the church.

Some of the men expressed personal convictions about not being a good example in the past but being a much better example now and still having the need to continue improving. They talked about having had quick tempers, a nonchalant attitude about church, and joining in with the "crowd" instead of being distinguished from the crowd by their holy behavior. They expressed the understanding that discipleship was a continual process of growth in holiness and helping others to their best ability because we never reach perfection. The concluding sense of this discussion was it was time for men at Trinity to be the examples and disciples that wayward young men needed them to be. They praised other men in their lives who impacted them towards a life of holiness.

Week 12

In week 12, a Bible study dealing with “the role of discipleship in the church” was taught to the participants using James 2:15-17 and Luke 6:31-32 as the primary passages. Ten participants attended this session, perhaps due to an extra effort to remind them to attend the last lesson. The main point of the lesson was that the Great Commission Christ gave was a great plan but it required the church to do a great work. The illustration was given that a brilliant architect might draw up a great plan for a bridge but only when workers go out and construct the bridge will anyone ever walk or ride across it. Disciples do the work of building the bridge that leads to a relationship with Jesus Christ. The church makes disciples through faithfulness to the work of discipleship, extraordinary love for others, and perseverance in the ministry of edification and discipleship.

The passage used from James 2:17 states that “faith without works is dead.” The work that Jesus did in discipleship speaks for itself in that his disciples spread the gospel to half the world’s population. And as great as it is, still pales in comparison to his faithfulness to die on the cross for the sins of the world.

The class considered points such as, only when you pray can you expect to experience answered prayer and only when we attempt great things can we have hope of accomplishing great things for Christ. Successful discipleship is only possible through faithfulness to do the work of discipleship. A church full of potential can go unrealized if a plan of action does not accompany the congregation’s stated faith. The men were encouraged to recognize that God commissioned them to do the work of helping other men to grow in Christ and they were responsible for mobilizing themselves to see the commission fulfilled.

The class secondly discussed the importance of displaying extraordinary character far and above that which is ordinary. There was no question that the love of Jesus surpassed all and disciples today should challenge themselves to love others to the best of their ability as Jesus loves them. Luke 6:31-32 says that if “we only love those

who love us” we are not better than the average person in the world. Disciples must work at being above average in loving character at all times. The impact of serving others in an extraordinary way was illustrated by a discussion of the service at five star hotels. The question was asked, “Why do some many customers want to go to five star hotels and why do so many want to return to five star hotels after their first visit?” The unanimous answer was because of the extraordinary service these hotels extended to their guests during their visits. The men followed their answer to this question by discussing how they could mimic a five-star hotel’s treatment in a discipleship ministry for men at Trinity. The conclusion reached was to be constantly ready to serve, call, counsel, model, and love other men at the moment they need it and serve them above their own expectations of their mentors.

The final point of discussion in this lesson was the need for perseverance in the work of discipleship. Jesus was not a quitter, for he was faithful until his death on the cross. The class observed Galatians 6:9, which says, “Be not weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.” The participants were challenged to adopt the motto, “Quitting is not an option.” The point was reiterated that if we do not do the work of discipleship it will not get done, but also giving up after starting is not much better. The agricultural illustration was used to explain that between sowing and reaping there is a time of silence which can be misinterpreted as no progress and lead to participants walking away from discipleship prematurely before seeing results. The class was challenged to hang in there with their future mentees and wait long enough to see positive results in their lives. They were finally challenged to allow God to produce spiritual fruit in the lives of others after discipleship has planted the seeds in their hearts.

A few of the participants commented on the church’s propensity to do a lot of talking but never really doing much outreach work beyond Sunday morning worship and the irrationality of expecting something for doing nothing. The question was asked whether the lack of outreach and discipleship activity was a lack of will or the lack of

organization. The majority felt it was a lack of organization due to the fact that so many in the church did care about the spiritual health of future generations but that no leader had presented or implemented a plan to foster interest in discipleship among men in the church. A lot of the responsibility for the lack of discipleship was placed on the vision of the pastor and, to a lesser degree, other church leaders. In summary, they said the work of discipleship requires a leader who organizes curriculum and activities, recruits and trains men to carry it out, and brings a lot of passion, perseverance, and grace to encourage mentors to keep reaching out.

