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IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF MENTOR BASED PERSONAL
EVANGELISM TRAINING AT HILLSDALE BAPTIST CHURCH
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF MENTOR BASED PERSONAL
EVANGELISM TRAINING AT HILLSDALE BAPTIST CHURCH
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To Becky,

whose love sustains me

Song of Songs 1:15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| LIST OF TABLES | viii |
| PREFACE | ix |
| Chapter | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Purpose | 1 |
| Goals of the Project | 1 |
| Context of the Project | 2 |
| Rationale | 8 |
| Definitions and Limitations | 10 |
| 2. A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR USING A MENTORING APPROACH TO TEACH EVANGELISM | 12 |
| Biblical Mandate for Personal Evangelism | 12 |
| Matthew 28:18-20 | 12 |
| Matthew 4:19 | 18 |
| The Biblical Model for Evangelism Training | 21 |
| Moses and Joshua | 21 |
| Jesus and His Disciples | 26 |
| Paul and Timothy | 30 |

| Chapter | Page |
|---|------|
| Paul's Command in Philippians 3:17..... | 32 |
| Conclusion | 33 |
| 3. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES | 34 |
| Mentoring Principles | 34 |
| Definitions of Mentoring | 34 |
| A Mentoring Model | 36 |
| Characteristics of Mentors and Protégés | 37 |
| The Implementation and Evaluation of a Mentoring Relationship | 40 |
| Secular Applications of Mentoring | 41 |
| Mentoring as a Tool for the Discipleship of Christians | 44 |
| Discipleship as a Relational Endeavor | 45 |
| Historic Precedent for Mentoring in Christian Discipleship | 47 |
| An Evaluation of Three Popular Models of Evangelism Training | 49 |
| FAITH..... | 49 |
| The Net..... | 56 |
| Evangelism Explosion | 59 |
| A Model for Mentor Based Evangelism Training | 64 |
| 4. FISHERS OF MEN | 66 |
| Week 1: Program Kick-off | 66 |
| Week 2: Recruitment and Preview Banquet | 66 |
| Week 3: Commissioning Ceremony | 68 |
| Week 4: Session 1 - Orientation | 69 |

| Chapter | Page |
|---|------|
| Week 5: Session 2 | 72 |
| Week 6: Session 3 | 73 |
| Week 7: Session 4 | 75 |
| Week 8: Session 5 | 77 |
| Week 9: Session 6..... | 78 |
| Week 10: Session 7 | 79 |
| Week 11: Community Festival | 80 |
| Week 12: Session 8 | 81 |
| Week 13: Session 9 | 82 |
| Week 14: Session 10 | 83 |
| Week 15: Session 11 | 84 |
| Conclusion | 84 |
| 5. PROJECT EVALUATION | 86 |
| Evaluation of Data | 87 |
| Reducing Fear of Witnessing | 87 |
| Preparing Participants to Serve As Mentors | 91 |
| Evaluation of Goals | 94 |
| Reducing Fear of Witnessing | 94 |
| Preparing Participants to Serve as Mentors | 95 |
| Learn to Design and Implement a Witnessing Training Program | 95 |
| Learn Mentoring Skills | 96 |
| Project Modifications Needed | 97 |

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Theological Reflection | 98 |
| Personal Reflection | 99 |
| Conclusion | 100 |
| Appendix | |
| 1. SERMON..... | 101 |
| 2. TEACHING SESSION 1 NOTES | 108 |
| 3. TEACHING SESSION 2 NOTES | 112 |
| 4. TEACHING SESSION 3 NOTES | 113 |
| 5. TEACHING SESSION 4 NOTES | 115 |
| 6. TEACHING SESSION 5 NOTES | 117 |
| 7. TEACHING SESSION 6 NOTES | 119 |
| 8. TEACHING SESSION 7 NOTES | 122 |
| 9. TEACHING SESSION 8 NOTES | 124 |
| 10. TEACHING SESSION 9 NOTES | 127 |
| 11. TEACHING SESSION 10 NOTES | 129 |
| 12. PRE AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE | 131 |
| 13. PRE-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES | 134 |
| 14. POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES | 135 |
| 15. STATEMENT 4 PRE AND POST-TEST RESPONSES | 136 |
| 16. FISH OUTLINE | 137 |
| 17. COMMITMENT CARD | 140 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 141 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. Research data for statement 4 | 88 |
| 2. Research data for statement 6 | 89 |
| 3. Research data for statement 7 | 90 |
| 4. Research data for statement 8 | 90 |
| 5. Research data for statement 9 | 91 |
| 6. Research data for statement 10 | 92 |
| 7. Research data for statement 11 | 92 |
| 8. Research data for statement 12 | 93 |
| 9. Research data for statement 13 | 94 |
| A1. Pre-project questionnaire responses: Statements 7-13, all respondents | 134 |
| A2. Post-project questionnaire responses: Statements 7-13, all respondents..... | 135 |
| A3. Statement 4, pre and post-test responses | 136 |

PREFACE

Although only one name appears on this project, I could not have completed it without the help and encouragement of many others. Of course, the most important of these were the members of my cohort group. As iron sharpens iron, they have challenged me and honed my understanding of church growth. In particular I would like to thank Rob Sumrall, Tony Wolfenbarger, Chris Regas, and Richard Carter. These men have been friends that "sticketh closer than a brother." Without their encouragement and insight, I doubt that this project would have ever been completed.

In addition to my cohort, I would like to thank my faculty supervisor, Dr. Jeff Walters. At times he filled the role of cheerleader, grammarian, and even supply preacher at my church. Jeff consistently went the extra mile to encourage and advise me throughout this process. I trust that our friendship will continue for many years hence. I would also like to say a few words about the contribution made by Dr. Chuck Lawless. My association with Dr. Lawless goes all the way back to my Master of Divinity. He was the first person to encourage me to pursue doctoral work. I owe him a great debt of thanks. Additionally, I would like to thank each member of the faculty that taught a seminar or gave a lecture during course of my degree program. I know in many cases, they took time away from family and other endeavors to help me and my cohort. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. I would be remiss if I did not take a moment as well to thank the members of Hillsdale Baptist Church. Not only were they the subject of my project, they gave me the time and freedom to pursue this degree program. Being their pastor has been the greatest privilege of my professional life.

My wife Becky has accompanied me through every step of this journey.

Without her encouragement and support, I would never have begun, much less completed this project. She has loved and encouraged me even when I was unlovable. This project is as much her accomplishment as it is mine. Finally, thanks are due to our daughters, Jess and Emily, who have endured many days without Dad around so that I could finish this project. I am so proud of the beautiful and godly women they have become.

Through the course of my studies I have come to the same conclusion that many other church growth practitioners have reached. Church growth is not about tricks and gimmicks. Building a crowd is not the same as building a church. Church growth is about evangelism. The goal of this project has been to create an army of evangelists within the church. Soldiers are trained best through mentoring relationships. My prayer is that every believer in Christ would not only do the work of an evangelist, but the work of a mentor as well.

Louisville, Kentucky
December, 2014

Timothy J. Harris

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to reduce the fear of witnessing experienced by selected members of Hillsdale Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. This task was accomplished by improving the evangelistic skills of a group of church members through classroom training combined with mentor guided evangelistic experiences.

Goals of the Project

The project was guided by four comprehensive goals. The first goal was to reduce the fear of witnessing in the project participants by training them to share their faith using both a personal testimony and memorized scriptures. The curriculum used in the training was designed by the pastor and was based on a mentoring relationship with another more experienced soul winner. The thesis of this project was that fear of witnessing is reduced when individuals experience both training in evangelistic methods and see these methods modeled by a mentor. This goal was measured by using an opinion survey administered both at the beginning and at the end of the training program. The second goal of this project was to prepare members to serve as mentors to other students of evangelism. The church must create a growing group of soul winners. This goal was accomplished by providing learners with both training and experience in sharing their faith. Learners were asked to serve as mentors in subsequent iterations of the training

program.

The third goal is personal. I wanted to learn to design and implement a witnessing training program that will be applicable in multiple ministry settings. Such a program will be of immense value to me in the future as a pastor.

Fourth, since Ephesians 4:11-12 calls the pastor to be an equipper of the saints, I wanted to learn mentoring skills that will help me train other believers in not only evangelism but in other Christian disciplines as well. The process of serving as a mentor to a group of learners helped provide me with ample opportunity to develop these skills.

Context of the Project

Hillsdale Baptist Church began in 1955 with two men who had a vision for reaching lost people in their community. These two men held a tent revival in the Pleasure Ridge Park area of southwestern Jefferson County which resulted in several professions of faith. From this tent revival the group went on to plant a congregation which met in the home of one of the first members. The small congregation grew quickly, constructing a building in 1956 on Stephan Drive. The church eventually outgrew its small building and moved to its current location on Pages Lane in 1966. In the 1970's the church expanded the sanctuary twice, and in 1984 the congregation built an education wing. In 1994 the church constructed a family life center which includes a gymnasium and additional classroom space.

Much of southwestern Jefferson County is made up of older subdivisions built in the 1950s and 1960s. These homes are owned primarily by blue collar and elderly residents. Two new subdivisions have been constructed near the church. These are located in close proximity to a nine-hole public golf course. The homes in these two

subdivisions sell for substantially more than those in the older areas of the community. There are also a large number of government subsidized apartments located across the street from the church in two separate complexes. An apartment complex catering to retirees has also been built near the church.

The church is debt free, having recently paid off its mortgage due to a large gift from a church member. There are no significant disputes or power struggles in the congregation, and the church has a good reputation in the community. The church is theologically conservative, and the pastor has a good relationship with the members. The paid ministry staff consists of the pastor, a part-time secretary, and a part-time music leader. Unfortunately, many ministry jobs are filled by volunteers whose commitment is often low. The congregation's greatest challenges are that the church members are aging, and the congregation suffers from a lack of strong lay leadership.

A demographic report supplied by the North American Mission Board reveals that the population of the community is stagnant.¹ The population within a three mile radius of the church is 60,425 and is projected to increase by no more than 1.6 percent over the next four years. The population within five miles of the church is 128,262 and is projected to increase by 0.7 percent over the next four years. More than 90 percent of the church's active members live within a three mile radius of the church. Within that three mile radius of the church the community is 92.7 percent white. That estimate is not projected to change appreciably in the next four years. The population within a five mile radius is 86.3 percent white. This statistic is expected to decrease to 85 percent in the next

¹ESRI (Business Analyst Online), www.esri.com/bao/ (accessed January 20, 2009), Center for Missional Research, North American Mission Board.

four years. The median age of the residents within a five-mile radius of the church is 37.9. This statistic is near the national average. However, the percentage of adults in the age range between 45 to 84 exceeds the national average. The only other age group that exceeds the national average are the 25-34 year olds.

Income distribution statistics reveal that the largest income group is made up of households making 50,000 to 74,999 dollars per year. The next largest group is made up of households making 75,000 to 99,999 dollars per year.² These results may be skewed somewhat by the presence of the two up-scale subdivisions mentioned earlier. Most of the homes in the community are modest, blue collar, single family dwellings. Church members are almost all white. The children's programs tend to be significantly more ethnically diverse than the Sunday morning worship services.

In recent years, Hillsdale Baptist Church has become a classic example of a plateaued church. While total church membership has increased steadily, an analysis of the church's annual church profiles reveals that worship attendance occasionally spikes to an average of approximately 165 and then drops back to approximately 130. This pattern has been repeated many times since 1980. Part of the problem rests with the small size of the church sanctuary, which seats fewer than two hundred people. However, in recent years a portion of this pattern can also be attributed to the type of people the church has attracted. While new members have been split almost equally between additions by baptism and by transfer, the two categories reflect two highly disparate groups. The majority of transfer additions have been elderly people, a substantial number of whom

²Ibid.

have fled the change to contemporary music by other churches in the area. These individuals tend to come from financially secure, middle income backgrounds. While the church is supported mostly by the financial contributions of these older members, the church also experiences a higher than average number of losses due to death. In contrast, baptisms have come mostly from the children's ministries. The church operates a number of strong children's programs including AWANA, a Wednesday evening children's program called ABC Wednesday, a children's choir, Vacation Bible School, and Upward soccer. These programs are fueled by a van ministry which targets lower income children living in the large number of apartment complexes in the community. While these activities attract many children, the church has had difficulty attracting and retaining young, and middle-aged adults. Younger adults that do attend tend to be transient due to their financially disadvantaged status. Also, growth in the children's programs has been limited by the lack of volunteers to drive the church vans. These factors have resulted in a significant shortage of long-term young and median adult members.

Long-time members of the church report that Hillsdale often baptized more than 20 people a year during its early years. If this is true, then the annual baptism ratio was often less than 5 members to one baptism. For the last 20 years, however, the number of baptisms has been substantially fewer. The church has baptized more than 15 people in a single year only 6 times since 1980. Recently, the church's plan for reaching the community has focused on programs for children. In 2005, the church established an AWANA program. This program initially resulted in a significant jump in annual baptisms. In 2005 the church added 10 members through baptism. In 2006, the church reported 21 baptisms. However, the number of baptisms coming from this program has

fallen in recent years. The church baptized twelve people in 2007. Four people were baptized in 2008, 8 in 2009 and only 5 in 2010. The church has averaged 6 baptisms per year during the period of 2011 to 2013. The AWANA program currently ministers to approximately 50 children each week. Growth in the program has come primarily through children inviting their friends and through the efforts of one especially industrious van driver. The church's Wednesday evening children's program currently ministers to approximately 25 children each week. The church began an Upward soccer program in 2005 that was been reasonably successful in attracting unchurched families to participate but resulted in virtually no baptisms. Finding volunteers to work in all of these programs became increasingly difficult. Both AWANA and Upward Soccer may have to be discontinued due to a lack of volunteer workers.

In addition to its children's ministries, the church also operates a crisis food pantry ministry which serves approximately 20 families a year. Unfortunately, the pantry is often poorly stocked and maintained. One of the most popular events of the church year is an annual Mother's Day breakfast which precedes the morning worship service. Typically, attendance on this day is second only to Easter. Unfortunately, while the congregation enjoys the event, it rarely attracts first-time visitors to the church.

The result of the church's attempts to reach youth has been mixed. In May of 2008, the church's youth director resigned to take a similar position with a "high impact" church plant started nearby by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Most of the church's youth quickly followed the youth director to his new church because they had no family ties to Hillsdale. One of the laymen in the church stepped in to rebuild the program and now averages 20 in attendance for his midweek Bible study. Most of the attendees are

middle school aged youth. In 2013 a new church member, who had experience playing in a band, began organizing a youth praise band. This effort has resulted in a marked increase in both the number of youth attending worship, and in youth participation in the weekly music ministry of the church.

In the summer of 2010, the church experienced something of a spiritual revival that resulted in a growing sense of expectancy and enthusiasm among its members. As a result of this revival, I began an early morning prayer group that focuses exclusively on praying for the lost in the community and on spiritual revival within the church. Worship increased to more than 150 during the first quarter of 2011. However, attendance dropped back to 2010 levels again in the summer of 2011. Sunday school increased from an average of 81 to more than 100 in the spring of 2011. As with worship attendance, Sunday School attendance dropped in 2011 as well. As the youth praise band has begun to take a more active part in Sunday morning worship, attendance has begun to increase again in 2013 in both worship and Sunday School.

The church averaged just over 6 baptisms per year since 1980. That number has declined to an average of less than 6 per year for the period from 2008 to 2010, and 6 from 2011 to 2013. The church has tried a variety of methods for attracting new members and prospects. I began a FAITH evangelism training program in 2002. Initially, the program had good attendance with more than 18 adults volunteering to participate. Unfortunately, the program never resulted in increased baptisms or new members. By 2008, participation in the program had dwindled to 4 or 5 volunteers each semester. In response to this decline, the church implemented a new program in January of 2009 based on the GROW outreach model. Initially, 40 members volunteered to be a part of

the new program. By January of 2011, participation in the new program had dropped to fewer than 10. Finding prospects to visit has been a continuing problem. GROW volunteers follow up on those who visit in worship or attend one of the children's events. Most of the time, volunteers simply perform ministry visits to existing members. The primary problem for both GROW and FAITH has been finding prospects to visit. The church has tried several approaches to finding prospects. Hillsdale does a direct mail campaign to the community once a year. This program has resulted in at least one new family joining the church each year since 2009. The church also subscribes to a "new mover" service which sends a card to every new resident in the community. There is no evidence to suggest that this approach has resulted in any new members or first time visitors. The church invested heavily in the denomination's "Find it Here" campaign but had no response at all from those efforts. Likewise, efforts designed to encourage members to submit the names and addresses of prospects have been unsuccessful. Clearly, the church needs to generate more prospects, visitors, and baptisms in order to survive.

Rationale

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus exhorts his followers to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Unfortunately, most Christians have failed to heed Christ's words. In *Share Jesus without Fear*, William Faye states that the majority of Christians have never shared their faith with anyone. He declares that they are guilty of

the "sin of silence."³ Thom Rainer has proven conclusively that the most effective manner for reaching people with the gospel is not by cold calls, but through existing relationships.⁴ Many church members already have established relationships through which they could effectively share the gospel if they only had the training and confidence to do so.

Hillsdale does not currently have an effective program for training members to share their faith. The church has used a number of witnessing training approaches in the past. These approaches have included a one day seminar on how to use an Evangecube, a multi-week training program using *Share Jesus without Fear*, and a segment in the church's new members class on how to use the "Roman Road" and a marked Bible. While these approaches have given members many tools for witnessing, none of these approaches has led to any visible change in most members' lifestyles.

A mentor based program will allow untrained and inexperienced members to be a part of an evangelistic outreach without the threat of having to share their faith before they are ready. Novice soul winners need mentors that will model soul winning. Mentoring is the way Jesus trained his disciples. In John 13:15 Jesus said to his disciples "I have given you an example." The apostle Paul also used mentoring. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, he called on the Corinthians to "be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."

In 2002, Hillsdale implemented the FAITH evangelism strategy. While the strategy did not result in large numbers of baptisms, it did encourage a more evangelistic

³William Faye and Ralph Hodge, *Share Jesus without Fear* (Nashville, Lifeway Press), 6.

⁴Thom S. Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan,

culture in the church. Rather than return to this strategy, this project has designed and implemented a mentor based approach that attempts to integrate the best qualities of a number of different evangelistic programs.

This project recruited a small group of people who were mentored by me and a few other volunteers. In the future, this small group will mentor additional learners. Hopefully, this process will continue to grow and spread as church members reach out to those in their circle of relationships. The ultimate goal of the program will be to mobilize an army of witnesses within the faith community.

Definitions and Limitations

“Personal evangelism,” “soul winning,” and “witnessing” will be used interchangeably to refer to the process of presenting the biblical message of personal guilt, the availability of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and the need for personal repentance from sin, culminating in an invitation to believe the message and profess faith in Christ’s work on the cross as sufficient for receiving heaven and eternal life.⁵

“The gospel” refers to the biblical message of salvation through the work of Christ on the cross, conditioned upon repentance and belief by the subject. First Corinthians 15:3-4 offers a one source summary of the essential message of the gospel⁶ – “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our

2003), 202.

⁵R. H. Mounce, "Gospel," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Basingstoke, UK: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1985), 474.