The class session ended with prayer for needs expressed by the participants. The participants conducted the prayers among themselves. It was pleasing to see the men spending time fellowshiping after prayer. They often talked about the biggest headlines in sports but at least they were having fellowship with men they did not usually converse with. The class had succeeded in fostering more fellowship among the brethren.

Post Project Questionnaire and T-Test

In week 13, a post project questionnaire was given to the participants. This was the same questionnaire (pre-project) that was given in week 3. The scores from the post-project questionnaire were entered into a t-test for dependent paired samples and recorded to measure if there was any significant statistical difference in the participant's knowledge of discipleship at the completion of the last class of curriculum.

T-Test Hypothesis

The hypothesis question for the t-test was "Did going through the discipleship curriculum lessons improve the participant's understanding of discipleship and the practice thereof?"

Data Collection

The results of the pre-project and post-project questionnaire were compared for each person. The results were recorded for each participant who completed the

discipleship curriculum class and completed both pre- and post-project questionnaire (see Figure 1).

A value of “1” was given to an answer of “no.” A value of “2” was given to an answer of “yes” on the questionnaire. The total accumulated value from each participant’s answers to all 16 survey questions was recorded in the pre-curriculum column of the t-test for the pre-curriculum results and post curriculum column values were entered in the post curriculum column of the t-test.

If the absolute value of the “t Stat” was greater than both the one-tail and two-tail values, the results represented a significant difference beyond simple chance or coincidence between the answers given before the discipleship curriculum lessons and the answers given after the participants completed the discipleship curriculum lessons.

A “P” value of <0.05 for the “one-tail” and “two-tail” values indicated certainty of a significant change between the pre-project and post-project results.

Explanation of Results

The absolute value of the “t Stat” value was significantly higher than the “P one-tail” and the “P two tail” values. This indicated a significant difference in the pre-project and post-project answers given by the participants. The participant’s improvement in their understanding of discipleship and the practice thereof was not due to chance or mere coincidence.

The “P one-tail” value of 0.027 and the “P two tail” value of 0.047 from this t-test were lower than the established “P <0.05 ” standard value, which indicates the outcome was not due to chance or mere coincidence but shows a significant change. Therefore, it is with a high degree of certainty that the men who completed the discipleship curriculum lessons from this project improved their level of understanding of biblical discipleship and the practice thereof (see table 1).

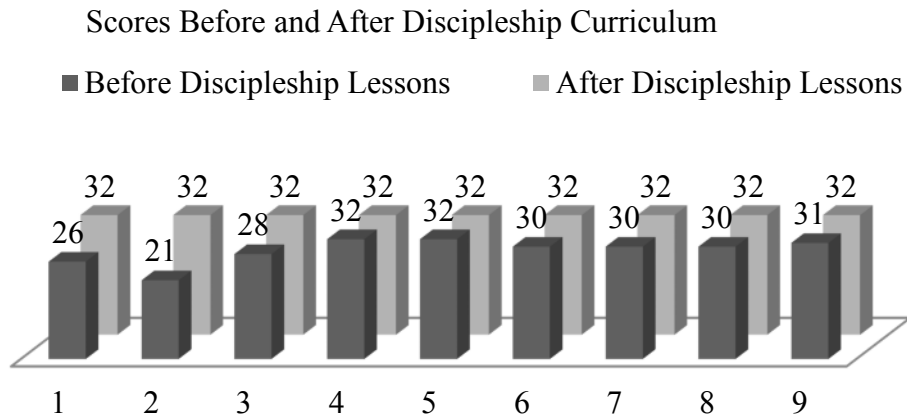


Figure 1. Discipleship curriculum scores

Table 1. Pre and post-curriculum t-test data

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	26	32
Mean	29.25	32
Variance	12.7857	0
Observations	8	8
Pooled Variance	6.39286	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	14	
t Stat	-2.1753	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.02362	
t Critical one-tail	1.76131	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.04724	
t Critical two-tail	2.14479	

Teacher Evaluation

Week 14

In week 14, a teacher evaluation form for the project was given to the participants and they filled it out. The evaluation consisted of ten questions that were answered using the Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The questions were designed to give the teacher feedback on the effectiveness of presenting the curriculum and comments for improvements. The questions asked if the

teacher clearly communicated what a disciple is, if the teacher was stimulating and interesting to listen to, if their role in discipleship was clearly communicated, if the curriculum was well organized, if the quality of the handouts were good, if the teacher seemed to understand discipleship, if the class was taught at a reasonable pace, if the length of the class was appropriate, if the teacher was prepared for each lesson, and if they would recommend the discipleship class to others.

It contained four questions that asked for written comments on the teacher's outstanding features, strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement in the teacher's performance.

Responses to the evaluation revealed the participants ended the class with a clear understanding of the biblical definition and significance of discipleship. This understanding was indicated by all of them circling the "strongly agree" response on the evaluation form. They indicated unanimously that the teacher was stimulating and interesting and clearly communicated what their discipleship role was in the church and community. They felt the curriculum was presented in an organized fashion and taught at a reasonable pace. All of the participants indicated they would highly recommend this discipleship class be taught to others and that the curriculum be offered more than once per year. Some suggested that some form of the class be taught every Sunday on subjects beyond discipleship while maintaining the all male composition of the class. The crown jewel of all the responses was a comment that expressed the desire for all the participants to go out and bring in other men to take part in the class when it was scheduled to be taught again.

In terms of weakness, some responses indicated the class time for some lessons was too short to adequately cover all the material of the handout in depth. There was also a comment encouraging the teacher to give many illustrative examples of discipleship to solidify what it looked like in the mind of the class participants.

Conclusion

In week 15, a conclusion regarding the project experience and results of the project was written and served as chapter 5 of this project. The conclusion will evaluate the project's purpose and goals. Strengths and weakness of the project are discussed and recommendations for completing certain aspects of the project differently are made. Theological and personal reflections are discussed and a summary conclusion is completed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

This chapter serves as a cumulative and comprehensive conclusion of all the organization, theological foundations, and secular research to develop and implement a discipleship curriculum for young adult men at Trinity Baptist Church in Fort Valley, Georgia.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a discipleship curriculum for young adult men at Trinity Baptist Church, Fort Valley, Georgia. The project successfully fulfilled its purpose according to the responses of the project participants, curriculum evaluators, and the numerical outcome of a t-test for paired samples which revealed a statistically significant change in the attitudes of the participants at the end of the project. All of these indicators support the positive outcome and distinctive impact the curriculum had on the participants.

The purpose of the project was appropriate because Trinity Baptist Church did not have an intentional method of discipleship outreach to young adult males. This void provided a perfect context for the implementation of a men's discipleship curriculum. Thus the idea of developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum for young men at the church resonated with the congregation and also with those who agreed to participate in the project.

The curriculum chosen for the classes was developed based on discipleship in the New Testament church with emphasis placed on Christ's command to disciple others (Matt 28:18-20) and his example of discipling the twelve Apostles. The singular focus of

the curriculum on discipleship and its various aspects helped to paint a portrait of discipleship that the participants confirmed they understood. In a class evaluation, they all expressed that the ministry of discipleship was something they felt was personally attainable.