⁶Larry D. Robertson, "Gospel Presentation," in *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, ed. Scott Dawson (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 70.

sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” These terms will not encompass the processes of discipleship or assimilation into the church. For the purpose of this project "mentoring" will be defined as "a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies."⁷

The first limitation of the project was time. Due to the limitations of the Doctor of Ministry program, the mentoring program had to be completed within a very short time frame. Ideally, the project will constitute a beginning to a program which will continue and expand through multiple cycles over a period of many years.

A second limitation is the fact that a mentor based program depends on having trained mentors to lead trainees. While there are a number of church members who have been through other witnessing training programs, at the beginning of this project there were none that had experience with the specific training program that this project will utilize. Still, I believe that the value of a mentor is found in his or her experience in witnessing, not with the specific program utilized. For this reason mentors were recruited from a pool of those who have experience sharing their faith using a variety of methods.

⁷Margo Murray, *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring: How to Facilitate an Effective Mentoring Program* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), xiv.

CHAPTER 2

A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR USING A MENTORING APPROACH TO TEACHING EVANGELISM

For Christians, the New Testament is the ultimate authority for belief and practice. Evangelical Christians are committed to the principle that the Scriptures are *ipsissima verba Dei*, the very words of God.¹ This chapter demonstrates that the Scriptures clearly teach that all believers have the responsibility to be a personal, verbal witness of the gospel and examines evidence for the assertion that the New Testament model for training believers to carry out the enterprise of evangelism is rooted in the mentor relationship. Additionally, it establishes that the mentoring process has substantial precedent within the pages of the Old Testament.

The Biblical Mandate for Personal Evangelism

This chapter provides a biblical basis for the Christian's obligation to share the gospel with non-believers by examining several key texts dealing with Christ's summons to the church to the evangelistic enterprise.

Matthew 28:18-20

The phrase "Great Commission" is often used to describe Christ's command to the church to make disciples. Russell Moore has called the Great Commission a

¹Bruce Riley Ashford, "A Theologically Driven Missiology for a Great Commission Resurgence," in *The Great Commission Resurgence: Fulfilling God's Mandate in Our Time*, ed. Chuck Lawless and Adam Greenway (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 177.

"theology of cosmic warfare." In giving this command, "Jesus was not launching a global public relations campaign. He was declaring war."² This commission constitutes the church's marching orders. It is so foundational to the mission of the church that a form of the Great Commission is found in at least five texts in the New Testament. Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-17, Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-22 and Acts 1:8 all contain a version of Christ's command to make disciples. Each version supplements the others, carrying with it its own unique emphasis. Mark emphasizes the urgency, method and geographical scope of the mission. Luke and Acts emphasize the Christocentric foundation and universal scope of the work, while John emphasizes the spiritual nature of the mission.³

Of course, the most commonly quoted version of the Great Commission is found in Matthew 28:18-20.⁴ The heart of this verse is found in the imperative to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."⁵ The proper context for understanding this imperative begins in verse eighteen. It is in this verse that Christ declares the authority by which He issues His command. The authority of Christ is one of the unique emphases of Matthew's

²Russell Moore, "Theology Bleeds," in *The Great Commission Resurgence: Fulfilling God's Mandate in Our Time*, ed. Chuck Lawless and Adam W. Greenway (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 104-5. Moore states that the Great Commission means the overthrow of those powers which "hold the creation captive through sin and death." It represents the triumph of the Messiah over those powers which are hostile to God.

³George W. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), 174.

⁴Robert L. Plummer, "The Great Commission in the New Testament," in *The Challenge of the Great Commission: Essays on God's Mandate for the Local Church*, ed. Chuck Lawless and Thom S. Rainer (Crestwood, KY: Pinnacle Publishers, 2005), 33.

⁵Unless otherwise noted all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Version.

presentation of the Great Commission.⁶ The command itself flows directly from Christ's authority. Jesus declares that "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." The Great Commission is, therefore, based in Christology. This declaration of Christ's authority echoes Daniel 7:13-14. In both passages, the authority of the Son of Man passes to his community.⁷ Christ's declaration of His authority signals the end of the time when He would be known as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa 53:3). The limitations which applied to Him during his earthly ministry have been thrown off. Verse 18 declares that He is now in possession of all authority both "in heaven and on earth."⁸

The writer of Matthew's gospel repeatedly establishes the principle that Jesus was a man of authority. In Matthew 7:29, he writes that Jesus "taught them as one having authority." In Matthew 28, Christ's authority is reaffirmed by his resurrection.⁹ As in Daniel, the authority of the Son of Man passes to his community. Having been exalted, Jesus is now in a position to send his followers into the world.¹⁰ The authority of Christ, then, provides the springboard for evangelism.¹¹

Jesus' authority includes the power to tell His disciples to "go" (Πορευθέντες). Since this word is a participle (going), it could be translated "as you go" or "on your way," implying that the disciples need not cross cultural or geographic boundaries in

⁶Peters, *Biblical Theology of Missions*, 174.

⁷David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 689.

⁸Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 745.

⁹John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005), 1265.

¹⁰Turner, *Matthew*, 689.

¹¹Mortimer Arias and Alan Johnson, *The Great Commission: Biblical Models for Evangelism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 27.

order to share the gospel. The point of the command is that the disciples were to communicate the gospel to those who had not heard, regardless of geographic context.¹²

Christ's command indicates that the disciples central responsibility is to produce new disciples. Indeed, making disciples is the primary focus of the pericope. The verb μαθητεύσατε means "to make disciples." Μαθητεύσατε is the imperative form of the verb which carries the force of a direct command.¹³ As new disciples are gained the original creation mandate given to humanity in the garden of Eden is fulfilled. The fulfillment of the Great Commission is a decisive stage in the renewal of the world, the plundering of the kingdom of Satan.¹⁴

The universal authority of Christ provides the basis for a universal mission.¹⁵ In contrast to His command in Matthew 10:5, Jesus now broadens the scope of the disciples commission from merely reaching the Jews to reaching all nations. The author of Matthew used the phrase πάντα τὰ ἔθνη three times in his gospel. Here, it is used to widen the scope of Christ's message. Matthew used ἔθνη alone when speaking of the Gentiles. However, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη is used inclusively to speak of all humanity, Jews and Gentiles alike.¹⁶ Of course, nothing in the text indicates that Christ has revoked the mission to Israel, but merely adds here a new element which revokes a previous

¹²Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 718.

¹³Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33b (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 882.

¹⁴Russell D. Moore, "A Theology of the Great Commission," in *The Challenge of the Great Commission*, ed. Chuck Lawless and Thom Rainer (Crestwood, KY: Pinnacle Publishers, 2005), 50.

¹⁵Hagner, *Matthew*, 886-87.

¹⁶Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1265-66.

prohibition found in Matthew 10:5 against evangelizing Gentiles.¹⁷

For Matthew, evangelism is discipleship. His whole gospel is didactic in character, and Christ's commission is simply the climax of that didactic model.¹⁸ This didactic process of making disciples consists of a three step method. First, verse 19 instructs the apostles to take the initiative. They are to "Go therefore and make disciples." In order to fulfill the commission, the disciples had to put themselves in direct contact with individuals from all nations. Second, by their witness, the disciples must bring their hearers to the point where they consciously and publicly align themselves with Jesus Christ through baptism. This baptism is to be performed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the new believer must willingly and publicly enter into a relationship with the triune God. Third, the new convert must be educated in the commands of Christ so that he or she may become a mature follower of Christ.¹⁹ The content of these commands certainly includes the major discourses of Christ found in the gospels. However, the goal is not so much knowledge as obedience. As Christ says in Matthew 5:19, "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." The goal is not just orthodoxy of belief, but orthopraxis.²⁰ No doubt, Matthew shared the general Jewish impulse to view religion as a way of life rather than simply a pattern of belief. Christ's command then to "observe" (τηρεῖν) is the same word used in 19:17 where He

¹⁷R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 1114-15.

¹⁸Arias and Johnson, *The Great Commission*, 18.

¹⁹Plummer, *The Challenge of the Great Commission*, 34-35.

²⁰Turner, *Matthew*, 690.

instructed the rich young ruler to keep the Decalogue. The emphasis is on action rather than intellectual assent.²¹ Christ Himself said, "You will know them by their fruits" (7:16).

The process of discipleship implies a central role for the church. Matthew's baptismal formula presupposes the formation of a community of believers. It is within this community that the values of Christ's kingdom will be lived and experienced.²² The local body of believers is the primary agency by which missions and evangelism will be accomplished. Only within this body can new disciples be baptized and taught to observe Christ's commands.²³ Πορευθέντες, βαπτίζοντες, and διδάσκοντες are "syntactically subordinate participles that take on imperative force."²⁴ Going, baptizing, and teaching are inextricably connected. The organism in which these three activities occur is to be the local church body.

While the job is daunting, the resources Christ provides are more than equal to the task. In verse 20, Christ promises that throughout the process of making disciples, His followers will experience His presence. Through the Spirit, Christ will tell them what to say when opposed by those outside the church (10:16-20), and He will be with them during times of conflict within the church (18:20).²⁵

Christ's special presence will conclude only when He returns at the end of the age. By dating the conclusion of His empowering presence at the end of the age, it is

²¹Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1270.

²²Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Missions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 252.

²³Turner, *Matthew*, 690.

²⁴Hagner, *Matthew*, 882.

²⁵Turner, *Matthew*, 692.

clear that this commission was not for the original disciples alone. Clearly, Christ will continue to be present with His followers every day until His return.²⁶ Indeed, Gentry makes the point that Christ's commission carries all the marks of a covenant and that verse 20 meets the criteria of "succession arrangements," rendering the covenant binding on all those who become a part of the church in the future.²⁷

Matthew 4:19

One of the most compelling examples of Christ's call to evangelism is found in His summons to Simon Peter and Andrew to become "fishers of men." As Jesus was walking along the banks of the Sea of Galilee He saw the two men casting a net. A casting net was circular in shape and measured up to twenty feet in diameter, with stone weights attached to its ends. An attached rope would allow the fisherman to draw the net closed, entrapping his prey.²⁸ As Jesus passed the men "He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men'" (Matt 4:19).

It is interesting to note that Jesus called His disciples Himself. In Judaism, traditionally, the disciple chose his rabbi. Jesus reverses the process by selecting those he desires as followers.²⁹ Indeed, what Jesus issues is more like a command than an invitation. Such a command is more typical of a prophet than a rabbi. Keener goes so far as to suggest that Jesus has adopted the prophetic model for calling one's successor. Indeed, there are parallels between Christ's call of Peter and Andrew, and the call of

²⁶Ibid., 691.

²⁷Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Greatness of the Great Commission* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1990), 23.

²⁸Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 77.

²⁹Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 84.

Elisha in 1 Kings 19:19-21.³⁰

In following Jesus, the original twelve embody patterns that are meant to be repeated by all Christians. "Followed" (ἠκολούθησαν) is a key word for Matthew that often implies discipleship.³¹ Clearly, Jesus is not calling these men to a casual stroll. Jesus is calling them to something far more permanent, to a lasting relationship, an apprenticeship which will prepare them to carry on the same work in which Jesus is already engaged.³²

Jesus adds a promise to his call. Should the two fisherman heed the summons, Jesus will make them fishers of men. Since there is no direct rabbinical precedent for this phrase, there is some debate as to its meaning. Fishing metaphors were widely used in the ancient Near East.³³ Clearly, Jesus is not calling these men simply to the task of learning, but of actively doing something, fishing. While the disciples are called to be fishers of men, the question remains as to what will be the fate of the fish who are "caught?"³⁴ Davies and Allison suggest that the metaphor carried an intentionally negative connotation.³⁵ Jeremiah 16:16 uses a similar metaphor of "catching" sinful people for the purpose of being judged. However, given Jesus' message of repentance in preparation for

³⁰Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 150.

³¹Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 91.

³²France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 147.

³³Wilhelm H. Wuellner, *The Meaning of "Fishers of Men"* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 8.

³⁴Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 85.

³⁵W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, The International Critical Commentary, vol. I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1988), 399.

the coming kingdom, it seems more appropriate to take the metaphor of "catching" in a positive sense. Supporting this view is the parallel metaphor of the lost sheep of Israel in Matthew 10:6. Jesus employs a similar metaphor in Matthew 13:47-50. There, "catching" will lead to judgment for some and salvation for others. From this evidence we conclude that it is most likely that Jesus simply uses the metaphor of fishing because fishing was the vocation of the men he was calling. It is a play on words, an analogy, and like all analogies, should not be stretched too far.

Clearly, the metaphor of fishing relates to the time of decision. Simon and Andrew are being called to help bring people to a moment of decision.³⁶ Linguistically, both the Hebrew and Aramaic words for "catch" can apply both to physical catching and to winning others through deception or debate. Keener indicates that similar implied meanings appear in the Greek language as well. Still, Jesus is not implying anything deceitful. He is simply calling men who are used to gathering fish to a new profession of gathering people.³⁷

Having made a decision, those who are caught are called to action. As with the Matthew 28 version of the Great Commission, discipleship is the goal of "fishing" for men. Men are caught to obey Christ.³⁸ Calling, following, and discipleship are derivative from the foundation of the original twelve.³⁹ Just as Christ called His first disciples to the vocation of obedience to his teachings, they in turn are called to catch men who will also live as obedient disciples.

³⁶France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 147.

³⁷Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 151.

³⁸Wuellner, *The Meaning of "Fishers of Men,"* 230.

³⁹Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 180.

The Biblical Model for Evangelism Training

From Moses and Joshua, to Jesus and the disciples, to Paul and Timothy, mentoring is the model used in the Bible for training believers.⁴⁰ Neither the word *mentor* nor the word *mentoring* is found in the Bible. The term actually comes from Homer's *Odyssey*. In Homer's story, Mentor is a trusted friend whom Odysseus appoints to look after his son Telemakhos. Mentor is the classic instructional figure, helping both the son and the father complete their life's work.⁴¹ Although the term is not found in Scripture, the concept of mentoring can be found throughout the Bible. This section will examine several prominent examples of mentoring as it is modeled in both the Old and New Testaments.

Moses and Joshua

Moses used the process of mentoring to prepare Joshua to succeed him as Israel's spiritual and military leader. Although Numbers 11:28 indicates that Joshua was Moses' "attendant" from his youth, the first time one sees Joshua in the Scriptures is in Exodus 17:8-16. In this passage, Moses appoints Joshua to lead the army of Israel against the Amalekites. The Amalekites, descendants of Esau, were a nomadic group who lived by raiding other nations. Moses appointed Joshua to the task of selecting and leading the nation's soldiers against this threat.⁴² On the day of the battle, Moses climbed to the top of a hill with Aaron and Hur accompanying him. As long as Moses held his hands aloft, assisted by Aaron and Hur, Israel prevailed. When his hands fell, the Amalekites prevailed. This experience taught Joshua that power is not found merely in the sword but

⁴⁰Chuck Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic and Professional, 2002), 122.

⁴¹Laurent Deloz, *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners* (San Francisco: Josey-Bass Publishers, 1999), 20.

⁴²Stuart, *Exodus*, 393.

in the hand of God. Joshua learned that the soldier must fight hard in battle, but power ultimately belongs to God rather than man.⁴³

After the battle with the Amalekites was won, Moses issued a command in verse 14 that the events of the day should be written in a book and then "recited" to Joshua. The emphasis on the fact that Joshua should understand the full significance of what God had done represents the first indication in the Scriptures that Joshua would be Moses successor. The Amalekites would be only one of many threats Joshua would have to guard Israel against.⁴⁴

The next time we see Joshua is in Exodus 24:13 when Moses is invited to the top of Sinai in order to receive the law from God. There is some dispute among scholars both as to how many trips Moses made up the mountain and who accompanied him. Schaeffer holds that Moses made a single trip in which Moses, Joshua, Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the elders ate a covenant meal before Moses and Joshua alone continued to the top of the mountain.⁴⁵ Stuart holds that there were two trips up the mountain. On the first trip Moses was accompanied by Aaron, Aaron's two sons and the seventy elders of Israel. After seeing God and eating a covenant meal with Him the group descended the mountain. Joshua may or may not have been included in this company. Moses then made a second trip up the mountain. The Scriptures explicitly state that Joshua accompanied Moses on this second trip. However, Stuart believes that Joshua stopped at some point before reaching the pinnacle of the mountain. Verse 18 seems to indicate that Moses alone entered the glory cloud representing the presence of God. Joshua would have

⁴³Francis A. Schaeffer, *Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975), 10.

⁴⁴Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 399.

⁴⁵Schaeffer, *Joshua*, 11.

waited just outside, close enough to render aid to Moses if he was needed.⁴⁶ From this experience, Schaeffer believes that Joshua learned to appreciate the "interplay between the seen and unseen worlds." He learned that God is "above everything and overshadowing everything."⁴⁷

Joshua accompanied Moses down from the mountain in time to witness the disastrous incident with the golden calf in Exodus 32. As the two descended the mountain Joshua thought he heard the sound of war, but Moses taught him that it was the sound of something far more serious than war. The tumult rising from the camp was the sound of singing, and sometimes the sound of singing can be worse than the sound of war.⁴⁸

As Joshua watched, Moses destroyed the tablets on which God had given the law. Through this experience Joshua learned the true and terrible nature of sin among God's people. Joshua also learned from his mentor that there is a place for "Godly anger." He learned that sin cannot be tolerated among God's people and that sin inevitably leads to moral breakdown. Moses taught Joshua that Yahweh was to be Israel's sole focus of worship.⁴⁹

The fourth time Joshua appears is at the tent of meeting in Exodus 33:11. Moses would enter the tent in order to meet with the Lord. When he departed, Joshua would remain. Durham states that his role did not entail cultic activity, rather, his role was probably that of a guard⁵⁰ or perhaps a custodian.⁵¹ Still, Joshua was being prepared

⁴⁶Stuart, *Exodus*, 560.

⁴⁷Schaeffer, *Joshua*, 12.

⁴⁸Ibid 12-14.

⁴⁹Stuart, *Exodus*, 682.

⁵⁰John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 3 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 443.

⁵¹Stuart, *Exodus*, 698.

through this experience as well. It was imperative that Joshua learn about the glory of God and about his guidance. Through this experience, Joshua would see God's direction in a more personal way than anyone other than Moses himself. He would learn that God is not only able, but willing to guide his people.⁵² Interestingly, Joshua was still learning and being groomed despite the fact that he would have been approximately forty years old at this point. He is called "young" in verse 11 because he was half the age of Moses.⁵³ This theme of learning is repeated in the next passage where Joshua appears.

Joshua had another lesson to learn in Numbers 11:24-29. When God put His Spirit upon seventy elders, all seventy began to prophesy. When it was reported to Joshua that two men in the camp were prophesying, he immediately became jealous for Moses' sake and demanded that they be rebuked. Moses refused, rebuking Joshua instead. Schaeffer points out that Joshua had to learn that God is sovereign. The Lord may do what he likes. No one can impose man-made rules on God. The Almighty binds Himself with whatever rules He deems to be proper, and human beings must never try to limit God. Such actions are not only foolish but futile. God abides by His own counsel alone.⁵⁴

In perhaps the most famous incident in Joshua's life, Numbers 13 records that he was one of twelve spies sent to scout the promised land. Through this experience, Joshua learned to stand with God, even when he was in the minority. After returning from their mission, only Joshua and Caleb reported that the people should trust God and take the land. Unfortunately, the majority of the spies disagreed. The people sided with the majority report and rebelled against God. Joshua once again learned the terrible nature of rebellion against the Lord. God decreed that none of the rebels would enter the

⁵²Schaeffer, *Joshua*, 15.

⁵³Stuart, *Exodus*, 699.

⁵⁴Schaeffer, *Joshua*, 16.

promised land. For the next thirty-eight years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness. Those years of wandering indelibly impressed upon Joshua the lesson that rebellion against God is not a small thing. Eventually, God brought Joshua and Caleb into the promised land. They were the only two men from an entire generation who survived to receive God's promise. From this, Joshua learned yet another lesson. God keeps His promises.⁵⁵

In Numbers 27:18-23, Joshua finally receives the mantle of leadership. As his time on the earth draws to a close, Moses is concerned for the leadership of Israel. In verse 17, he asks "who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep which have no shepherd." God responds by commissioning Joshua to be the nation's new leader. Joshua had learned from Moses by serving close to him for many years. But leadership does not derive from men alone. Human leadership cannot bring spiritual results.⁵⁶ There is more to equipping a man for leadership than simply serving a great mentor. The crucial qualification is that God had caused His Spirit to be upon Joshua. The faithfulness of Joshua's life was evidence that the Spirit of God controlled him.⁵⁷ He who would lead Israel must "possess a divine commission, blessed with a sovereign hand of guidance and strength."⁵⁸

In Deuteronomy 31:1-8, Moses issues his final words to Joshua. In verses 6 and 7, Moses charges Joshua to be strong and courageous. His strength and courage is to

⁵⁵Ibid., 20.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Roy Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 742.

⁵⁸R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers*, The New American Commentary, vol. 3b (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 468.

be rooted in the knowledge that "the Lord goes before his people, the Lord goes before the human leader and then the people can go without fear." The order is important, the people must wait upon God's leading. As long as the order was maintained, Joshua could lead with confidence.⁵⁹

Schaeffer points out one final lesson for Joshua. No man is irreplaceable, but all men are unique. With the passing of one leader, God raises up a new one. Joshua would not be Moses. Deuteronomy 34:10 says that "since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." Joshua would not be like Moses. He would speak to the Lord through an intermediary, Eliezer.⁶⁰ Joshua was not Moses, but he was the man God had chosen and groomed for that time.

Jesus and His Disciples

Christ understood that He could not reach the masses without leaders who would, in turn, reach others. His concern was not first and foremost with programs but with people. Therefore, the method Jesus used for instructing his disciples was personal rather than programmatic. Indeed, His approach was a process of modeling correct belief and practice. Jesus set out to enlist men in whom He could invest his life. Jesus was thoroughly transparent with His mentees. These would in turn invest their lives in others after Jesus returned to the Father. Coleman observes that "Jesus was trying to usher in a Kingdom. This meant he needed men who could lead the multitudes."⁶¹ Although He did not neglect the masses, He focused on a few key leaders. These leaders would later enlist a few men to train, and the cycle would be repeated. The pattern modeled by Jesus

⁵⁹Schaeffer, *Joshua*, 21.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 24.

⁶¹Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1977), 31.

illustrates that the first concern of an evangelist is to concentrate his time and talents on a few men or women. "Victory is not won by the multitudes."⁶² Jesus' formula for changing the world may be summed up as "more time spent with fewer people equals greater kingdom impact."⁶³

As noted earlier, Jesus always approached the prospective disciple Himself. Mark 3:13 says "And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him." Jesus did not wait for Simon and Andrew to approach Him, rather He commanded them to "follow Me" in Matthew 4:19. Again, in Matthew 9:9, He summons a tax collector named Matthew to "follow Me." From Jesus' example, we may discern that it is the responsibility of more mature believers to approach the next generation and invite them into a mentoring relationship. Another aspect of the fact that Jesus chose his disciples is that, for Jesus, mentoring was intentional. There was nothing accidental about the relationships into which He entered. Mentoring was the strategy Jesus chose to fulfill His mission on earth.⁶⁴

From Christ's example, we may also see the importance of prayer in the process of choosing a protégé to mentor. Luke 6:12-13 says that "it was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles." This is the longest single period of sustained prayer by Jesus recorded in the Bible.⁶⁵ The lesson here is that there is no substitute for prayer when

⁶²Ibid., 33-34.

⁶³Regi Campbell, *Mentor Like Jesus* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009), xvi.

⁶⁴Ibid., 5.

⁶⁵Ibid., 65.

choosing a mentee. The choice of whom to mentor was intentional for Jesus. He bathed the process in prayer. Jesus then selected only those men whom the Father desired.

Jesus required commitment from His mentees. James, Andrew, and Matthew were asked to leave their livelihoods in order to follow Jesus. Similar levels of commitment are required of all those who would be Christ's disciples. Examples are found in Luke 9:6 and Matthew 8:21. When the rich young ruler approached Jesus in Luke 18, he was instructed in verse 22 to sell everything he had and then to "come, follow Me." His lack of commitment disqualified him for service. The mentor/mentee relationship requires commitment on the part of both participants. As demanding as the role of the mentee may be, so, too, is the role of the mentor. The mentor cannot ask more of a protégé than he is willing to give himself. The mentor must model commitment. While the rewards are great, the demands of being a mentor are just as great.⁶⁶

Jesus set a specific starting and ending point for his mentoring relationships. Jesus mentored His disciples for approximately three years. Certainly, Christ promised in Matthew 28: 20 to be with his disciples "even to the end of the age," but while the relationship continued, the formal mentoring stage ended. Likewise, in contemporary mentoring relationships, while the relationship may continue for life, the period of formal mentoring may exist only for a limited time.⁶⁷

The goal of Jesus' mentoring process was to produce more disciple makers. Reproduction was the overt objective of the process. Christ's mentoring process began with a call to his disciples to become fishers of men. The process concluded three years later with the call in Matthew 28:19-20 to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

⁶⁶Ron Lee Davis, *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 50.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 75-76.

teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” From beginning to end, the objective remained the same.⁶⁸

Leona English identifies five functions that a mentor fills. The mentor must take on the roles of teacher, sponsor, encourager, counselor, and befriender.⁶⁹ Jesus fulfilled all five of these functions. There was never a better teacher than Jesus. Roy Zuck states that the word διδάσκαλος, or teacher, is used to describe Jesus more than 45 times in the New Testament.⁷⁰ Indeed, Jesus himself acknowledges that this term is an appropriate title for Him in John 13:13.

Jesus also fulfilled the role of sponsor. English describes sponsoring as the function of "giving the mentee entrée into the profession and becoming a sponsor and guide on the mentee's vocational journey."⁷¹ Jesus sponsored His disciples by calling them into service (Matt 4:19, 9:9; Luke 6:13). After they were trained, Jesus commissioned the disciples to be His witnesses in Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-48, John 20:21 and Acts 1:8.

Jesus also encouraged his disciples. English describes the encouraging function as a process of providing feedback, while gently pushing the mentee toward constructive action.⁷² Jesus certainly encouraged His disciples. In John 14:1, He told them, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.” Repeatedly, he encouraged them to dare great things, to step out in faith, and to trust in him. In Matthew 14:29, he

⁶⁸Campbell, *Mentor Like Jesus* 149-50.

⁶⁹Leona M. English, *Mentoring in Religious Education* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1998), 8-9.

⁷⁰Roy B. Zuck, *Teaching As Jesus Taught* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 24.

⁷¹English, *Mentoring in Religious Education*, 9.

⁷²*Ibid.*

encouraged Peter to step out of the boat and come to him. The goal of the mentor, as encourager, is to see the mentee fully realize his or her potential. In this sense the mentor as encourager can be called a helper. In John 14:16 Jesus promised his disciples to send the Holy Spirit, whom He identifies as another helper (παράκλητον). He uses the term "another" because Jesus is their first helper.

The fourth role of the mentor is that of counselor. English does not use this term in a therapeutic sense, but refers instead to the role of listening and communicating with the mentee. Zuck describes Jesus as "unsurpassed" as a teacher and communicator. He touched the imagination through parables, the heart with emotion, and the mind with logic.⁷³

Finally, Jesus fulfilled the role of befriending. In John 15:15, Jesus calls his disciples friends. Prior to this point in John's Gospel the twelve have been mere disciples. Now they are elevated in status. Servants and slaves receive orders, disciples receive instruction. In contrast, friends are given more information, which enables them to achieve a full understanding of the mentor's purposes.⁷⁴

Not only did Jesus provide instruction, but he also modeled a mentor-based approach to training disciples. Therefore, the relationship between Christ and his disciples can legitimately be considered a model for mentoring soul winners in the contemporary church.

Paul and Timothy

Timothy had a crucial place within Paul's mission. In 1 and 2 Timothy, Paul's protégé represented the apostle in Ephesus. From time to time Paul also sent Timothy to

⁷³Zuck, *Teaching As Jesus Taught*, 18.

⁷⁴Andreas Kostenberger, *John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 459.

represent him in Corinth (1 Cor 4:17), and Philippi (Phil 2:19). Timothy was involved in the writing of six of Paul's letters. In addition, the Apostle addressed two letters directly to Timothy.⁷⁵ Paul certainly cared a great deal for Timothy. In 1 Corinthians 4:17, he is called Paul's "beloved and faithful child in the Lord." In 1 Timothy 1:2, the Apostle calls Timothy "my true child in the faith."

From the available evidence, one may conclude that Timothy was well versed in the gospel, so much so that he could represent Paul in situations where false teachers had to be confronted and theological errors corrected. Through Paul's investment of time and energy, Timothy grew into a mature believer who also became a powerful tool in the ministry of the Apostle.⁷⁶

Paul modeled more than orthodox belief for Timothy. In 2 Timothy 3:1-13, Paul instructs Timothy in the qualifications required for elders and deacons. In these verses Paul emphasizes the qualifications, rather than the duties of these leaders. Clearly, the stress is on the quality of a leader's character, though the presence of appropriate gifts and abilities would be an assumed requirement. Paul chooses this emphasis advisedly, he recognized that respectability on behalf of church leaders would be essential to influencing others to accept the gospel message.⁷⁷

All that Paul invested in Timothy culminates in his command in 2 Timothy 1:13-14, "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith

⁷⁵The scholarly questions concerning the authorship of the pastoral epistles lie outside the scope of this paper. I will assume that the pastoral epistles were written by the Apostle Paul and addressed to their titular recipients.

⁷⁶William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 2000), lviii.

⁷⁷Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), 239-42.

and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*." All that Paul has invested in Timothy has been working toward this moment. Paul is not simply calling Timothy to routine faithfulness. He is now calling Timothy to be his successor. Paul has sought to reproduce himself in Timothy.⁷⁸ But even this is not the end of the cycle. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul commands Timothy to take up the mantle of mentor to the next generation of believers. Paul and Timothy are merely two links in a long chain of mentors and mentees which include Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Luke, and Titus. This chain of mentors and protégés connects new believers to Jesus and the gospel he proclaimed. The relationship between Paul and Timothy demonstrates that mentoring was the Apostle's normative method for replicating the maturity of one believer in another.⁷⁹

Paul's Command in Philippians 3:17

In Philippians 3:17 the Apostle issues an injunction for his readers to follow both his example and that of those like him, (presumably Timothy and Epaphroditus, whom he holds up as examples of faithful believers earlier in the letter).⁸⁰ This command sets the pattern for discipling new believers throughout the church age. Indeed, the book of Philippians lays a foundation for the entire mentoring process within the church. The relationship between Paul and the Philippians exists in light of Christ and the gospel, thus creating a three way bond between Christ, mentor, and mentee. Paul's concern is not only

⁷⁸Ibid., 477.

⁷⁹Robert Joseph Schneider, Jr., "Mentoring Ministry Leaders at Calvary Baptist Church, Edwardsville, Illinois" (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 43.

⁸⁰Gordon Fee, *Paul's Letter To The Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 362.

for his relationship with the Philippians, but also for their relationship with Christ.⁸¹ Having described his own relationship with Christ in verses four through fourteen, Paul uses his relationship with the Philippians to encourage them to imitate him as a means for strengthening their own relationship with Christ. In every case, imitation of Paul meant "as he imitated Christ."⁸² Paul is drawing on a strong Jewish heritage in which a pupil not only received instruction from a master, but also put into practice the example of the teacher. The idea was that the pupil would internalize and live out the model presented by the teacher.⁸³

Conclusion

The task of developing disciples and leaders in the Bible has always been accomplished through the process of mentoring. Moses allowed Joshua to attend him closely, observing all he did as a leader and as a follower of the one true God. From these experiences Joshua learned who God is and what he demands from those who would be leaders of his people. This process of training through example continues in the New Testament. Jesus was the mentor par excellence. He fulfilled all the roles of a mentor in his relationship with his disciples. Paul's relationship with Timothy provides an example of the use of mentoring to train leaders within the New Testament church, as does his command to the Philippians to follow his example as one who both believes correctly and lives out the Gospel's demands in daily life.

⁸¹Fee, *Philippians*, 13-14.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 352.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 364-65.

CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES

Mentoring Principles

This section will explore the principles and concepts that contribute to a successful mentoring program. While many of the concepts have been developed in a secular context, we will see that there is historical precedent for mentoring within the context of Christian discipleship.

Definitions of Mentoring

Eugene Anderson defines mentoring as a process in which "the more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development."¹ This definition contains five essential functions of a mentor: teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending.² Margo Murray's definition contains a similar emphasis. She defines mentoring as "a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies."³ Both of these definitions take into

¹Eugene Anderson, "Definitions of Mentoring," unpublished manuscript, 1987; quoted in Leona English, *Mentoring in Religious Education* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1998), 6.

²Leona M. English, *Mentoring in Religious Education* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1998), 6.

³Margo Murray, *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring: How to Facilitate*

account the essential function of mentoring as providing a model for others. A pastor in Arizona was known for saying that "people are not very good at taking orders but they are great at imitating."⁴ Likewise, Engstrom argues that mentoring is more than simply teaching and training. Mentoring involves investing time, prayer, and building relationships. Mentoring is more than simply transferring skills and knowledge, it is about building attitudes.⁵

There is some debate as to whether a mentoring relationship can be intentionally designed or structured. Murray distinguishes structured mentoring programs from unstructured mentoring relationships. Structured or facilitated programs follow a series of processes to create effective mentoring relationships. The advantages of a structured program include preventing problems that are likely to occur due to mismatches between the mentor and a protégé. Unstructured or informal mentoring programs are allowed to happen without a structured process.⁶ Biehl says that a successful mentoring relationship is based on a "positive natural chemistry." He argues that mentoring seems to work best when it is simply allowed to happen.⁷ Indeed, critics of structured programs argue that mentoring can only occur in a spontaneous fashion. They argue that formalized mentoring relationships lack the necessary "critical, magical ingredient necessary in such a relationship." Still, the increasing number of participants in various formal programs provide ample evidence against such criticism.⁸

an Effective Mentoring Program (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), xiv.

⁴Ted Engstrom and Norman B. Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), 72.

⁵Ibid., 73.

⁶Murray and Owen, *Beyond the Myths*, 6.

⁷Bobb Biehl, *Mentoring* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 38.

⁸Murray and Owen, *Beyond the Myths*, 6.

A Mentoring Model

Murray suggests a generic model for a structured mentoring program. While this model applies specifically to a business environment, it is sufficiently broad to serve in a variety of contexts. The process begins with the identification of potential protégés. Protégés may volunteer, be selected through some sort of application process or be nominated by another person. After the selection process is complete the model moves on to the developmental diagnosis stage. In this stage the development needs of the protégé are determined and a development plan is prepared. Next, mentor candidates are recruited. They may volunteer, be chosen by the protégé, or be recruited directly by the program coordinator. The mentor candidates are then screened and matched based on the skills of the mentor, the needs of the protégé, and the compatibility of their styles and personalities. The process continues with orientation programs for both the mentor and the protégé. Next, the mentor and protégé negotiate an agreement which stipulates the roles of each participant, the duration of the relationship, and the time that will be invested by each party. The mentoring model then moves into the application phase in which the development plan is executed. The execution phase will include regular meetings for planning, coaching, and feedback. The plan may also include periodic reporting to the coordinator by both the mentor and the protégé. Finally, the agreement concludes after a specified period of time or after one member of the pair believes that the relationship is no longer productive.⁹

Not everyone who is knowledgeable in a specific field or vocation can be a good mentor. Speaking from a Christian perspective, Engstrom and Rohrer suggest that a good mentor should be generous. He or she should believe in people, be willing to take time to get to know a protégé and help to meet his or her needs. The mentor should be known for standing up for friends and not letting them be destroyed by discouragement.

⁹Ibid., 68.

Mentors get excited about good things that happen to other people. Finally, within the Christian context mentors seek to affirm and encourage others in their walk with the Lord.¹⁰

Characteristics of Mentors and Protégés

Speaking from a business perspective, Murray and Owen list a number of hallmarks, or characteristics found in good mentors. Good mentors must have strong interpersonal skills. Because the role of a mentor requires close, personal relationships, the mentor should enjoy being with people and interacting with others. In selecting a mentor, the program's coordinator should look for someone who both talks and listens well.¹¹

The good mentor will be knowledgeable about the organization. The successful mentor will have an intimate knowledge of the vision and goals of the organization in which he or she is working. Within the context of evangelism, this knowledge would manifest itself in a full orbbed understanding of the evangelistic mandate given to the church by Christ.¹²

A mentor should possess good supervisory skills. Among these skills are the ability to plan and appraise the protégés performance, provide feedback and coaching, model desirable performance, and delegate tasks appropriately. The coordinator of a mentoring program should look for people who have managed groups of people successfully in the past or have led committees or task forces.¹³

¹⁰Engstrom and Rohrer, *The Fine Art*, 10-12.

¹¹Murray and Owen, *Beyond the Myths*, 107-8.

¹²*Ibid.*, 108.

¹³*Ibid.*, 109.

A good mentor will possess technical competence. It seems obvious that the mentor should possess the skills and competencies that the protégé requires. However, some organizations will select mentors based on position or willingness to participate without considering whether the mentor possess the skills that the organization wants to pass on to the protégé. The mentor should also possess what Murray and Owen call "personal power." By this they mean that a mentor will have a charismatic personality. In selecting mentors, the coordinator should look for individuals who are regularly sought out by others for their opinions and advice.¹⁴

The mentor should also be willing to take responsibility for someone else's growth. A mentor must be motivated by the often intangible rewards of seeing another person learn and grow. A mentor who is secure about his or her own competence in a given area is most likely to be willing to help others grow. Those responsible for recruiting mentors should look for individuals who initiate coaching and training contacts with others naturally. The mentor should also be willing to share credit. He or she must be willing to step out of the limelight and allow the protégé to take credit for his or her own accomplishments. The mentor recruiter should look for a person who believes in teamwork and does not crave praise and admiration.¹⁵

Finally, the mentor should be patient in risky situations. This may be the most important attribute of all. The mentor must be willing to let the protégé fail. He or she must know when to let the protégé muddle through on their own and when to jump in and help.¹⁶

Like mentors, protégés can be selected through a variety of methods. They can

¹⁴Ibid., 110.

¹⁵Ibid., 111.