The greatest evaluation of accomplishing the project's purpose was the request by a number of the participants that the class be continued. They felt a sense that they had finally been introduced to and instructed in their purpose as a Christian and expressed a hunger and thirst to continue down that path. They actively studied God's Word together and prayed for each other's needs. After each class the participants developed a fellowship with each other that did not exist before the class. They knew of each other in the church but this project brought them together in the context of Spiritual growth activities. They expressed a desire for more!

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The first goal for this project was to get young men enlisted to participate in developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum and that goal was met as ten young men signed up and participated. The project's goal intrigued them enough to participate. It was something they were genuinely interested in.

The second goal was to evaluate the project participant's knowledge of discipleship. This goal was accomplished with a pre-project survey of questions designed to measure the degree to which the participants understood the concept of discipleship. They filled out the survey which revealed varying degrees of familiarity with discipleship. The results indicated there was room for growth in knowledge of discipleship and thus the curriculum would be tested to see if it could increase their knowledge base and familiarity with discipleship.

The third goal of the project was to develop an appropriate discipleship curriculum to increase the participant's knowledge of the biblical basis for discipleship. The implementation of the curriculum subsequently proved to increase their knowledge

of discipleship. A class evaluation using the Likert scale showed an increase in their understanding at the end of the project as opposed to the beginning of the project. A subsequent t-test for paired samples also indicated an increase in knowledge to be statistically significant. All of the instruments used to measure a change in the participant's knowledge base of discipleship indicated that their knowledge base on discipleship had increased.

The fourth goal of this project was to implement a five-week discipleship curriculum with the volunteer participants. This was accomplished through meeting each Sunday at 10am for five consecutive Sundays. Attendance varied but the participants attended the majority of the discipleship lessons. The participants expressed a willingness to continue attending lessons beyond the five weeks so it could be said that this goal was actually exceeded to the extent some wanted to continue the curriculum.

Strengths of the Project

The strength of the project proposal was that it established in detail the case that Trinity did not have an intentional ministry targeting young adult men for discipleship and it clearly laid out the rationale justifying the development of a curriculum designed to disciple young adult men to fill the void of outreach to this population in the church.

The strength of the theological foundation rests on the strong biblical evidence that some form of discipleship is necessary to perpetuate the gospel ministry from one generation to another. Moses was instructed by Jethro (Exod 18:13-26) to train other men to teach and instruct the Israelites in holiness, Jesus gave a clear command to the first church members to disciple others (Matt 28:18-20). The apostle Paul instructed Timothy and his followers to teach others what they had learned (2 Tim 2:2-4). The book of Acts (2:41-42) describes a context where fellowship and discipleship were daily activities in the first church at Jerusalem. Scripture is replete with examples of discipleship and discipleship was the theological foundation for this project.

The strength of the research of parallels to discipleship in the secular world was the discovery that the growth of new entry level individuals depended heavily on the guidance of veteran leaders and workers in a company. The same type veteran guidance is needed in the church to help “entry level” Christians to become active disciples themselves. Companies and institutions who maintained highly effective leadership all had faithful veteran leaders and workers to participate in mentoring, they had an organized system of mentorship, and there was an insistence by upper echelon leadership for workplace mentoring to be a constant and integral part of the company’s leadership development. These same areas are vital for effective discipleship in the church; there has to be faithful men to disciple young men, an organized program of discipleship must exist, and the pastor has to insist on discipleship being implemented on a continual basis. Success in both secular mentoring and spiritual discipleship require similar elements to achieve a successful outcome.

The strength of the instruments, such as the Likert scale and t-test used to measure significant change in the attitudes and knowledge of the participants, rests in their established accuracy in measuring statistically significant change in individuals, groups, and society in general. The positive results these tests rendered in this project can therefore be trusted to be accurate according to social and statistical scientists.