¹⁶Ibid., 112.

volunteer, be selected by a mentor, or be selected by another person. The primary criterion for selection is that the protégé be motivated to develop some new competencies. The coordinator of the mentoring program should look for curious individuals who are hungry for more training.¹⁷

The question of whether a person can effectively mentor a person of the opposite sex is often raised in mentoring discussions. Murray and Owen cite studies that indicate that mentoring behavior does not vary with differences in the sex of mentors, or protégés, or with gender mix.¹⁸ Still, they admit that even when there is no romantic relationship between a mentoring pair, gossips will often manufacture one. For this reason, most mentoring relationships should not cross gender lines.¹⁹

English states that research has documented the importance of preparation for the mentoring role.²⁰ English, who writes from the perspective of professional religious education, suggests a model for preparing both mentors and protégés. While the specifics of her model may be too complex and time consuming for an evangelism training program involving volunteers, her program does contain transferable elements and principles. English has designed a program which consists of in-class sessions for mentors, protégés and joint sessions which combine both groups. English believes that the joint orientation sessions should cover such topics as an overview of the mentoring program, the goals of the program, evaluation procedures, particular situational concerns, and available resources. The coordinator should also offer a brief explanation of the expectations and requirements of the mentoring relationship. One joint session should

¹⁷Ibid., 119-20.

¹⁸Ibid., 175.

¹⁹Ibid., 174.

²⁰English, *Mentoring in Religious Education*, 137-38.

include the negotiation and completion of a mentoring covenant.²¹

In the sessions devoted explicitly to the mentors, the coordinator will want to cover such issues as the role of the mentor. There should also be an opportunity to learn from those who have experience in a similar mentoring role. The coordinator may want to focus on strategies for working with protégés. These strategies may include basic communication techniques and listening skills. Finally, the mentor only sessions will want to focus on specific techniques for improving the skills of a protégé.²²

The protégé orientations sessions should focus on the role of the protégé and the benefits of mentorship. There may also be an opportunity for learning from colleagues if there are learners present who have been through a similar experience. Finally, the coordinator will want to address any specific concerns of prospective protégés.²³

The Implementation and Evaluation of a Mentoring Relationship

The implementation phase of a mentoring relationship should begin with the completion of a mentoring agreement. English believes that a formal covenant increases the commitment of the participants. The covenant should include specific meeting times, the intentions of the mentors, protégés, and administrators. Finally, it should clearly set out the beginning and ending parameters of the relationship.²⁴

Kathy Kram has delineated four stages of the process of mentorship. The first stage is initiation. This is the time in which the pair familiarize themselves with each

²¹Ibid., 146-47.

²²Ibid., 148-49.

²³Ibid., 150-52.

²⁴Ibid., 173.

other and their respective roles. During this time the mentor should familiarize himself with the needs of the protégé. The next step is cultivation. During the cultivation phase the mentor and protégé develop a comfortable working relationship. The third phase is separation. The separation phase is marked by a gradual decrease in the supportive functions provided by the mentor. The final stage is the redefinition of roles and collegial friendship. In the final stage both partners have completed the requirements of the covenant and are no longer officially accountable to one another. Still, the relationship may continue in the form of an ongoing friendship.²⁵

All mentoring programs should be evaluated in order to provide accountability, understanding, knowledge, and improvement.²⁶ English suggests a five step approach to evaluating a mentoring program. Evaluation begins with stating the goals and standards for the program. The goals should be measurable and specific. Next, the mentoring team should formulate appropriate questions, taking into account the necessary data needed, how to phrase the questions, and who should be asked to respond. Next, the administrative team must gather the appropriate data. Data may be gathered through questionnaires, observations, rating forms, interviews, or any of a multitude of other methods. The administrative team must then analyze the data and report the findings to the appropriate stake holders and administrators.

Secular Applications of Mentoring

Mentoring has become popular as a form of leadership development in the world of business, the arts, education, finance, politics, the military, and the trades. Employers have discovered that mentoring can help train employees not only in job

²⁵Kathy E. Kram, "Phases of the Mentor Relationship," *Academy of Management Journal*, 4 (1983): 614-21.

²⁶English, *Mentoring in Religious Education*, 188.

skills, but also help transmit and build a culture within an organization with minimal expense and time.²⁷

One of the benefits of mentoring in the secular realm is increased productivity. Margo Murray argues that the work ethic of the mentor is critical to increased productivity in the protégé. When protégés are paired with mentors who possess good work ethics the protégé tends to adopt that ethic. Mentoring relationships can also increase productivity through performance planning and increased teamwork between mentor and protégé. Murray and Owen have also found that setting measurable goals for a protégé's performance will increase his or her motivation and lead to increased performance and productivity.²⁸

Another benefit of workplace mentoring applications is improvement in cost effectiveness. Since most formal mentoring programs are carried out as part of both the mentor's and the protégé's regular work responsibilities, protégés often get relevant practice of important skills without the cost of classroom training. With mentoring there is no need to rent a meeting room, no trainer to hire, and no excessive time off for which to compensate.²⁹

Mentoring can also provide the additional benefit of improving recruitment efforts within a secular organization. College campus interviewers often present a strong mentoring program as evidence that candidates will not simply be thrown into a difficult job to sink or swim. Jewel Tea Company is an example of an organization that uses its mentoring program as a way to attract high quality candidates who might not otherwise consider a career with a retail company. A mentoring program assures new employees

²⁷Engstrom and Rohrer, *The Fine Art*, 99.

²⁸Murray and Owen, *Beyond the Myths*, 32.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 33.

that the company is a solid organization that takes care of its members.³⁰

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance uses cross-divisional mentoring to increase organizational communications and understanding. By matching protégés with mentors in offices across the state and across divisions, employees in the district offices gain a more accurate understanding of how the central office in Albany operates.³¹

Working with a protégé provides benefits not only for the student, but for the teacher as well. Mentoring can provide a means by which senior people in an organization can rekindle their zeal for the job. Mentoring forces a senior employee to rethink his or her philosophies and methods. Mentors also benefit from the fresh ideas and enthusiasm of protégés.³²

Some social service agencies are using mentoring to strengthen and enhance their services. These agencies have discovered that mentoring advances the organization's goals, provides one-on-one assistance to clients, allows case workers to better manage and direct resources, and allows mentors to get personally involved in making a difference in the lives of others. Examples of these kinds of programs are found in San Antonio, Texas, and Stamford, Connecticut. These programs have paired women on welfare with community mentors who aid women in their transition from social welfare programs into the workforce. Another example is found in a national program implemented by the YWCA that provides teen mothers with mentors who provide emotional support and help young mothers develop parenting skills.³³

³⁰Ibid., 34.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., 35.

³³Ibid.

Secular organizations have discovered that they can benefit from mentoring through improvements in strategic and succession planning. Mentoring can provide an organization with a concrete way to move good people into higher-level jobs and shorten the development cycle of future leaders. For example, Federal Express has developed its Leadership Institute mentoring program specifically to address the need for more effective succession planning.³⁴

Formal mentoring programs are found in a tremendously diverse number of secular organizations and fields. Examples can be found in government, business, and education. The General Accounting office of the United States operates a program called the Executive Candidate Development Program. The program pairs 125 senior executives with between fifty and sixty mentees each year. In addition to the business applications already mentioned, we can point to a mentoring program in an Oakland, California based accounting firm called Rooney, Ida, Nolt, and Ahern. All one hundred employees in the firm are eligible to participate in a volunteer mentoring program. Twice a year the personnel department screens candidates to match participants with mentors. In the field of education, a mentoring program at Yale University matches Yale students with elementary school teachers in New Haven Connecticut. Together they develop methods to integrate science into the school's curriculum. The Yale students also meet with the elementary school students to direct a weekly science club.³⁵

Mentoring as a Tool for the Discipleship of Christians

This section will examine the application of mentoring to the specific task of Christian discipleship. We will see that the relational aspect of mentoring fits well with

³⁴Ibid., 36.

³⁵Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron* (Chicago:

the relational aspect of building Christian disciples. We will also see that there is historic precedent for the use of mentoring as a tool to build disciples.

Discipleship as a Relational Endeavor

Howard and William Hendricks draw a distinction between mentoring and discipleship. While both involve instruction based on a relationship, Hendricks believes that discipleship is distinct because it "involves a call, a direct invitation from the teacher that borders on a command." Additionally, discipleship focuses on the spiritual dimension. Discipleship takes every aspect of life and asks how it relates to Christ. In contrast, mentoring is less about instruction than about initiation. It is about bringing young people to maturity.³⁶ Aoki, however, makes the case that discipleship is a subcategory of mentoring. He argues that in contrast to the broader concept of mentoring, discipleship is uniquely inclusive of spiritual concerns.³⁷ The benefit of mentoring is that relationships are more "caught than taught." This is especially true when dealing with adolescent believers. Beliefs taught in the home gain validity when demonstrated by non-parental adults.³⁸ Lawless argues that the process of discipleship is the process of taking believers from theological foundations to practical living. Thus, disciple making is the process of teaching converts all that Jesus commanded, including how to evangelize.³⁹

Evangelicals today are discovering that the Christian faith should be more

Moody Press, 1995), 99.

³⁶Ibid., 182.

³⁷Wayne T. Aoki, et al., "Mentoring and the Discipleship of Adolescents: Research and Applications to the Church," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 19, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 377.

³⁸Ibid., 382.

³⁹Chuck Lawless, *Discipled Warriors* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 47.

relational and communal if it is to develop any spiritual depth.⁴⁰ For this reason evangelicals need to reevaluate their practice of spiritual direction and correct what has historically been an individualistic mentality.⁴¹ Shinohara points out that the evangelical emphasis on conversionism and activism, while essential, is not sufficient for a "fully integrated Christian life." Christianity is meant to be a shared journey of faith.⁴²

Houston argues that such a relational emphasis is fundamental to the Christian faith. It is rooted in the fact that our God is triune in nature. He is fundamentally a relational God. Even Christ is called Immanuel, or "God with us." Since we are created in His image, we are relational by nature as well. It seems reasonable, then, to presume that God has predestined us to live communally. For this reason, Christian teachers should live out, rather than merely talk about, the Christian life. Christian mentors help integrate theory and practice through "head, heart, and arm."⁴³

Chuck Lawless believes that mentoring models Jesus' method of disciple making and should, therefore, be normative for the church today. Lawless lists six benefits to using mentoring as a tool for discipling believers. First, if leaders are always mentoring another person, leaders will never be alone and will be less vulnerable to the assaults of Satan. Second, new believers will have someone to support them when they encounter attacks from the Devil. Third, mentoring creates accountability and sets expectations for Christian living for the disciple. Fourth, mentoring provides a vehicle for

⁴⁰Akira Shinohara, "Spiritual Formation and Mentoring: An Approach from the Christian Tradition of Spiritual Direction," *Christian Education Journal* 6, n.s., no. 2 (Fall 2002): 105.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 107.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 116.

⁴³James M. Houston, "Why the Contemporary Interest in Mentoring?," *Christian Education Journal* 3, n.s., no. 1 (Spring 1999): 85-86.

supporting one another in prayer. Fifth, mentoring provides an avenue for service in the church. If everyone is either a protégé or a mentor, then no one is inactive. Finally, since mentoring is the model used by Jesus, we must assume that the church will be more effective in equipping believers through mentoring than it would be using any other model.⁴⁴

Historic Precedent for Mentoring in Christian Discipleship

Indeed, there is much precedent for the use of mentoring as a means of training in the history of the church. Leona English points to the use of mentoring among fourth century monks in the Egyptian desert. All monks were required to have elders or directors to provide them with spiritual direction. This spiritual guidance was given in a whole way of life, focusing as much on everyday affairs as on spiritual matters.⁴⁵ Elders provided direction both through the spoken word, and by example. Role modeling was a fundamental part of the elder/disciple relationship. An elder was part of a long spiritual lineage of holy men. In order to serve as an elder a monk had to have been a disciple of those who went before. This approach perpetuated a cycle of mentor/protégé relationships that spanned generations. Particularly applicable to the training of evangelists is the emphasis of the desert monks on both learning and doing. The monks believed that knowing the word was not enough. The monastic community believed that anyone who tries to teach without having worked hard will be ineffective. They believed that virtues were acquired through hard work. Similarly, those who would learn to be evangelists in our day should seek out mentors who have themselves labored in the field of evangelism. Otherwise, mentoring becomes a co-equal relationship in which both

⁴⁴Lawless, *Discipled Warriors*, 122.

⁴⁵English, *Mentoring in Religious Education*, 28-29.

mentor and mentee receive emotional support, but neither one learns. The desert monks also emphasized the need for the cultivation of deep spiritual qualities in a mentor.⁴⁶ While most Christians will not live a monastic lifestyle, it is reasonable to expect a mentor to be knowledgeable about the basic Christian disciplines and to have a strong personal relationship with God.

Another example of the mentoring relationship between elder and disciple can be seen in the lives of medieval nuns who lived in Saxony, Germany in the thirteenth century. The writings of Mechtild of Hackborn show a strong emphasis on the responsibility of mentoring other individuals, especially in providing counseling for the protégé. Mechtild believed that mentorship directly fulfilled the demands of Christ on her life.⁴⁷ She wrote that, as part of her position as prioress in a convent, she would help and comfort disciples, giving them all the assistance in her power. She expressed a special sensitivity to the needs of the one being mentored. She insisted on thinking first of the needs of the disciple, emphasizing the dignity of the mentee. Perhaps her greatest contribution to our understanding of mentoring is found in the intentional role modeling she provided for other members of her order.⁴⁸

English notes three characteristics of mentoring found in these ancient monastic communities that are applicable to any Christian mentoring relationship today. These include attention to prayer life, inducting new members, and providing a strong mentoring environment. Gertrude of Helfta wrote of the considerable emphasis she placed on mentoring those who entered the monastery as novices or postulants. English notes that the priority given to the mentoring environment within these early monastic

⁴⁶Ibid., 32.

⁴⁷Ibid., 38.

⁴⁸Ibid., 62.

orders increased the potential that formal mentoring would be effective. The monastic orders recognized that mentoring was essential to living out their vocations and ensuring the continuance of their work.⁴⁹

An Evaluation of Three Popular Models of Evangelism Training

At this point it is appropriate to examine three major evangelism training programs that incorporate a mentoring component. These programs represent contemporary attempts to bring the kind of mentoring approach we seen in historic Christian education to the field of evangelism training. At the end of each of the three reviews we will evaluate each program based on the clarity of its presentation of the gospel as well as its incorporation of mentoring elements. The three programs we will evaluate are FAITH, The Net, and Evangelism Explosion.

FAITH

The FAITH evangelism program is the product of a partnership between the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and Lifeway Christian Resources.⁵⁰ The original FAITH curriculum consisted of sixteen weekly sessions. In 2007 the program was revised and shortened to twelve sessions. We will focus on the original sixteen session model and note the 2007 changes in the evaluation portion of this review.

⁴⁹Ibid., 47.

⁵⁰Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey in FAITH: facilitator guide* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2002), vii.

A description of FAITH. The original FAITH curriculum consisted of sixteen weekly sessions. Each session is divided into team time, teaching time, visitation time, and celebration time.⁵¹ During the teaching time the participants learn a specific outline for a visit. The outline describes the sequence of a visit and possible topics for starting a conversation with the prospect. The outline also includes a specific gospel presentation based on the letters in the word *FAITH*. Each week the students learn more of the outline until they are able to recite it in its entirety from memory. At the conclusion of the teaching time the facilitator gives the students a series of home study assignments. These assignments usually consist of reading a section of their student manual and memorizing an additional portion of the FAITH outline.⁵² During the teaching time a facilitator presents the FAITH outline and demonstrates how to make an evangelistic visit using both a lecture format, power point slides, and video presentations.⁵³ Additionally, each participant is expected to develop and practice a Sunday School testimony extolling the benefits of being involved in a Sunday School class.⁵⁴ Finally, each participant is instructed in how to develop and present a brief evangelistic testimony.⁵⁵

During the visitation time the participants break into teams of three. The participants remain on the same team for the duration of the FAITH semester. Each team consists of a team leader, at least one man, and at least one woman. The team leader is responsible for training two learners who are participating in the training for the first

⁵¹David Apple and Doug Williams, *FAITH Director's Administrative Guide* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2001), 53.

⁵²Welch, Williams, and Apple, *A Journey in Faith*, facilitator guide, 6.

⁵³*Ibid.*, xi.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 43.

time. The team leader has multiple responsibilities. He or she ensures that the learners are memorizing the FAITH outline by asking each learner to recite the portion assigned in previous week's homework. The team leader also checks to make sure that any written home study assignments have been completed. The team leader models the use of the FAITH outline during evangelistic visits and gradually allows the learners to take the lead in presenting the gospel in evangelistic visits as the semester moves along. Finally, the team leader presents the team report during the celebration time.⁵⁶

FAITH teams make three kinds of visits. The first kind is evangelistic visits to prospects who are not enrolled in Sunday School. The second kind of visit is ministry visits to those who are enrolled in Sunday School, but have some need such as absenteeism or sickness. Finally, the teams will make follow-up visits to those who make professions of faith.⁵⁷

FAITH is not a standalone evangelistic program. Rather, it is integrated into the assimilation process through Sunday School. The FAITH director and the team leaders are expected to participate in weekly Sunday School leadership meetings. Additionally, all participants in FAITH are expected to attend Sunday School.⁵⁸ Every prospect visited by a FAITH team is assigned to a Sunday School class and will be enrolled in the class as part of the FAITH team visit. Indeed, one of the fundamental principles behind the FAITH strategy is that "Sunday School is the foundational strategy in a local church for leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for building Great Commission Christians through Bible study groups that engage people in

⁵⁶Ibid., 8-9.

⁵⁷Ibid., 11.

⁵⁸Ibid., 9.

evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry and worship."⁵⁹

The FAITH visit outline begins by introducing the members of the FAITH team to the prospect. The presentation then moves on to a discussion of the prospect's interests. This discussion is merely preliminary and is meant to break the ice with the prospect. Eventually, the team member giving the presentation is expected to turn the topic of conversation to the prospect's church involvement. During this time the prospect is asked to describe his or her church experience while the team listens for clues as to the prospect's true spiritual condition. At some point, a member of the team will present his or her Sunday School testimony and an evangelistic testimony. Next, the member who is presenting the outline will ask a key question. The key question is designed to diagnose the prospect's spiritual condition. The key question is "in your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to go to heaven?" The prospect is expected to respond in one of three ways. Either he will affirm personal faith as the only way to heaven or he will respond by suggesting that one is saved by doing good works. Of course, he or she may respond by saying that they are not sure, or have no opinion. If the prospect responds with anything other than a faith answer then the presenter will ask permission to share what the Bible teaches on the subject. If the prospect grants permission the presenter continues with the outline.⁶⁰

Each letter of the acronym FAITH stands for a key word. The key word is accompanied by a statement and a scripture. The letter "F" stands for forgiveness. The statement accompanying the letter "F" is "we cannot have eternal life and heaven without God's forgiveness." The scripture that supports this point is Ephesians 1:7a. The letter "A" is for available. "Forgiveness is available. It is available for all." The Scripture

⁵⁹Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey In Faith*, journal (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1998), 17.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 71.

associated with the letter "A" is John 3:16. In addition to available, "A" also stands for the fact that forgiveness is not automatic. This point is supported by Matthew 7:21a. The letter "I" stands for impossible. "It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven." This point is supported by three scriptures. John 3:16 proves that God is love, but James 2:13a also indicates that He is just. Also, Romans 3:23 is used to prove that man is sinful. At this point the presenter has created a problem for the prospect. The prospect knows that he is a sinner in need of forgiveness. He also knows that he cannot get into heaven without help. So the presenter asks the question "how can a sinful person enter heaven, where God allows no sin? At this point the presenter goes on to the letter "T." This letter stands for turn. The presenter explains that turn means to repent, or change direction. The prospect must turn from sin and self. This point is supported using Luke 13:3b. The sinner must also turn to someone. He or she must trust Christ alone for salvation. This point is supported by 1 Corinthians 15:3b-4 and Romans 10:9. The final letter is "H." This letter stands for heaven. The presenter equates heaven with eternal life. He states that eternal life is a quality of life found here on earth. This point is supported by John 10:10b. Eternal life is also found in the hereafter, as promised by Jesus in John 14:3. Finally, "H" also stands for how. The presenter asks, "How can a person have God's forgiveness, heaven and eternal life, and Jesus as personal Savior and Lord?" Using the FAITH tract the presenter goes on to explain that FAITH can also stand for "forsaking all, I trust Him." After completing the FAITH outline the presenter then concludes with an inquiry, an invitation and an attempt to insure a decision. The inquiry is a memorized question which asks if the prospect would like to receive forgiveness and trust in Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. If the prospect agrees, the presenter will lead him or her to pray to accept Christ and to commit or recommit their life to Christ. Additionally, the prospect will be invited to make a commitment to join a Sunday School class. Finally, the presenter will attempt to insure the decision by leading the prospect to sign a

commitment card, allow themselves to be enrolled in Sunday School, and agree to make their decision public during the sponsoring church's weekend worship service as soon as possible.⁶¹

An evaluation of FAITH. The comprehensive nature of the original FAITH program is reflected in the fact that it gives guidelines for recruitment of leaders and learners⁶², ideas for finding prospects⁶³, and even provides an opinion poll that can be used in door to door canvassing of neighborhoods.⁶⁴ Additionally, FAITH places a strong emphasis on prayer support. An integral part of the FAITH program is the recruitment of prayer partners who undergird the work of the visitation teams.⁶⁵ Another strength of FAITH is its integration of Sunday School into the evangelism program.

One of the drawbacks of the original FAITH program was that the outline presented the need for forgiveness before explaining that all people are sinners. The 2007 edition of the program corrected this problem and introduced a number of other changes as well. In the updated version the "forgiveness" portion of the outline is supported by the statement that "everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness." In addition to Ephesians, 1:7, the authors have added Romans 3:23 to support the proposition that forgiveness is available to everyone. The "I" portion of the outline has also changed. The presentation now states that "according to the Bible, it is impossible to get to heaven on our own." John 3:16, James 2:13 and Romans 3:23 have been replaced by Ephesians 2:8-

⁶¹Ibid., 148-50.

⁶²Apple and Williams, *Faith Director's Administrative Guide*, 26.

⁶³Ibid., 20.

⁶⁴Ibid., 85.

⁶⁵Ibid., 18.

9 as the supporting scripture for the "impossible" segment of the presentation. Also, in addition to Luke 13:3, the "turn" portion of the outline is now supported by quoting John 14:6, and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 has been replaced with Romans 10:9-10. The letter "H" has changed as well. Instead of stating that heaven is "here" the updated presentation states that "eternal life begins now with Jesus."⁶⁶

One of the major problems with the original FAITH program was that it required the pastor (and preferably anyone who was to lead the program) to attend an intensive, multi-day training session. This was an expensive proposition, especially for a small church. The 2007 update is now available for purchase to anyone, without the training requirement. Changes have also been made to the length of the program. The original program was designed to run for sixteen weeks. The 2007 update has been shortened to twelve weeks. Finally, the original program concluded with a test. The 2007 student manual no longer includes a test. Shortening the semester and dropping the test requirement may have been intended to reduce the commitment necessary to complete the program, but that may not be a good thing. Bobby Welch stated that the original objective of FAITH was not to create a new program, but to implement a process that would instill a lifestyle of witnessing in the learners.⁶⁷ Reducing the commitment necessary from the participants does not seem to support this goal.

The 2007 update corrected most of the major drawbacks of the FAITH presentation. The current form of the program provides a sound outline of the gospel. The fact that each learner remains with the same team and team leader adds a strong mentoring aspect to the program as well.

⁶⁶Bobby Welch, et al., *Faith Evangelism: Journal 1* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2007), 10-11.

⁶⁷Lifeway Press, *A Journey in Faith: Faith Training Clinic Note-Taking Sheets* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2000), 7.

The Net

The Net is an evangelism training curriculum developed by the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The program can be taught in a number of different formats. The *Leader Guide* suggests presenting the material in eight weekly training sessions coupled with an hour and a half of visitation. Alternatively, the material can be presented in a single one day session followed by eight weeks of visitation.⁶⁸

A description of The Net. Participants are identified as either mentors or apprentices. Mentors undergo one or two training sessions prior to the beginning of the apprentice training sessions.⁶⁹ Mentors and apprentices have separate training manuals. The mentor's manual contains all eight of the lessons found in the apprentice manual. In addition, it also contains chapters on the role of the mentor, the biblical foundations for evangelism, spiritual warfare, dealing with difficult witnessing situations, and a chapter on how to share the gospel with people of different faiths. One of the greatest strengths of The Net is that it incorporates the presenter's own personal testimony into the evangelistic presentation.⁷⁰

The Net presentation begins with a conversation guided by the acronym CAST. The letters of CAST stand for connection, activities, spiritual matters, and tell your story. The apprentice will learn to use this acronym to initiate a conversation with a prospect. Additionally, the apprentice is encouraged to write a testimony that will be

⁶⁸The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net: Leader Guide* (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 3.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, B3.

⁷⁰Alvin Reid and Daniel Forshee, *The Net*, mentor handbook (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 1.

integrated into the Net presentation. The presentation is divided into five parts. Part 1 is called "The Way." In part 1 of his or her testimony, the presenter describes what his or her life was like before becoming a Christian. This description is followed by a transitional statement incorporating two Scriptures, Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23. The transitional statement is "I realized I needed a change in my life. I discovered the Bible says, 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.' I realized that 'all' included me and that the consequences of sin is spiritual death. The Bible says, 'for the wages of sin is death.'"⁷¹

The transition statement leads into part 2 of the testimony, "The Truth." Part 2 is subdivided into two truths, "the truth about God" and "the truth about Jesus." The first truth statement is "I discovered the truth about God. He loves me in spite of my sin and provides a new way of living through Jesus." The presenter supports this truth by quoting John 3:16. The presenter then has the option of explaining what the Scripture means by the phrases "the world," "only begotten," "whoever," and "believes." The speaker goes on to present the second truth by saying "you see, Jesus is God, and He became a man. The Bible says 'And the Word [Jesus] became flesh and dwelt among us.' It also says, 'Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day.'"⁷²

The speaker moves the presentation to the next step by saying, "When I discovered these truths, I realized that God had a purpose for my life and that Jesus was the only way I could experience true spiritual life." At this point the presenter describes his or her own salvation experience. The presenter concludes part 2 by quoting John 1:12 and asking the hearer "isn't it great to know that God longs to adopt us into His family

⁷¹*The Net*, leader guide, A2 .

⁷²*Ibid.*

and give us the gift of new life?" Part 3 of The Net presentation is entitled "The Life." At this point the presenter describes his or her life since becoming a Christian. Part three concludes with the presenter quoting John 10:10.⁷³

Part 4 of the presentation begins with the presenter asking if what he or she has been sharing makes sense to the prospect. If the response is "yes" then the presenter asks "would you be interested in knowing how you can be adopted into God's family and receive His gift of new life?" If the response is still positive then the presenter states that "the Bible teaches that we must turn from our sin, which is repentance, when it says: 'Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' We must place our trust I Jesus alone for new life. Remember, Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" The presenter then offers to lead the hearer in the sinner's prayer. If the hearer prays, the presenter concludes the encounter by giving the new believer a folder and completing a decision card.⁷⁴

Each training session is broken into a training time, mentor time, an hour and ten minutes of visitation time, and a report and sharing time. The Net leader presents new material during the training time. During the mentor time the mentors practice the presentation with their apprentices and hold them accountable for their home assignments. During the visitation time the mentors model the material and gradually allow their apprentices to take the lead in making the presentation.⁷⁵

A unique component of the Net is that apprentices are given a lifestyle assignment each week. At the beginning of the semester each apprentice chooses a person that they would like to see become a believer. Each week the apprentice is given an

⁷³Ibid., A3.

⁷⁴Ibid., A4.

⁷⁵*The Net*, leader guide, 3.

assignment designed to help them build a relationship with the prospect culminating in inviting the prospect to a small group Bible study in week 7⁷⁶ and sharing the Net presentation with the prospect in week 8.⁷⁷

An evaluation of The Net. Like FAITH, The Net offers a sound presentation of the gospel. One of the program's unique strengths is the additional training provided for mentors. Another strength of the program is its incorporation of lifestyle assignments. This component gives the program the advantage of helping to create a lifestyle of evangelism among participants that may last beyond the end of the training period.

Evangelism Explosion

Evangelism Explosion was developed by D. James Kennedy.⁷⁸ The original version of his approach was published in 1970. Subsequent editions were published in 1977, 1983 and 1996. This section will review the 1996 edition of this popular training program. The program consists of a four month training semester.

A description of Evangelism Explosion. The training consists of classroom instruction, at home assignments, on the job training (making visits), and a report time. The participants are organized into teams of three. The number three is recommended in order to include women in the training. Teams of three insure that a male will be present for safety reasons. A third person on each team also helps to avoid the problem of sending an unrelated male and female out on assignment together.⁷⁹ A team typically will

⁷⁶Ibid., 39.

⁷⁷Ibid., 43.

⁷⁸D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1996), 18.

⁷⁹Ibid., 8-10.

contain one senior trainer, at least one trainee, and possibly an assistant trainer.

The witnessing encounter begins by starting a conversation with a prospect about his or her life and interests. Eventually, the presenter seeks to turn the conversation to the prospect's church background and their impressions (if any) of the presenter's church. The presenter then transitions into the gospel presentation using one of two kinds of testimonies. If the prospect has attended the presenter's church, the presenter may offer a church testimony declaring the purpose of their church. Alternatively, the presenter can give a personal testimony.⁸⁰ Evangelism Explosion trains participants to write a three part personal testimony. The first part describes the presenter's life before he or she was saved using a "life concept" such as loneliness, strife, guilt, fear of death, emptiness, rejection, insecurity, or depression.⁸¹

Next the presenter transitions into the gospel presentation. The *Evangelism Explosion* gospel presentation begins with a set of two diagnostic questions. The first is "Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you know for certain that if you were to die today you would go to heaven, or is that something you would say you're still working on?" The first question is designed to find out if the person is already a Christian.⁸² If the prospect responds that he or she is still "working on it," then the presenter asks permission to share the gospel. If the answer is yes then the presenter moves on to the second diagnostic question. "Suppose that you were to die today and stand before God and He were to say to you, 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' What would you say?" This question is designed to discern the means by which the

⁸⁰Ibid., 31.

⁸¹Ibid., 71.

⁸²Ibid., 75-76.

prospect believes he or she can get into heaven.⁸³ If the prospect responds with anything other than a statement of faith in Christ then the presenter proceeds by informing the prospect that he or she has good news to share.⁸⁴

The presenter then moves on to the heart of the gospel presentation. He or she begins by demonstrating that salvation is by Grace. The presenter shows that heaven is a free gift using Romans 6:23 as scriptural support. Using Ephesians 2:8-9 he or she demonstrates that the gift is not earned or deserved. The next point in the presentation concerns the nature of man. Using Romans 3:23 the presenter demonstrates that we are all sinners. Matthew 5:48 is used to support the premise that man cannot save himself. The presenter then moves on to discuss the nature of God. Using 1 John 4:8 the presenter demonstrates that God is merciful and does not want to punish us. However, Exodus 34:7 proves that God is just, and therefore must punish sin. The fourth point of the gospel outline concerns Jesus Christ. John 1:1 and 1:14 are used to show that Jesus is the infinite God-Man. Isaiah 53:6 and 1 Peter 2:24 are used to explain that "Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to pay the penalty for our sins and to purchase a place for us in heaven."⁸⁵ The final part of the gospel presentation discusses the subject of faith. The presenter shows that faith is not merely intellectual assent and is more than acknowledging that Jesus was a real person in history. Also, he shows that faith is not trusting Christ to provide things in this life. Rather, faith is "trusting in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life."⁸⁶

At this point the presenter transitions to the commitment portion of the

⁸³Ibid., 77.

⁸⁴Ibid., 80-83.

⁸⁵Ibid., 33-34.

⁸⁶Ibid., 35.

presentation. He or she asks the prospect if the presentation makes sense to them. If the prospect says "yes" then the presenter asks if the prospect would like to receive the gift of eternal life.⁸⁷ The presenter encourages the prospect to seek God through prayer using Jeremiah 29:13. He or she leads the prospect in praying a three part prayer. The first part, or "preparatory prayer," consists of the presenter praying for the prospect, that the Holy Spirit would draw him or her to himself. The second part is a joint prayer led by the presenter. Using Matthew 18:20 the presenter informs the prospect that God is present with them. Then, in short phrases repeated after the presenter, the prospect accepts the free gift of eternal life. The third part of the prayer, the "assurance of pardon," is prayed by the presenter. It asks that the Holy Spirit to grant the prospect an assurance of salvation.⁸⁸ Finally, the presenter concludes the commitment time by having the prospect read John 6:47. In this way the presenter helps confirm for the new believer that he or she has actually received the gift of eternal life. The presenter concludes the section by welcoming the new believer into the family of God.⁸⁹

An important part of Evangelism Explosion is the follow up process. This process begins immediately after the new believer makes a profession of faith. The presenter gives the new believer a booklet entitled *Partners in Growing*. The booklet contains the gospel presentation and a decision card that *Evangelism Explosion* calls the birth certificate. This card records the convert's signature, name, address, and the presenter's telephone number. Next, the presenter encourages the new believer to take advantage of five means of spiritual growth. The new believer receives a copy of the book of John and instructions to read a chapter each day. At this point the presenter

⁸⁷Ibid., 36.

⁸⁸Ibid., 50-51.

⁸⁹Ibid., 51-52.

makes an appointment to return in seven days to follow up with the new believer's progress. The convert is also encouraged to pray daily, and to find a place of worship and fellowship with other believers. Finally, the new believer is encouraged to witness. In order to cement the decision, the new believer is also encouraged to tell someone about their decision immediately. Next, the presenter makes an appointment to accompany the new believer to church, or to meet them at church next Sunday. The encounter concludes as the presenter offers a prayer of thanks for what God has done in the life of the new convert.⁹⁰

An evaluation of Evangelism Explosion. One of the strengths of Evangelism Explosion is its emphasis on flexibility. The author insists that the presentation is not to be a "canned approach." Rather, the witness for Christ must be both flexible, and well equipped to share the gospel. In light of this philosophy the authors have included a large number of illustrations and supporting material that will allow the presenter to expand, or streamline his or her approach as the situation requires. Still, the presentation itself consists of 65 points (reduced from a hundred in the original version).⁹¹ Surely the gospel can be presented in a much more succinct fashion. Unfortunately, the presentation does suffer from the misuse of some scriptures. At one point the author suggests the use of Revelation 3:20 to prove that Christ does not force himself on the lost.⁹² Of course, this verse was not written to unbelievers, but to the church and may be inappropriate for use in witnessing situations. Another example of this problem is found in the author's use of Matthew 18:20 to teach that Christ is present with believers who pray to be saved. This

⁹⁰Ibid., 52-53.

⁹¹Kim A. Lawton, "Evangelism Explosion Retools It's Approach," *Christianity Today*, March 3, 1997, 58.

⁹²Ibid., 28.

passage clearly deals with the context of church discipline, not evangelism. Still, Evangelism Explosion does offer a strong system for follow-up on new believers and contains a solid mentoring component.

A Model for Mentor Based Evangelism Training

As we have seen, the systematic pairing of elders and novices for the purpose of religious training dates back centuries within the Christian tradition.⁹³ Evangelism training programs such as FAITH, Evangelism Explosion, and The Net have attempted to integrate this element into their systems. The mentoring element in these approaches provides an important component found in historic discipleship and training endeavors that is often missing from modern evangelism training.

As Lawless points out, the command to "make disciples" in Matthew 28:19-20 includes both "baptizing them" and "teaching them." If baptizing represents conversion and commitment to Christ, then teaching is the task of instructing new believers. Assumed in the task of teaching is that head knowledge should become heart knowledge, which will result in a change of behavior.⁹⁴ This break between head knowledge and heart knowledge is particularly relevant to the issue of evangelism. Of those Southern Baptists who have been trained to share their faith, only 55.4 percent have talked with an unsaved person about becoming a Christian in the last year.⁹⁵ Clearly, a purely intellectual understanding of the importance of evangelism does not always result in behavioral change. This conclusion is bolstered by anecdotal evidence. D. James

⁹³English, *Mentoring in Religious Education*, 3.

⁹⁴Lawless, *Discipled Warriors*, 47.

⁹⁵North American Mission Board, *Research Report: U. S. Congregational Life Survey: Conversion and Witnessing among Southern Baptists* (Nashville: North American Mission Board, Research Services, 2002), 4.

Kennedy points to the fact that early in his ministry he focused on teaching classes on evangelism. Unfortunately, in retrospect Kennedy could not think of a single person who was won to Christ by any of the laymen who took his classes. He came to the conclusion that "the average person can no more learn to evangelize in a classroom than he can learn to fly an airplane in the living room."⁹⁶

Mentor based programs such as those reviewed above offer the hope that church members will not only agree with the biblical mandate for personal evangelism, but will also change their behavior as well. The evangelism that took place in the New Testament did not occur as the result of some organized program or campaign. It occurred because individual believers took it upon themselves to reach out to those around them. The goal of mentor based evangelism training is to prepare and motivate believers to bear witness to the gospel in every situation in which they find themselves, even after the training has concluded.⁹⁷

With this foundation, a program based on mentoring relationships can be designed to teach and encourage personal evangelism. Beginning with the biblical principle that all believers are called to become fishers of men, we will introduce to members of the congregation the programmatic instruction component employed by modern evangelism training methods. This instruction will be conducted within the context of mentoring relationships as seen in both biblical and early Christian environments. This model offers a means by which we hope to create genuine change in behavior as well as changes in beliefs. As Christ pointed out in John 14:15, we prove that we truly love Him by keeping his commands.

⁹⁶Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion*, 6.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 19.

CHAPTER 4

FISHERS OF MEN

Based on the scriptural and historical precedents for mentoring as a tool for discipling Christians, I designed a program for evangelism training in the local church specifically for this project. The program is designed to equip individual church members to engage in personal evangelism. Much of the curriculum written for the project will reflect the research I gathered in chapter three. The program will attempt to leverage the best aspects of the three evangelism training programs we reviewed. The title of the program is "Fishers of Men." The theme verse for the program is Matthew 4:19. The following is a summary of each week of the implementation phase of the program.

Week 1: Program Kick-Off

I introduced the program to the church during the morning worship service on July 21, 2013. The announcement corresponded with the preaching of a sermon based on the theme verse (appendix 1). During the ensuing week, I recruited several key members of the church leadership team to be a part of the new program. I asked these leaders to encourage others to participate as well.