Strengths of the Organization

The organization of the project was strong because of its logical progression. Goals were established followed by the context in which the goals were to be pursued. The rationales for pursuing the goals were detailed followed by a research methodology to show how those goals would be measured qualitatively and quantitatively to indicate the degree of success or failure. All of the preceding was then justified through establishing a theological foundation for the project. The theological foundation was followed by researching parallel issues in the secular arena to achieve familiarity on discipleship in both the church and secular society. The methodology for the

implementation of the discipleship curriculum was outlined and carried out followed by evaluations and conclusion regarding the activities and outcomes of the project.

Strengths of the Project Implementation

The implementation of the discipleship curriculum strengthened the knowledge base of discipleship and its core disciplines of the young men who participated. The project implementation also addressed the void of discipleship training at Trinity and addressed the need for mentoring outreach to young African American men in particular.

Camaraderie and fellowship fostered bonding among the participants during and after curriculum lessons. The fellowship moved the participants from random coincidental type relationships to one of intentionally engaging one another in conversation. Often the conversations were about current events in sports, but they had fellowship where it was once absent.

The curriculum implementation united the participants in the sense they were all together striving to achieve the same purpose of growing in their knowledge of discipleship. The lessons challenged the participants to look beyond the class and apply their knowledge of discipleship to strengthen other persons in their circle of family and friends. The effort was made to convince the participants they were being prepared for something much bigger than the class!

Weaknesses of the Project

The weakness of the proposal was the limited amount of time that could be allotted to actual implementation of the curriculum. The time spent recruiting, enlisting, and developing a curriculum left precious few weeks for actually engaging the participants face-to-face. In the case of this project, doubling the amount of time spent engaging the participants directly would have been useful especially considering requests by some participants that the class be extended.

Weaknesses in the theological aspect of this project were the lack of

intentional, organized, classic discipleship examples in the Old Testament. There are definitive instances of mentoring in the Old Testament but very few examples of classic discipleship given the volume of the Old Testament. Much of the discipleship in the Old Testament tended to occur in the context of family rather than in a congregation of unrelated individuals.

The secular sources of research used various terms such as mentee, protégé, apprentice, trainee, and student, all with slight nuances in their meaning and context in which the terms were used. While they all referred to training, there was a need to be cautious to avoid making all these terms synonymous with biblical discipleship.

Having only implemented five lessons left concern for the amount of lingering impact the project could have on the participants. Some of them did not attend all of the lessons which further decreased their exposure to the discipleship training to below five lessons. They were reminded to attend the lessons each week on more than one occasion through text messages and phone calls. Human nature suggests a number of them would be prone to reverting back to their previous mindset of Christianity where discipleship is not the first priority in their lives. Without the constant exposure to discipleship lessons, group prayer, and Christian fellowship, determination to change can be expected to diminish to some degree.

What I Would Do Differently

Given the chance to do the project again, it would be interesting to give an opportunity to participants who showed a special passion for the curriculum to lead a discussion on some aspect of discipleship. While Jesus taught twelve disciples, he gave particular attention to Peter, James, and John because he perceived a special gift in them. There were gifted leaders even among the circle of disciples. During the lessons, there were at least two participants who became very passionate about discipleship. They would have likely welcomed the opportunity to engage in the discipline of teaching others about discipleship.

Personal interviews with persons who have lead discipleship ministries at other churches would be a focus if this project was conducted again. There is no substitute for the empirical wisdom gained from the personal testimonies of those serving in the “trenches” of discipleship. Books and articles can give a “cookie cutter” version of discipleship but the “rest of the story” and other major and minor nuances of a successful discipleship ministry are best communicated in person.

Finally, a more comprehensive rendering of the apostle Paul’s struggles and successes in discipleship would be discussed. Jesus is the ultimate model but the apostle Paul made many stops on his three missionary journeys where it was imperative for him to establish churches and train faithful men to maintain the integrity of God’s Word and their personal moral integrity. Paul’s missionary journeys were a major work of discipleship he had to repeat at each stage. His success varied with different individuals and in different cultures. Some of the men Paul discipled continued doing an exemplary job of discipleship (1 Thess 1:2-8) and others turned to false teaching (Acts 20:30). This same varying scale of outcomes should be expected by those who endeavor to disciple today. They would be well served to be aware of these biblical patterns of outcomes. An extended discussion of Paul’s experiences training other men would yield valuable insights of the human impact and responses of different individuals.