Week 2: Recruitment and Preview Banquet

On Sunday, July 28, I announced that a preview banquet would be held the following Tuesday at seven o'clock in the evening. I invited anyone who was interested in being a part of the program to attend. I assured everyone that the meal would be free, and that there would be no obligation to continue with the program. Those who were interested in attending the banquet were asked to raise their hands. Twenty-five people

indicated an interest in attending.

On Tuesday evening the church provided a catered meal for the attendees. Twenty-seven adult church members attended. After the meal, I gave a brief description of how the program would work. I told the attendees that they would be placed in teams of three. Each team would include at least one man and one woman. Teams would be led by a mentor called the Team Leader. The remaining two members would be learners. At first, the team leader would be expected to do all of the talking when the team made visits. No learner would be expected to speak during a visit in the first weeks of the program. I explained that the process is designed to relieve the fear many people have of speaking to strangers. Gradually, the learners would be expected to take a bigger part in evangelistic visits.

After I described the program, two previously recruited individuals were asked to give testimonies about their experiences in leading someone to salvation. Afterward, the floor was opened for questions. Most of the questions had to do with the time commitment the program would require. I assured the group that the program would only require a commitment of one and a half hours per week. I explained that participants would have homework assignments, but these should not require a large investment of time. During the discussion, it became clear that fear was one of the strongest emotions present in the group. I assured the group that the program was designed to be as non-threatening as possible. One attendee asked if there would be child care available for the participants. I promised that someone would be recruited to provide child care at the church each week.

At the end of the banquet, I asked the attendees to sign a commitment card indicating that they would be part of the twelve-week training program (appendix 17). Each card included a place to indicate whether the attendee would be a leader or a learner. Twenty-one church members signed commitment cards.

Six people volunteered to be mentors. I had approached each of the mentors prior to the recruitment banquet and asked them to consider being a team leader. These individuals were chosen based on two criteria. First, each one had been a part of an evangelism training program in the past. Also, each one had experience in leading another person to Christ using a memorized gospel presentation or a marked New Testament. The first mentor was a white male in his late forties. The second mentor was a white female in her early seventies. The third mentor was a white female in her early fifties. The fourth mentor was a white male in his early thirties. The fifth mentor was a white male in his early sixties. The sixth mentor was a white woman in her late seventies. I also planned to be a mentor as well, bringing the total to seven.

Week 3: Commissioning Ceremony

On Sunday, August 4, 2013, the church held a commissioning ceremony for those who had signed commitment cards. The ceremony was conducted during the morning worship service and consisted of a responsive reading and a prayer by the pastor. Those who had signed commitment cards were asked to stand on the platform at the front of the church during the ceremony. Also, immediately after the commissioning ceremony, I made an appeal for someone to provide child care during the training. One of the church nursery workers volunteered to coordinate child care. Also, I made an appeal for those not involved in the training to become prayer partners for those who were participating. After the service, I met with those who had been commissioned in order to distribute prayer partner cards. I asked each participant to recruit two people to support them in prayer during the training time. Each of these prayer partners would receive commitment cards to sign as well. I instructed the program participants to record the names of their prayer partners on a separate card that would then be turned in at the first training session.

Week 4: Session 1 - Orientation

The group's first meeting occurred on Tuesday, August 6, 2013, at seven o'clock in the evening. Fifteen people, not including me, were in attendance. Sandwiches and snacks were made available for those who had come directly from work. Child care was also provided for those participants with young children. Snacks and child care were made available every week thereafter.

I opened the session with prayer. After the time of prayer, participants received a survey designed to determine their comfort level with sharing their faith. I explained that the survey had two purposes. The first purpose of the survey was to help improve the program for future sessions. Second, the results would be used as an important part of this writing project. I stressed that the survey was optional and that participants would be allowed to continue even if they opted out of the survey. Everyone, except me, completed a survey. I then distributed handouts that comprised the evening's lesson to each participant, along with three ring binders in which to keep the handouts.

I began the training time by asking the group why we should share our faith. After taking suggestions from the class, I pointed out that believers share our faith for two reasons. These reasons are rooted in the two great commandments given by Jesus. In Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself." We share our faith because we love Jesus and we love our neighbors.

I then pointed out that one of the major reasons we fail to share our faith is fear. Common worries include the fear that we will be inadequate to the task, fear of unfamiliar situations and fear of rejection. I pointed out that one of the best ways to overcome fear is through preparation.¹

¹William Faye And Linda Evans Shepherd, *Share Jesus without Fear*

At this point I introduced the witnessing outline that the class would learn over the next twelve weeks. I announced that the plan would be based on the acronym FISH. The acronym FISH is taken from the ancient Christian fish symbol, the Ichthus. In ancient times this symbol was used by believers to identify one another secretly. The fish is still used today by believers to identify themselves. The ichthus is displayed on the backs of cars, on t-shirts, and even on business signs and logos. In Greek, the title "Jesus Christ Son of God, our Savior" is Iesous Christos Theou Uios Soter.² The first letters of this title form the acronym ICHTHUS. For this reason it is appropriate to use the acronym FISH to help us share out faith with others. Each letter stands for a part of the gospel message. The letter "F" stands for failed, we have all failed to keep God's commandments. "I" stands for impossible, it is impossible for sinners to have heaven and eternal life. "S" stands for Savior, if we want heaven and eternal life, then we need a Savior. "H" stands for heaven. For those who repent of their sin and put their faith in Jesus Christ as savior and Lord, God gives the promise of heaven and eternal life.³

Next, I surveyed the schedule and format for the semester. The class was scheduled to meet each Tuesday evening at seven o'clock. I pointed out that each session will begin with a mentor time. During this time, the mentors will review the homework assignments of each of the learners. The group will then gather together for instruction time. Instruction time will conclude by seven-thirty. At that point, the visitation teams will receive their visitation assignments and will depart to make their assigned visits for the night. Each team will return by eight-thirty for report time. During the visits, the

(Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 17-26.

²Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, "Symbols," in *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, ed. John Bowden (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1164.

³The FAITH evangelism strategy also uses "I" for impossible and "H" for heaven. Welch, Williams, and Apple, *A Journey in Faith*, Journal, 191.

mentor on each team will take the lead in presenting the gospel. At first, the learners will only be asked to observe. As the program progresses, the learners will be allowed to take the lead in presenting the gospel.

I went on to explain that all participants were expected to recruit two prayer partners, attend each meeting, and complete all homework assignments. Additionally, I distributed prospect cards to each participant. The participants were asked to provide the names and contact information for any person that might be a prospect for the teams to visit.

Next, I distributed copies of the New Testament to the group. For the balance of the teaching time we learned how to mark and use a copy of the New Testament as a witnessing tool. This exercise accomplished two tasks. First, it provided an overview of the scriptures used in the Fishers of Men gospel presentation. Second, at the conclusion of the session each member had a tool that he or she could use immediately to share the gospel with another person.

I concluded the session by giving the group a homework assignment. Taking a page from the NET evangelism program, I asked each participant to identify at least one person that they wanted to see come to Christ. I explained that this person will become the participant's "Most Wanted Person for Christ."⁴ Each participant was instructed to begin praying immediately for their "Most Wanted Person for Christ" to be saved. We concluded the session with prayer. No visits were made the first week.

On the following Sunday we placed prospect cards in the church bulletins. Additional cards were made available through-out the church building. During the morning service I encouraged the congregation to submit prospects for the Fisher's of

⁴The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net: Leader Guide* (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 18.

Men teams to visit. No prospect cards were returned that week.

Week 5: Session 2

The second session convened with eighteen people in attendance, including myself. Three new attendees were present for the first time. One person was absent. The new attendees were invited to fill out surveys and were issued student materials. I began the session with prayer. Afterward, I collected the prayer partner cards. Next, I asked if everyone had identified a "Most Wanted Person for Christ." The participants were instructed to write the name of that person on the inside cover of the binder they had received. Next, I distributed a handout of the evening's lesson. Participants received a handout each week. The blanks on the handout were filled in using a Power Point presentation.

The purpose of this session was to demonstrate how to make a visit in a prospect's home. I gave the team members specific instructions regarding how to make a home visit. I encouraged participants to pray before leaving the church. I also asked them to review the information on their prospect cards while in the car.

When approaching the prospect's door, the participants were instructed to knock or ring the bell, and then step away from the door in order to avoid intimidating the person who answers. Participants were also instructed to allow the female team member to stand closest to the door, also to reduce the intimidation factor. After someone answers the door, the participants were instructed to introduce the members of their team. They were reminded to know the name of the person they are visiting, explain what prompted the visit, and to ask permission to visit with the prospect. If the team arrives at an inconvenient time, the team leader should make an appointment to return at a later time.

Next, I made the team assignments for the semester. Six mentors were each assigned two learners. I did not join a team during this week. The absentee was not assigned a team either. I distributed the visitation assignments, prayed and dismissed the

teams to make their visits. The visitation prospects came from Vacation Bible School registrations, contacts from the church's crisis food ministry, and recent visitors to church services.

Each of the teams returned on time. The teams made ten visits and reported twenty seven contacts. Two teams attempted to present the gospel. There were no professions of faith reported this week.

Week 6: Session 3

Twenty members attended session 3, including myself. Two new attendees joined the group. Two people were absent. This week I stepped in and became a mentor, forming a seventh team to accommodate the two new members. The session began with mentor time. The mentors made sure that all team members had successfully recruited prayer partners and had identified a "Most Wanted Person for Christ."

After mentor time, I distributed a handout containing the lesson for the evening. The lesson covered the procedure for how to initiate a spiritual conversation. The participants were told that just as the FISH acronym could help them remember how to share their faith, they could also use the acronym FISH to remember how to start a spiritual conversation. I pointed out that this method would allow them to begin with secular topics and slowly guide the conversation toward spiritual issues. When used to begin a spiritual conversation, the letter "F" in FISH stands for family and friends, the "I" stands for interests, and the "S" stands for spiritual background. The team member will progress through each of these stages until he or she begins to move the conversation toward spiritual issues by asking "do you have any kind of church or religious background?"⁵ After listening to the prospect's response, the team member will want to

⁵This approach is similar to the CAS model used by the North American Mission Board, *The Net*, leader guide, page 14. A similar model is also found in the "interests" portion of the FAITH gospel presentation, *A Journey in Faith*, journal, 14.

transition into the gospel presentation by asking the diagnostic question represented by the letter "H" which stands for heaven. The diagnostic question in the FISH presentation is "what must you do to have Heaven and eternal life?"⁶ The prospect will answer in one of three ways. First, the prospect may respond with the correct answer, that we are saved by faith in Christ's death on the cross on our behalf. Most of the time the prospect will respond with the wrong answer. Wrong answers may include the idea that we are saved by being good, by being religious, or the prospect may simply assert that we cannot really know. If the prospect gives a wrong answer or says "I don't know" then the team member should ask permission to share the gospel. The team member can do this by asking, "can I share with you how the Bible answers that question?"⁷ If the prospect says yes, then the team member should continue with the FISH gospel outline. If the prospect says no, the team member should stop. It is important to always respect the prospect's wishes. Above all, the person presenting the gospel should keep the lines of communication open and trust that the Holy Spirit will provide other opportunities to present the gospel.

At the conclusion of the power point presentation, the group divided into teams and spent the remainder of the instruction time practicing how to initiate a spiritual conversation. Afterward, the teams picked up their visitation assignments, prayed and departed to make their visits. The teams made seven visits and spoke with 20 people. No team presented the gospel, but all the teams did invite their contacts to attend Sunday School and Sunday worship. Two teams visited individuals who had already made professions of faith in Vacation Bible School. The leaders on these teams emphasized the importance of following up this profession by being baptized. One of the prospects made

⁶This diagnostic question is taken from the question asked by the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:30.

⁷Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey In Faith*, journal (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1998), 204.

a commitment to follow up in baptism.

I concluded the report time by assigning each participant to make contact with their "Most Wanted Person for Christ" this week. I asked them to begin developing a relationship with this person. Also, each participant was instructed to practice initiating a spiritual conversation using the FISH method, and to be able to do it from memory by next week. The session concluded with prayer.

On the following Sunday one young man came forward during the altar call to present himself as a candidate for baptism. He stated that his decision to request baptism was a direct result of the visit he had received earlier in the week from a Fishers of Men team.

Week 7: Session 4

The session began with sixteen members present. One person dropped out of the program due to health issues. One new member was added. The new member took the place of the one that dropped out. Only six teams were available to make visits. Two teams were sent out with only two members. During the mentor time, the participants practiced the technique learned in session three for initiating a spiritual conversation. Also, the mentors asked their protégés if they had attempted to develop a relationship with their "Most Wanted Person for Christ." The mentors encouraged the participants to make another attempt this week if they had not already made an initial contact with their prospect.

I distributed the lesson handouts at the beginning of the lesson time. I introduced the gospel presentation using a Power Point presentation. After reviewing the diagnostic question, I pointed out that "F" in FISH stands for failed. We have all failed to keep God's commandments. I used Romans 3:23 as the proof text for this point in the presentation.

After introducing the first letter of the gospel outline, I presented a brief study

on the importance of prayer to the work of evangelism. I pointed out that while we work, it is God who gives the increase. D. James Kennedy has said that lost people all have a "slight" spiritual impediment. "They are deaf, blind, and dead. Otherwise they are in pretty good shape."⁸ For this reason, we need the Holy Spirit to intervene and bring them spiritual life. We are wholly dependent on Him for success when we present the gospel.

Team members also learned that God hears and answers prayer. I presented 2 Kings 20:1-5 as an example of how prayer can make a difference. I emphasized the fact that we should always pray before we attempt to share the gospel with the lost. I also discussed how to pray for the lost. I suggested that we should pray for the lost by name. We should pray for wisdom as we share our faith. We should pray for protection as we share our faith. We should pray for boldness as we share our faith. We should pray that God will make appointments for us to share our faith. We should pray that God will open doors for us to share our faith. We should pray that converts will bear fruit. And finally, we should pray that the church will nurture new converts.⁹

For homework I asked the participants to memorize the gospel presentation beginning with "how to start a conversation" through the "F" is for failed portion. Also, I pointed out that if any participant had not yet begun to develop a relationship with their "Most Wanted Person for Christ" they should do so this week. The teams picked up their visitation assignments and were dismissed. The teams completed eight visits and made nineteen contacts. They attempted to present the gospel four times. No professions of faith were reported this week.

⁸D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1996), 11.

⁹The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net*, mentor handbook (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 104.

Unfortunately, during the following week one of the learners in the program died unexpectedly. Since two other members of the program were immediate family members, and since the funeral visitation was held on the night we normally met for Fishers of Men, session five was postponed for one week.

Week 8: Session 5

Due to the death of one of the participants, one team was left with only two members. I decided to allow the team to remain at two members since both members were male. The lack of a female member put the team at somewhat of a disability, but I reasoned that the vacant spot could be used as a buffer in the event that other teams experienced losses or absences. I hoped that a female member could be added on a temporary basis from week to week. Additionally, one male member dropped out of the program due to acquiring shingles. At this point, I did not know if he would return so I left his spot on his team unfilled. The remaining members of his team were allowed to visit together since they were blood relatives.

The teams reviewed their homework assignments during the mentor time. Since we had experienced problems with running long each week, the group agreed to start our sessions fifteen minutes earlier. The purpose of session five was to introduce the second part of the gospel presentation, the "I" in the FISH outline. This portion of the presentation was designed to show that because of our sin and because of God's holiness, it is impossible for a person to go to heaven by his or her own efforts. I cited Roman's 6:23 as a proof text for this point. The handout explained that that the word "death" in Romans 6:23 refers to separation and that the word refers not just to physical death, but to spiritual death as well. I defined spiritual death as separation of one's soul from fellowship with God.¹⁰ The handout cited Matthew 25:46 in support of this point.

¹⁰Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 823.

The second part of the session focused on the concept of being a lifestyle witness. This portion of the session was designed to help the participants understand that the tools they were developing in Fishers of Men were not meant to be used only on visitation night. I encouraged the group to apply what they were learning to all their relationships and encounters with other people. I encouraged the participants to engage the lost by building relationships. I explained that we must endear the lost through acts of kindness, educate the lost by sharing the plan of salvation and escort the lost to the throne of grace by inviting them to receive the gift of salvation that Christ offers.¹¹

Finally, I issued the homework assignments for the week. All participants were asked to commit the "F" and "I" portions of the gospel presentation to memory. Also, the participants were encouraged to show hospitality to their "Most Wanted Person" this week by inviting the person over for a meal, taking them to lunch or inviting them out for coffee.¹²

The participants broke into their teams and collected their assignments. Six teams went out and reported thirty four contacts. The large number of contacts was due to the fact that one team engaged a large group of youth and children playing in the community. The teams made two attempts to present the gospel. One team reported one profession of faith. In order to celebrate the profession of faith, the entire group joined in singing the doxology before being dismissed.

Week 9: Session 6

After meeting with their mentors to review the previous week's homework

¹¹North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net: Apprentice Manual* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 49.

¹²North American Mission Board, *The Net: Leader Guide* (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 18.

assignment, the teams gathered for the teaching time. The purpose of session six was to introduce the "S" portion of the witnessing outline. Each participant received a handout. The handout stated that because we are all sinners, we all need a savior. John 3:16 is the supporting scripture for this portion of the outline. From this verse we learn that Jesus is unique. He is unique because he is both fully man, and fully God. I pointed out that only a person who was both God and man could offer the sacrifice our sin required. Jesus is that unique Savior. The handout explained that the term "Savior" implies that we are helpless and can do nothing to save ourselves. We need outside intervention if we are to be delivered from God's judgment. In His perfect justice, God has declared that the wages of sin is death. But in His love and mercy, God provided the very penalty His justice demanded. Jesus bore our sin on the cross, and offered Himself as the only acceptable substitute for sinners.

After the teaching time, the teams picked up their visitation assignments, prayed and departed. Seventeen members attended this session. Six teams were sent out. The teams made six visits. They attempted to present the gospel to ten people. No professions of faith were reported this week.

The following weekend the church held a block party, in part, to generate prospects for the Fisher's of Men group to visit. The homework assigned to the Fisher's of Men participants was to attend the block party and to seek out an individual with whom to share the gospel. Also, each participant was to invite and accompany their "Most Wanted Person" to the block party. Finally, each participant was instructed to memorize the FISH outline through "S" is for Savior.

Week 10: Session 7

After meeting with their mentors to review the previous week's homework assignment, the teams gathered for the teaching time. The purpose of session seven was to learn the "H" portion of the witnessing outline. Each participant received a handout.

The handout stated that three things are necessary in order to inherit heaven and eternal life. First, we must repent of our sins. To repent means that we abandon our old way of living. Acts 3:19 was presented as the proof text for this point. Second, we must believe that Jesus died for us personally. Romans 10:9-10 was given to support this portion of the presentation. Finally, we must receive the free gift of salvation by asking Jesus to save us.

After presenting the plan of salvation, I instructed the group to begin the follow up process. The process begins by asking the prospect "would you like to ask Christ to save you and forgive you of your sins now?" If the answer is yes, then the team member should pray a brief sinners prayer with the lost person, celebrate their decision, and offer to accompany them to church on Sunday. If the prospect says no, then the team member should respect their wishes and keep the lines of communication open.