Theological Reflections

This project revealed that God has placed a tremendous responsibility on believers to practice the disciplines of discipleship to increase their faith and the faith of others. The perpetuation of the gospel ministry to the present and succeeding generations is the responsibility of all believers. Scripture reveals that God will bear fruit in the ministry (Acts 2:31) of those who take the risk of reaching out to others through discipleship. The apostle Paul confidently testified that “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13). God’s message to those who disciple is that “you can do it. I will help you.” He wants believers to focus on doing the work while trusting

Him to do the miracles.

It is evident that the church must place exponentially more emphasis on training parishioners to engage in discipleship. Jesus spent the lion's share of his time training the disciples. The apostle Paul spent the lion's share of his time training other men to be exemplary leaders in the various churches he planted and those he visited. The church must not deviate from this path for if there is no spiritual and numerical growth through discipleship, the church's viability and impact on its surrounding community will be limited.

The leaders of the church, beginning with the pastor, must insist that discipleship be a priority of the church and take the measures to implement the personnel, financial, and administrative resources to establish it; parishioners will not do it on their own.

If it is true that churches take on the personality of their leaders then there is hope for discipleship to take root and grow exponentially. All it takes is committed leaders to be inspiring examples of discipleship and the trend will catch on with others.

Discipleship is something that cannot be done adequately in worship service on Sunday's alone. At its core, it is about improving the ability of believers to render a godly response to all of the issues in their daily lives outside of the church. Consistent, but not over-bearing phone calls, text messages, lunches, dinners, and leisure time with those being discipled are mandatory if they are going to conclude their mentors actually care about them. No weekly class can establish a relationship to this degree. Discipleship demands personal availability far beyond worship service at church.

Theological reflections about this world center on the daunting task of discipleship outreach in countries where Christianity is a minority religion especially when the same task in the friendly environment of the US is difficult. Only a Christ-centered, faithfully-implemented plan of discipleship will enable a Christian minority to withstand the prejudice and persecutions from the adherents of the majority religion in foreign countries. Fervent prayer and support must be offered on behalf of missionaries

and their congregations who endure the hardships of discipleship to keep their churches viable under harsh conditions.

God's impact on the participants of this project was reflected in their positive responses after the curriculum had been administered. There was a consensus that dependence on God was paramount in their efforts to practice Christianity on a routine basis. They believed the practice of discipleship was attainable by the grace and power of the Lord. They truly felt God alone would make their efforts to live a sanctified life a reality. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the disciples did not begin their ministry of discipleship until they were empowered by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:3-4). By persuading the participants of God's faithfulness to assist those who faithfully disciple others, the participants finished the class with a greater degree of confidence God could make them fruitful in discipleship.

There was also conviction among the participants that discipleship was a large task but it was being done by only a few workers in the church. The enormity of the task made it clear that being a spectator only contributed to the lack of impact the church has on society today and particularly on young adult African American men. The participants learned to think in terms of a few leading the masses and being glad they were chosen to be a part of the faithful few leaders. God placed a sense of urgency on their hearts to be a part of His solution and healing to the spiritual sickness they observe and experience every day.

Personal Reflections

I learned that discipleship is my passion! After spending a year of extensive research on discipleship, I still hunger and thirst to know more about discipleship and more about strategies of implementing it in the church. If I have not become exhausted with the subject matter by now, I probably never will.

I became aware of the lack of time I had allotted in my daily schedule for intentional discipleship of a young man who might be a good candidate to be discipled. I

have since committed myself to making intentional time available to disciple other men beyond communication on Sunday mornings.

I learned that I can communicate the subject of discipleship in a way that students can understand it. I gleaned this conclusion from the responses to the teacher evaluation by the participants at the end of the project. They all noted the clarity with which I taught them about discipleship. Furthermore, a number of them wanted to know if the class could be continued immediately or at a date later in the year. They liked what they heard and the manner in which it was delivered.

I learned to allow the participants freedom to talk about discipleship during class discussions. The object of the class was to engage them in an in-depth conversation about discipleship. What better way to do this than to let them make extended remarks about discipleship if they were moved to do so. There is always the temptation for the teacher to want to dominate all aspects of the discussion but I learned that I had to trust God to grow and change their hearts. My job was to lead them but the Holy Spirit had to convince them to follow. This revelation decreased my anxiety about trying to teach every aspect of discipleship so precisely.

Finally, the imperative of prayer in the ministry of discipleship was magnified in my heart. There are so many other constant, insatiable, alluring desires to which young men are drawn to every day. How was I going to convince them to walk away from those desires and replace them with the new allure of serving the Lord with all their heart? It was only through the power of prayer (Jas 5:16b) that I maintained an optimistic outlook that all the strongholds that might prevent them from becoming disciples of Christ could be broken. Through prayer, I was joyfully reminded that “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil 4:13).

APPENDIX 1

YOUNG MEN'S DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM
RECRUITMENT SURVEY

ALL MEN 18-55 ARE ASKED TO PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SURVEY BEFORE LEAVING WORSHIP SERVICES TODAY

The survey is designed to recruit and enlist young men (18-55) for the purpose of developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum. This survey is being conducted by Gregory Moore in order to collect data for a discipleship ministry project at Trinity Baptist Church, Fort Valley, Georgia. Rev. Gregory Moore is a doctoral student at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

All young men (18-55) are asked to kindly fill out this brief survey whether or not you are interested in participating.

Goal of Project: The goal of this project is to develop and implement a discipleship curriculum for young adult men at Trinity Baptist Church.

Project Duration (5 weeks) : The length of this project is only five weeks. Men who agree to participate will be asked to meet for five Sundays at 10am.

Start Date: The start date for meetings will commence in approximately four weeks. A brief questionnaire will be administered on a chosen Sunday just before class meeting begins.

How this project can benefit you:

1. You may gain knowledge about discipleship. This is one of the direct commands Jesus gave to all believers
2. You will gain knowledge about the power of prayer and devotion.
3. You will learn the art of discipleship based on how Jesus discipled others.
4. You can grow in your personal faith and commitment to Jesus Christ!

COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP PROJECT

Please place a check on the line to indicate your response:

_____ YES, I am willing to give five Sundays attendance to the important project.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

_____ Sorry, I am unable to participate at this time.

APPENDIX 2

PRE- AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLASS PARTICIPANTS

This questionnaire is being conducted by Gregory Moore for the purpose of collecting data for a discipleship ministry project at Trinity Baptist Church, Fort Valley, Georgia. Rev. Gregory Moore is a doctoral student at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

In this research, you will simply answer the questions before the training begins and then answer the same questions after the training is complete. Any information you provided will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

What is your date of birth? _____?

Age (circle one)

18-30 31-42 43-55

Approximately how long have you been a Christian? _____

The next section of this questionnaire deals with your present knowledge of discipleship.

Please answer “yes” or “no” to the following statements.

1. _____ I have a firm understanding of what a disciple is.
2. _____ I understand the disciplines a disciple should have.
3. _____ I understand the purpose of discipleship.
4. _____ I understand the strategies Jesus used to develop disciples.
5. _____ I understand the strategy the apostles used to develop disciples.
6. _____ I understand what my role is as a disciple of Christ.
7. _____ I understand the connection of discipleship with church membership.
8. _____ I am actively pursuing God’s calling to be a disciple.
9. _____ I understand the process of discipling another person.