For homework, the group was asked to continue to memorize the FISH outline. Additionally, the group was asked to attend the Southwest Community Festival the following week in lieu of meeting on Tuesday night. The group members were asked to man the church's booth at the festival and look for opportunities to share their faith.

After the teaching time, the teams picked up their visitation assignments. Most of the groups were given contact cards from the block party, beginning with those who had requested more information about the church. Fourteen members were in attendance. Two more participants dropped out of the program. Two mentors were absent this week, so their teams were broken up to fill out the remaining teams. Five teams completed five visits and spoke with twelve people. The teams attempted to present the gospel to all twelve contacts. No professions of faith were recorded this week.

Week 11: Community Festival

In week eleven the church set up a booth at the Southwest Community Festival. Fourteen of the Fishers of Men group members attended some portion of the festival and manned the church's booth during the day. During that time they distributed

bottled water to festival participants and attempted to engage them in conversations about the gospel. No one reported a profession of faith, but group members reported attempting to share the gospel forty-two times. Additionally, one hundred and twenty-two people requested additional information about the church. Team members recorded these requests along with each individual's contact information to be used in follow up visits during the remainder of the training semester.

Week 12: Session 8

After meeting with their mentors to review the previous week's homework assignment, the teams gathered for the teaching time. The purpose of session eight was to learn how to write and present an evangelistic testimony. The class learned that their personal testimony was authoritative, relevant and unique. They were instructed to keep the testimony portion of their presentation under three minutes in length. Each participant was given a guide to help him or her write their own unique testimony. The format of the guide varied depending on whether the participant had been saved as a child or as an adult. Much of this material was adapted from material used in the FAITH evangelism training program.¹³ Finally, the class was instructed on how to incorporate their testimonies into the FISH witnessing outline.

At the conclusion of the teaching time, the teams were given their visitation assignments. Most of the groups were given contact cards received at the Southwest Community Festival. Unfortunately, one member of the program underwent an unexpected surgery. She and her husband withdrew from the program. Since both individuals were on the same team, the team was dissolved. For the rest of the semester the team mentor was used to fill in for those who were absent.

¹³Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey in FAITH*, facilitator guide (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2002), 42-45.

This was the lowest attended week during the semester with only 11 members of the program present. Four teams completed six visits and spoke with eleven people. Three presentations of the gospel occurred. No professions of faith were reported this week.

Week 13: Session 9

After meeting with their mentors to review the previous week's homework assignment, the teams gathered for the teaching time. The purpose of session nine was to learn how to use a tract to present the gospel. Each participant received a handout and a copy of the *Eternal Life* tract published by The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The content of the lesson was adapted from information found on the website of the North American Mission Board. Participants learned that a tract has many advantages. It requires little preparation to use. The effectiveness of a tract is enhanced by the hear/see/do principle. I forget what I hear, I remember what I see but I understand what I do. Tracts also allow us to present a witness when time or availability would otherwise hinder us.¹⁴

Before using a tract, the participants were instructed to become familiar with its contents and to practice using the tract. Participants were encouraged to keep a supply of tracts in a pocket, purse or the glove compartment of their car. To introduce a tract into a conversation, participants were instructed to use the same method for starting a spiritual conversation that they employed with the FISH outline. The lesson concluded with a few tips for using a tract. The prospect should be able to see the tract and the witness should proceed slowly through the tract. Finally, participants were instructed to leave a copy of the tract with the prospect and to print their own name and contact information on the

¹⁴Namb.net, "Using Tracts," <http://www.namb.net/using-tracts/> (accessed October 20, 2013).

tract.¹⁵

Homework this week consisted of practicing using a tract with a friend or family member. Also, the group was encouraged to continue to cultivate their relationship with their "Most Wanted Person." This week, they were asked to take them a small gift. I suggested taking a baked item or other small token of friendship.

After the teaching time concluded, the teams were given their visitation assignments. All of the groups were given contact cards from the Southwest Community Festival again. Fourteen participants were present. One new participant joined the program this week. The new member was added to a team that had only two members. The team mentor agreed to meet with him and cover the material that he had missed. Five teams were dispatched. The teams conducted five visits in which they spoke with eleven people. There were no professions of faith reported this week.

Week 14: Session 10

After meeting with their mentors to review the previous week's homework assignment, the teams gathered for the teaching time. The purpose of session Ten was to learn how to deal with difficult situations. Participants learned how to deal with objections to the gospel presentation. Team members learned how to deal with someone who responds that they have already received Christ as Lord and Savior, despite the fact that they gave an incorrect answer to the diagnostic question. Participants also learned how to deal with a person who claims not to believe the Bible. Finally, the class learned how to deal with distractions during a witnessing encounter as well. This material was adapted from the FAITH training material.¹⁶

This week's homework assignment was, for members who had not already

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Welch, Williams, and Apple, *FAITH*, facilitator guide, 208-11.

done so, to share the FISH witnessing outline with a lost person. Additionally, group members were asked to invite their "Most Wanted Person" to accompany them to church on Sunday.

After the teaching time, the teams picked up their visitation assignments. All of the groups were given contact cards from the Southwest Community Festival again. Thirteen participants were present. Five teams were dispatched. Two teams had only two members. Six visits were completed. The teams attempted to present the gospel to nine people. One profession of faith was reported. As had become our custom, the entire group joined in singing the doxology to celebrate the spiritual birth of a new believer. The person who made a profession of faith also attended worship the following Sunday.

Week 15: Session 11

The final session of Fishers of Men convened with seventeen members in attendance. I administered the concluding survey and collected the results. Group members were asked to discuss their impressions of the semester. The comments were universally positive. All members of the program felt that it had been helpful and should be continued. Thirteen participants committed to be a part of the next semester of the program. Six of the thirteen committed to be mentors for the next semester.

After the evaluation time, the teams collected their visitation assignments. All of the groups received contact cards from the Southwest Community Festival again. One group was also assigned to follow up on the person who had made a profession of faith the previous week. One team visited with only two members present. Six teams were dispatched. The teams reported five attempts at presenting the gospel. No professions of faith were reported this week.

Conclusion

The twelve weeks of Fishers of Men was a time of both growth and struggle.

The small group who joined me in this journey struggled with fear, illness, and even death. There was a sense throughout the semester that we were truly engaged in spiritual warfare. Still, there were tremendous rewards as well. The members of this group grew in confidence week by week. They also grew closer to their fellow team members.

Personally, this experience provided me with a leadership and administrative challenge that genuinely stretched me. In chapter 5 I will show that the project was successful in completing its goals and was beneficial to the members of the Fishers of Men group.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

This chapter concludes the presentation of this project. The stated goals of the project included reducing fear of witnessing by participants, and preparing participants to serve as mentors to other students of evangelism. The personal goals of this project were to learn to design and implement a witnessing training program that will be applicable in multiple ministry settings and to learn mentoring skills that will help me train other believers in not only evangelism, but in other Christian disciplines as well. This chapter will seek to evaluate the attainment of these goals and draw conclusions based on the evaluation. Participants completed a questionnaire during the first session of the training program to determine their level of fear regarding witnessing and their confidence levels regarding their abilities to share the gospel competently with another person. The purpose of the pre-test was to gain a baseline of each participant's self-perception in each of these areas. At the conclusion of the semester the participants were asked to complete the same questionnaire again.

The semester began with 16 participants. Six members dropped out of the program. Of these 6, 5 withdrew due to personal health reasons or due to the health of a family member. One member died during the semester. Six other persons joined the program later in the semester. Three of the 6 joined in the second week, 1 in the third week, 1 in the fourth week, and 1 joined in week 10. Four members of the group had

perfect attendance for the semester. The average participation rate for all members was 7.67 sessions. Attendance ranged from a high of 20 participants at the third session to a low of 11 at the ninth session. Reasons given by participants for missing a session included health issues, family problems, and work conflicts.

Evaluation of Data

The responses of the Fishers of Men group to the pre and post-project questionnaires may be found in appendices 12, 13 and 14. I will use the results of these tests to evaluate the success of the goal of reducing the fear of witnessing by participants. Six participants took the pre-test, but did not take the post-test. Six other participants took the post-test, but did not take the pre-test. These twelve questionnaires were not used to calculate the results. In addition, one individual did not complete all of the questions. His responses were used only on those questions where he responded on both the pre-test and the post-test.

Reducing Fear of Witnessing

Question 4 related directly to the first goal. It was designed to test the participant's comfort level in sharing the gospel. The data in Table 1 indicate that 7 out of the 10 respondents reported an increase in their comfort level. The net change in the respondents was an increase of 17 points. Two respondents reported no change and one respondent reported a decrease in comfort. This decrease may have been the result of confusion on the part of the respondent because this was the only question on the instrument that used a 10 point scale. Most other questions were based on a 5-point Likert scale. The average net gain by the respondents was +1.7. As might be expected, the 3 respondents who indicated no increase or a negative increase in comfort were team

leaders who each had significant experience sharing their faith prior to the training. Still, a clear majority of respondents indicated an increase in their comfort level with regard to sharing their faith. It is worth noting that one respondent indicated a 3 point increase in comfort, 2 indicated a 4 point increase in comfort and 1 reported a 6 point increase in her comfort level.

Table 1. Research data for statement 4

| <i>On a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel sharing your faith with another person?</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|---|----|-----|---|----|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 3 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 5 |
| Post-test | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| Shift | +3 | +6 | +1 | +4 | 0 | +4 | -4 | 0 | +1 | +2 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | +17 | | | |

Question 6 asked respondents "Which of the following reasons best describes the reason you do not witness more?" Respondents were forced to choose between three options. In the chart below the three options are labeled 1, 2 and 3 as follows; 1 represents "fear of how the other person will react," 2 represents "laziness on my part," and 3 represents "I lack the knowledge I need in order to witness effectively." Respondent number 7 did not answer the question on the post-test. On the pre-test he responded by writing in "I don't always find the opportunity to do so." Two respondents selected "fear of how the other person will react" on the pre-test, while 3 respondents selected this option on the post-test. One participant indicated that her new limiting factor went from fear of how others would react to simple laziness. On the pre-test 3 respondents indicated that lack of knowledge was the major factor inhibiting their ability

to share the gospel. No one selected this response on the post-test. One may gather from this information that the training was sufficient to remove any perceived inadequacy in the participants knowledge of how to witness. However, having removed that inadequacy, a new limiting factor, fear of how others would respond, became the new impediment for two of the participants. This question was not sufficient to indicate to what extent this fear existed initially, or whether the fear, though still present, had been reduced to any extent by the training.

Table 2. Research data for statement 6

| <i>Which of the following reasons best describes the reason you do not witness more?</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | -- | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Post-test | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | -- | 2 | 2 | 1 |

Questions 7 through 13 were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 — "Strongly Agree" to 5 — "Strongly Disagree." As with question 4, question 7 related directly to the first goal and was designed to gauge the comfort level of participants in telling others that they are a Christian. In the pre-test, 3 respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they were afraid to tell others that they were a Christian. Four neither agreed, nor disagreed with the statement. One participant did not respond to this question. The results of this question reflect a significant level of discomfort among the group at being identified as a believer. The group showed improvement in this area in the post-test, showing a net increase of 8 points or an average increase of 0.89 points.

Table 3. Research data for statement 7

| <i>I am afraid to tell others that I am a Christian.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 4 | -- | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| Post-test | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | -- | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| Shift | +2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | +3 | +1 | -- | -1 | +1 | +2 |
| Change in responses | | | | | | | +8 | | | |

Question 8 was designed to measure the level of comfort participants had with sharing the gospel with people they already know. No respondent disagreed with the statement in the pre-test. Respondent number 3 indicated that she neither agreed nor disagreed. The results of the pretest indicated a high degree of comfort on the part of the respondents with sharing the gospel with those whom they already know and have some relationship. Nevertheless, 2 respondents did show improvement on this question on the post-test. No respondent indicated a decrease in comfort.

Table 4. Research data for statement 8

| <i>I am comfortable sharing the gospel with people I know.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|----|----|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | -- | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Post-test | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | -- | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Shift | 0 | 0 | -1 | -1 | 0 | 0 | -- | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | -2 | | | |

The responses to statement 9 indicate that the group participants were far more reticent to share the gospel with strangers than with those they know. In the pre-test, 4 of the 9 respondents disagreed with the statement that they were comfortable sharing the

gospel with strangers. Three more neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 2 respondents agreed with the statement and no one strongly agreed with it. The change in the post-test responses was striking. Four respondents moved from "disagree" to "agree." One other moved from "neither agree or disagree" to "agree." Only 1 respondent indicated a decline in agreement with the statement. These results seem to indicate a significant improvement in the comfort level of respondents when engaging strangers with the gospel message.

Table 5. Research data for statement 9

| <i>I am comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | -- | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Post-test | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | -- | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Shift | -2 | +1 | 0 | 0 | -1 | -2 | -- | 0 | -2 | -2 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | -8 | | | |

Preparing Participants to Serve as Mentors

Questions 10 through 13 were designed to gauge the confidence level participants had with regard to their witnessing skills. Question 10 dealt specifically with their skill in sharing the gospel. Six of the 10 respondents indicated an increased confidence in their ability to share the gospel with another person. Only 1 person registered a reduced confidence level and that person only responded to 4 questions on the survey. Subsequent conversations with this individual revealed that he was confused about how to use a Likert scale. Still, even given the confusion on the part of 1 of the respondents, the results of this question seem to indicate a significant increase in the confidence levels of the respondents.

Table 6. Research data for statement 10

| <i>I am confident with my ability to share the gospel with another person.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Post-test | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Shift | -1 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0 | -1 | +2 | 0 | -1 | 0 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | -5 | | | |

Statement 11 on the survey was designed to gauge the confidence level of respondents in regard to using Scripture to share the gospel. Respondents showed a remarkable shift on this statement. Seven of the 10 respondents showed an increase in confidence. Only 1 showed a decrease in confidence, and as pointed out above, he may have been confused as to how to use a Likert scale. Even given the possibility of a confused response by participant 7, the net shift in responses shows a marked increase in the confidence of the respondents in their ability to use Scripture as part of a gospel presentation. If we throw out the responses of participant seven the shift is an impressive 10 points.

Table 7. Research data for statement 11

| <i>I am confident in my ability to use Scripture to share the gospel with another person.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Post-test | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Shift | -3 | -1 | -1 | -2 | 0 | -1 | +3 | 0 | -1 | -1 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | -7 | | | |

Statement 12 was designed to measure the confidence respondents had in their ability to use their personal testimony to share the gospel. In the pre-test only 1

respondent disagreed with the statement. This indicated an already high level of comfort among the respondents in using an evangelistic testimony. As might be expected, this high initial comfort level resulted in only a moderate change in the post-test results. Three individuals indicated an increase in confidence. One indicated a decrease in confidence.

Table 8. Research data for statement 12

| <i>I am confident in my ability to share my testimony with another person.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|---|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | -- | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Post-test | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | -- | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Shift | 0 | -1 | -2 | 0 | 0 | -1 | -- | +1 | 0 | 0 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | | -3 | | | |

Statement 13 was designed to measure the confidence respondents had with their ability to sufficiently communicate the method for salvation to another person. In the pre-test, only 1 respondent disagreed with the statement that "I am confident in my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved." The respondents seemed to have a good grasp of how to obtain salvation. Given the backgrounds of those who responded to the questionnaire, this result is not surprising. Eight of the 10 respondents had been Christians for more than 20 years. The two "youngest" believers indicated that they had been Christians for "6-10 years" and "11-20 years" respectively. As a consequence, the respondents seemed to have a firm grasp on what is required to be saved. The lone exception was respondent number 2. Even after the training he responded that he "neither agreed nor disagreed" with the statement, despite the fact that he indicated that he had been a Christian for more than 20 years. While respondent number 2 indicated that he had been a Christian for more than 2 decades, he has only recently become active in church. His long period of inactivity and recent return to church may

have contributed to his response.

Table 9 Research data for statement 13

| <i>I am confident in my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved.</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|---|----|
| Respondent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Post-test | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Shift | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0 | 0 | -1 | +2 | +1 | 0 | -1 |
| Net change in responses | | | | | | -2 | | | | |

Evaluation of Goals

Reducing Fear of Witnessing

Question 4 and questions 6 through 9 relate to this goal. Question 4 showed a significant improvement. The average response went from 5.8 to 7.5, indicating a significant increase in the comfort level of the respondents when it comes to sharing the gospel. The response to question 6 indicated that although respondents felt much better equipped to share the gospel, at least a third of the respondents still felt a significant amount of fear regarding how others would respond to them when they shared the gospel. Each of the remaining statements in this set showed a change that would indicate a reduced fear of witnessing. The net change in the responses to statements 7, 8, and 9 were particularly dramatic. Respondents indicated that they were more comfortable telling others that they are a Christian as a result of the training. In particular, they are more comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers than they were before the training. In addition, 12 of those present at the final meeting signed up to be a part of the next semester of personal evangelism, indicating a general enthusiasm for participating in evangelism. As a whole, the group reflected a much higher comfort level with sharing their faith than they had prior to the training. The response to the questionnaire coupled with the enthusiasm present in the group at the concluding session indicates that the

group experienced an increase in confidence and excitement about sharing the gospel. The evidence indicates that the first project goal was met.

Preparing Participants to Serve as Mentors

Questions 10 through 13 relate to the second goal. The responses to the questionnaire indicate that the group members were generally more confident in their ability to share the gospel with another person than they were before the training. They also expressed a greater confidence in their ability to use Scripture to share the gospel. The competencies participants gained during the training included learning a prepared presentation of the gospel, memorizing a set of relevant scriptures, learning to use a tract, and using an evangelistic testimony. Additionally, each learner had the opportunity to observe a mentor who modeled how to share the gospel with another person. Not all teams were able to lead someone to a profession of faith, but every team presented the gospel multiple times during the semester. Additionally, every member of the program was able to practice sharing the gospel with another person. Indeed, the responses to question four on the pre and post-tests indicates that an increased competence in sharing the gospel was one of the major improvements associated with this program.

Additionally, at the last session of training, participants were asked both to enroll for the next semester, and to indicate whether they were willing to serve as a team leader/mentor. Three individuals who had been learners agreed to serve as mentors for the next session. Additionally, the increase in confidence indicated by respondents in the post-test suggests that the participants have acquired the skills and experience necessary to train others. I conclude from the evidence that this goal was met as well.

Learn to Design and Implement a Witnessing Training Program

Fisher's of Men is a biblically sound witnessing training program. It is easy to

implement and easy to learn. It provides students with a variety of witnessing tools. It utilizes a mentor who models evangelism and is thus non-threatening. It also emphasizes actual evangelistic visitation by the trainee. This program is sufficiently flexible to fit into most ministry situations. I could easily transfer this program to another church or ministry situation with little or no modification. The pre and post-tests indicate that the program successfully accomplished the goal of equipping individuals to share the gospel and reduce their fear of witnessing. I conclude that the first personal goal was met.

Learn Mentoring Skills

In some sense, the evaluation of this goal is subjective in that I have to evaluate whether I feel that my skills have improved. I believe they have. My skills were advanced through the reading of material related to mentoring. This goal was also advanced by the practical application of leading a team myself. Also, during the semester I realized that I was not just a mentor to my team, but to all the other team leaders as well. My role as the project leader cast me in the role of a master mentor. This was especially true given the fact that this was the first iteration of this training. None of the team mentors knew the program prior to the training.