10. _____ I know what the Bible says about discipleship.
11. _____ I believe men are more likely to grow if they are disciplined.
12. _____ I aspire to be a disciple in my church.
13. _____ I know how to help others become a disciple of Christ.
14. _____ I understand the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship.
15. _____ I believe Jesus wants me to be a disciple.
16. _____ I need someone to disciple me.

APPENDIX 3

SCORING RUBRIC TO EVALUATE THE APPLICABILITY
AND FIDELITY OF THE DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM

Using the following scale, please circle the answer that best corresponds to your feelings in response to the following statements:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
SD	D	DS	A	AS	SA

Please evaluation the curriculum based on the following criteria:

1. Is this curriculum faithful to Scripture?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
2. Is this curriculum relevant to discipleship?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
3. Is this curriculum relevant to the project of developing and implementing a discipleship curriculum for young adult men at Trinity?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
4. Does this curriculum put emphasis on prayer and devotions?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
5. Does this curriculum put emphasis on spiritual disciplines?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
6. Is this curriculum consistent with Christ's work with the disciples?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
7. Is this curriculum relevant to the church?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA
8. Does this curriculum have the prosper scope?
Comment: SD D DS AS A SA

9. Does this curriculum employ a relevant strategy? SD D DS AS A SA
Comment:
10. Does this curriculum lend itself to practical application? SD D DS AS A SA
Comment:

APPENDIX 4

EVALUATION OF DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM TEACHER

Using the following scale, please write the number that best corresponds to your feelings in response to the following statements:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
SD	D	DS	A	AS	SA

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. The teacher clearly communicated what a disciple is. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 2. The teacher was stimulating and interesting to listen to. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 3. The teacher clearly communicated my role in discipleship. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 4. The curriculum presented was well organized. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 5. The quality of the Bible study handouts were good. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 6. The teacher seemed to understand discipleship. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 7. The class was taught at a reasonable pace. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 8. The length of the class was appropriate. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 9. The teacher was prepared for each class time. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 10. I would recommend this discipleship class to others. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 11. Briefly comment on outstanding features of the teacher. | | | | | | |
| 12. Briefly comment on weakness of the teacher. | | | | | | |
| 13. Suggestions for the teacher. | | | | | | |
| 14. Suggestions for the discipleship class. | | | | | | |

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM FOR YOUNG ADULT MEN AT TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH IN FORT VALLEY, GEORGIA

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014
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Chapter 1 details the recruiting and enlistment of young men in the church for the project and the evaluation of their knowledge of discipleship. It details the strategy for developing a curriculum for a men's disciple ministry and discusses the present ministry context at Trinity. A brief history of Trinity's ministry to men is discussed to highlight the need for a men's discipleship ministry at the church.

Chapter 2 presents the biblical support and theological foundation for perpetuating the gospel ministry through discipleship. Commentary and supporting arguments are given from Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:41-42, Exodus 18:13-26, and 1 Timothy 2:2-4 that reveal the commonality that God's commandments are established in each generation through a form of discipleship.

Chapter 3 discusses the effectiveness of mentoring (the secular parallel to Christian discipleship) in secular society and what the church can glean from those successes. It highlights how entry level employees improve their skills and confidence as a result of mentoring by veteran staff. It stresses the importance of guiding mentees while they are in an actual work environment.

Chapter 4 describes the fifteen-week project in detail and specifically discusses what was done each week. It contains the methodologies used, such as surveys, pre- and post-test questionnaires, t-tests, the development of specific bible study topics, and an

evaluation of the project by the project participants. A conclusion for the 15 weeks of activity is given.

Chapter 5 is an evaluation of the entire project to develop a discipleship curriculum for young men at Trinity Baptist Church. The project's purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses are discussed. There are suggestions for improvements for future reference along with theological and personal reflections about the entire project. The chapter concludes with findings and wisdom gained about developing a discipleship curriculum for young men at Trinity.

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