Many difficulties arose during the training that stretched me as a mentor. The first was disappointment. On several occasions my team did not find anyone at home during a visit. We called on one prospect 3 times before we found anyone at home. Additionally, on most visits, the person we visited either did not allow us to finish presenting the gospel, or did not respond favorably. These experiences were common to all the teams. Keeping the group's spirits up in the face of these setbacks proved challenging. Each time we encountered a problem I would remind them that success was not defined as leading someone to Christ. Success is defined as being obedient to Christ's command to be a witness.

My leadership skills were particularly stretched when we had to deal with the

death of a member of our group. We took a week off to mourn, but we continued the next week. I was able to use the experience as a motivating force for our group. I pointed out that the deceased member would have wanted us to continue to reach lost souls with the gospel. Also, the death of a such a close acquaintance served as reminder to our group of the urgency of our task. Our friend was a believer, but the lost people we encountered each week were not as fortunate. We were able to use the loss of a group member as an inspiration to keep going rather than as a reason to quit. Having successfully navigated the difficulties of the experience I conclude that my final personal goal was met.

Project Modifications Needed

As I have already indicated, the project successfully met its goals. However, if the project were to be repeated, the following changes would strengthen it. First, the project leader should increase the amount of meeting time devoted to mentoring. As I pointed out earlier, the mentor time had to be expanded informally to allow mentors to review the material from the previous week. The mentor time will be increased in future iterations of the program.

Second, the project leader should spend more time explaining how to use a Likert scale. As I indicated before, some of the participants did not seem to understand how to properly answer the questions on the survey. While I initially felt that my instructions were adequate, it might have been helpful to have the whole group complete the survey one question at a time while I read and explained each item.

Third, a decision card should have been developed and included in each team's visitation materials. There was no written way of keeping up with decisions made during a team visit. The project leader had to make notes each week based on verbal comments made during the report time.

Additionally, the prayer ministry supporting the project could have been stronger. No mechanism existed for keeping prayer partners informed and connected to the weekly activities of the teams. In fact, there was no way of measuring how many prayer partners were still actively engaged in supporting the teams at the end of the semester. In future iterations I will appoint a prayer coordinator who will communicate with prayer partners each week through email, a web page, by telephone, and through personal meetings.

Finally, a written test should have been administered to the group at the final session as a means for evaluating how well the group had learned the material. The project leader had only the word of the mentors as to whether learners had mastered the classroom material.

Theological Reflection

The need for rank and file church members to be more involved in evangelism is a perennial lament among pastors today. Too often, however, the approach to getting the typical lay person involved falls into 1 of 2 categories. The most common approach is for the pastor to try to guilt his congregation into being more evangelistic by haranguing them from the pulpit. The disconnect here is that people will never do what they have never been trained to do. The second, and only slightly better, approach is to offer periodic "evangelism training" classes. The advantage here is that the class attendee now has the tools to be an effective witness. Unfortunately, this approach fails in that most people will never put their new skills into effect, unless they have seen them modeled. Trainees need to be held accountable in some way for actually using their new found skills. Jesus is the perfect model for training disciples. He did more than teach his

disciples in a classroom. He walked with them daily. He became a role model and a mentor to his disciples. His instructions were buttressed by personal example. Jesus called his followers not just to go and make disciples, but to “follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt 4:19). Later, He sent them out 2 by 2 to be witnesses (Mark 6:7). Although He was not physically leading them at that point, they were not alone. Together the pairs supported one another and held one another accountable. Jesus modeled a system of discipleship training based on mentoring and practical experience.

During this project I have become deeply convinced that making disciples is more about personal relationships, modeling, and mentoring than about lecturing. While this project employed a certain amount of classroom instruction, the most valuable lessons were learned in living rooms and at community festivals. Instruction is most effective when coupled with the example of a mentor and personal practice.

Personal Reflection

My interaction with the Doctor of Ministry program has affected me in a number of ways. First, I have gained a greater appreciation of my need for a network of other ministers. While I learned much in my class work, I learned much more from the members of my cohort. Those relationships built during the class room instruction have remained and continue to stretch and challenge me to this day. My own church has been affected by the ministries of several of my cohort members. Not the least of which has been Rob Sumrall, who introduced me to the adventure of doing evangelism in a third world country. I will never be the same.

A second lesson that this experience has taught me is that I need to actively invest in the lives of other believers as a mentor. As a pastor, it is easy to become isolated, relegating my ministry to what happens from the pulpit each week. Ministry should be more about personal relationships. Just as Jesus mentored a few disciples,

every pastor should have a small circle of laymen that he is mentoring.

Finally, I have never experienced spiritual warfare in such a tangible fashion as I did during this project. The difficulties experienced in the lives of my group members and in my own personal life were unprecedented. It was obvious to all involved that Satan was attempting to derail our efforts. Through this experience I have a renewed appreciation for the fact that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Conclusion

In conclusion, all 4 of the project goals were adequately met. The members of the program responded in a positive way and exhibited a reduced fear of witnessing. Each member not only learned how to witness, but was able to accompany another person during multiple witnessing opportunities. There were no decisions reported among the Most Wanted Persons for Christ. Perhaps the members participants in our program could have been more diligent in their efforts to reach these individuals. Unfortunately, I have no data to evaluate because I depended heavily on the mentors to follow up on each participant's efforts. The written curriculum was the most time consuming portion of the project, but the greatest strength of the program was the personal practice aspect of the training.

APPENDIX 1

SERMON

Sermon Title: Becoming Fishers of Men

Scripture: Matthew 4:18-20

Main Idea: Christ has called each of his followers to the task of evangelism.

Scripture Introduction:

This morning we are going to look at the calling of two of Christ's Apostles, Peter, and Andrew. In the calling of these two men we are going to see that the call of Christ to us is first to salvation, and then to service. Specifically the service of bringing others to Christ. Matthew 4:18-2 (NKJV) says,

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Back in April of 2012 a man by the name of Glen Ey was sailing his sailboat around the coast of Australia when he was caught in a severe storm. He sought shelter from the storm in the cabin of the sailboat, but the waves got bigger and bigger until finally he was hit by a wave so large that it nearly capsized the boat. It snapped the mast off completely and damaged the hull so that the boat began taking on water. Glen Ey was lost and helpless in a violent sea. Ey activated his emergency beacon and waited to see if help would come.¹ Fortunately, the Australian authorities received his emergency call

¹ Michael Platt, "Australian Glen Ey Thanks Air Canada Flight for His Rescue at Sea," *Calgary Sun*, October 17, 2012, <http://www.calgarysun.com/2012/10/17/australian-glenn-ey-thanks-air-canada-flight-for-his-rescue-at-sea> (accessed July 17,

and seeing that the beacon was located along the flight path of a commercial airliner, they asked the pilot to be on the lookout for the stranded sailor. The pilot then used the public address system on the plane to ask the passengers and crew to help in the search for the lost man. The assistance of everyone on board the plane was essential because finding the lost man in the middle of such a vast ocean would be like finding a needle in a haystack. But every member of the crew and every passenger immediately began to search out their windows. Some passengers even broke out binoculars they had in their luggage. No one would have dreamed of ignoring the command of the pilot to help in the search.

The Scriptures teach us very clearly that the world today is like a vast ocean, filled with lost people who are in danger of destruction. And, like the pilot of the airplane, he has given each of us the command to help in the search for the lost. He commands us to be fishers of men.

Christ's Disciples are Enjoined to Fish

In our scripture, Jesus is passing along the sea of Galilee when he sees two brothers, Simon and Andrew fishing. This was their job, it is how they made a living. Now in that day there were three methods for fishing. The first was similar to what you and I would do when we go fishing, using a hook and a line. The second was casting a net in the shallow water near the bank. And the final method was using a drag net stretched between two boats. The word Jesus uses here for fishing indicates that Simon and Andrew were using the second kind of net, casting it from the shallows near the shore.²

In calling these disciples, Jesus is putting together a group of men who will

2013).

²John MacArthur, *Matthew 1-7, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1985), 115.

become his partners in ministry. Not because he needed them, He had both the power and the right to proclaim the gospel himself. But that was not his plan. His plan has always been to use disciples to win more disciples. Notice that the first thing Jesus commands after telling these men to follow Him is to be "fishers of men." When Jesus calls us to himself, he also calls us to call others. This command to be fishers of men was not merely for these two disciples, or for the first century church. This command extends to us as well. The same obligation for the called to themselves be callers rests on the church today. In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gives the church a similar command.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.
(Matt 28:19-20 NKJV)

Notice that Christ promised to empower the church until He returns at the end of the age. By dating the conclusion of His empowering presence at the end of the age, it is clear that this commission was not for the original disciples alone. Clearly, Christ will continue to be present with His followers every day until His return.³ In fact, this is a covenant and that is binding on all those who become a part of the church of Christ in every place and time.⁴ That means that this command to make disciples is for you and for me. The promise of Jesus that he will make you fishers of men is a promise to you and to me.

The passengers of Air Canada flight received a request, a command if you will, to be a part of the search for Glen Ey. Had the passengers and the crew on the airplane never known that there was a sailor in distress, then they would have been under no

³David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 691.

⁴Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Greatness of the Great Commission* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1990), 23.

obligation to look for the lost. But when the Pilot informed them of the need, and called them to be a part of the search, it would have been at least negligent, and at worst criminal, not to have made an effort to help in the search. In the same way Christ has informed us that the world is filled with lost people and He has called all of us to be a part of the search. Are the spiritually lost in any less danger than that stranded sailor in Australia? Are we then any less obligated to aid in the search than the passengers of that aircraft? Statistics indicate that nine out of ten people in the average church have not shared their faith in the last year.⁵ They have decided not to be involved in the search. Does that describe you? Have you decided that fishing for men does not include you? If so, then you are guilty of sin. You have consciously decided not to obey the command that Christ gave to us.

Why are you not part of the search? Fear? Of what? Rejection? Maybe you have not been part of the search because you don't think you have what you need to be a part of the search. I have heard people say, "I'm just not able to tell people about Jesus." Christ's disciples are not only called to fish, they are empowered by Him to fish as well.

Christ's Disciples are Empowered to Fish

Note that Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men." He did not say simply that you should be fishers of men. He said He would make you into fishers of men. In other words, he would empower you for the task. In Acts 1:8 (NKJV) He promised His disciples power. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

While the job is daunting, the resources Christ provides are more than equal to

⁵William Faye and Ralph Hodge, *Share Jesus without Fear* (Nashville, Lifeway Press), 6.

the task. In verse In Matthew 28:20, Christ promises that throughout the process of making disciples, His followers will experience His presence. Through the Spirit, Christ will tell them what to say when opposed by those outside the church according to Matthew 10:16-20.⁶

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. (Matt 10:16-20 NKJV)

The passengers in the Air Canada flight could not see a small sailboat on the ocean from the altitude they had been flying at. The Captain took them all down to 5000 feet so they would be able to see. Had the captain not dropped the plane down to 5000 feet, they would never have been able to find the sinking boat. In the same way, Christ empowers us to be witnesses. Through the gifts of the Spirit we are equipped. Through the work of the Spirit we are enlightened and directed. And through the providence of God we are given opportunities. You do not go to the work alone. You go in the power and strength of Christ.

Christ's Disciples are Eager to Fish

The Scripture records the reaction of the disciples to Christ's call. They *immediately* left their nets and *followed* Him. There is no hesitation. There is in fact an eagerness in their response. They recognize the authority of Christ and respond to his call. This is most impressive when we consider the sacrifice these men were making. Fishing was more than just a job they did. It was their way of life. Their family members

⁶Turner, *Matthew*, 692.

were fishermen. Their friends were fishermen. It permeated everything. It was their heritage, their culture. And yet, when Jesus calls, they are eager to leave it behind, to follow Jesus in the calling to win souls, to be fishers of men.

A disciple puts Christ before everything. The word "followed" comes from a Greek word that conveys the idea of following as a disciple who is committed to imitating the one he follows.⁷ In Peter and Andrew's case, they left their nets. Later, in James and John's case, they left their boat and their father. What are you willing to leave behind to be a disciple of Christ?. What are you willing to abandon in order to be a better follower? The Rich Young Ruler, in Luke 18, could not follow Christ because he would not leave his covetous lifestyle. So many prosperous Americans have heard the gospel, and even indicated a profession, but have been too distracted by the worldly things they love to follow Christ.

So many of us have dabbled in the gospel. We have heard the good news and received it ourselves. But we have never developed the sense of urgency that the task requires. In the Air Canada flight, as the passengers began to look for Glen Ey, they spotted the lost boat immediately. Had they delayed, had they waited until after dinner had been served and cleared, they would have been too far away to see him. They had a sense of urgency. There was a man down there somewhere in a sinking boat, and they were his only hope. Crew pressed their faces to the windows. Passengers brought out binoculars.⁸ The task was critical, the timing urgent. Oh, that we had as great a sense of urgency about the task of seeking the lost as those passengers had in seeking a lost sailor.

Glenn's mother, Colleen Ey, was waiting on dry land to hug her son when he was finally returned to land by the Coast Guard. She praised the Canadian plane for

⁷ MacArthur, *Matthew 1-7*, 116.

⁸ Michael Platt, *Calgary Sun*.

taking a detour for a stranded sailor. "I am very grateful," she said.⁹ I imagine the crew and passengers of that plane were pleased to hear that word of thanks. But how much grander will it be one day when we get to heaven and Jesus himself reaches out and puts a crown on our heads and says, "see this person over here, and that person over there. They are here because you helped look for them when they were lost. That's my son, that's my daughter, my child. Thank you for looking for them. Well done my good and faithful servant."

Sermon Conclusion

I want to offer a number of ways that you can answer the call of Christ to be fishers of men this morning. First, begin praying that God will lay someone on your heart that you can share your faith with. Some person who needs to hear the gospel. Also, begin praying about whether God would have you to be a part of our new evangelism program called Fishers of Men. Finally, If you have never received Christ as your savior, let me take just a moment to tell you about my King, my Lord, and Savior - Jesus Christ. The Bible says we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. It also says that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. If you would like to receive Christ as your savior, simply admit that you are a sinner, believe that he died on the cross for your sins, and confess him as Lord and savior.

⁹ Ibid.

APPENDIX 2
TEACHING SESSION 1 NOTES

Why should we share our faith? Tonight we will learn two reasons to be active in sharing the gospel. First, we share our faith because we love Jesus. Jesus said "if you love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15 (NKJV) says "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Love and obedience go hand in hand. The great commission is Christ's command to make disciples. It was so important to him that it was the last command he gave the church before ascending into heaven. The Holy Spirit found the command so important that he inspired the writers of the New Testament to include five different versions of the command. Look up the following scriptures: Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-48, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8. What do these scriptures have in common? The command to make disciples.

Second, we share our faith because we love our neighbors. What will happen to people who do not know Christ as savior? Consider Mark 9:43-48 (NKJV):

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- where *'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'* And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- where *'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'* And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire-- where *'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'*

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) says "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Consider as well Luke 16:19 - 31 (NKJV):

There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with ^{the} crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'" Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'

I think one of the reasons we do not tell others about Jesus is because we do not really believe those scriptures. If we did, wouldn't we be willing to risk anything to tell those around us who are perishing how to be saved? We need to be about sharing the gospel because we love Jesus. And we want to obey him. And also we love our neighbor and do not want to see him spend eternity in hell.

So, why do we fail to share the gospel? Nine out of ten Christians have not shared the gospel with anyone in the past year. William Faye¹ calls this the sin of silence. Why are most of us guilty of that sin? In part it is because we are lazy. It's hard work to get involved with other people. Still, the biggest problem is usually that we are afraid. Fear paralyzes us. What are you afraid of? (Take answers from the class)

¹William Faye and Ralph Hodge, *Share Jesus without Fear* (Nashville, Lifeway Press), 4.

Why we should not be afraid? What is the power behind our witnessing?

Christ is the power. 1 John 4:4 (NKJV) says "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world." In John 14:15-18 (NKJV) Jesus tells us—

If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Jesus promised never to leave us. All power is given to him, and therefore to us as well. That is why prayer is so important in this endeavor. One of the best ways to overcome fear is preparation. If we are prepared we will not be afraid. That is what Fishers of Men is designed to do. To help you overcome your fear of sharing the gospel with other people.

We are going to learn several ways to share our faith over the next few weeks. Each one will be useful in a given situation. But ultimately we will learn to share the gospel using the letters of the word FISH. In part this is appropriate because Christ himself called us to be fishers of men in our theme verse Matthew 4:19. But it is also appropriate because one of the oldest symbols for Christ, and Christianity is a fish.

One of the earliest symbols of the Christian faith is the Ichthus. This fish symbol was used by believers to identify one another secretly. The fish is still used today by believers to identify themselves. One sees it on the back of cars, on t-shirts, and even on the signs and business cards of businesses. The symbol comes from the name of Christ. In Greek the first letters of the title Jesus Christ Son of God, our savior, (Iesus Christos huiou tou theou soteris) form the acronym ICHTHUS.² For this reason it is

²Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, "Symbols," in *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, ed. John Bowden (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1164.

appropriate to use this symbol for Jesus as the acronym by which we will share out faith with others.

The FISH Outline

F stands for failed, we have all failed to keep God's commandments.

I stands for impossible, it is impossible for sinners to have heaven and eternal life.

S stands for Savior, if we want heaven and eternal life, then we need a savior.

H stands for heaven. For those who repent of their sin and put their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, God gives the promise of heaven and eternal life.

APPENDIX 3
TEACHING SESSION 2 NOTES

How to Make an Evangelistic Visit

1. Pray before leaving the church.
2. In the car, review the information on the prospect card.
3. When you arrive:
 - a. Do not block the driveway.
 - b. Observe the home. What does the home say about the people you are visiting? Are their children's toys in the yard? Are there many cars in the driveway?
 - c. When you approach the door, knock or ring the bell, then step back from the door. Allow the female team member to stand closest to the door.
4. When someone answers the door"
 - a. Introduce yourself and those who are with you.
 - b. Know the name of the person you are there to visit.
 - c. Explain what prompted your visit.
 - d. Ask permission to visit with the prospect.
 - e. If it is an inconvenient time, make an appointment to return at a later time.

APPENDIX 4

TEACHING SESSION 3 NOTES

How to Initiate a Spiritual Conversation

1. Begin by starting a conversation with the prospect. Move from general subjects to more specific spiritual topics.
2. The acronym FISH can be used to initiate a spiritual conversation.
 - a. Friends/Family - Ask about family or mutual friends.
 - b. Interests - Look around the home to identify hobbies and interests that might spark a conversation.
 - c. Spiritual Background - Move the conversation toward spiritual issues by asking about the person's church or religious background. Ask "do you any kind of church or religious background?"
 - d. H stands for "How to be saved." Transition into the gospel presentation by asking the diagnostic question - "what must you do to have heaven and eternal life?" The prospect will answer the diagnostic question in one of three ways.¹

1. Correct answer - We are saved by faith in Christ's death on the cross on our behalf.

¹Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey In Faith*, Journal (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1998), 28.

2. Wrong answer - We are saved by being good, being religious, or we can't really know.

3. I don't know.

If the prospect gives a wrong answer or says "I don't know" then you should ask permission to share the gospel by saying "can I share with you how the Bible answers that question?"² If the prospect says yes then continue with the gospel presentation. If the prospect says no, then stop. Keep the lines of communication open and trust that the Spirit will provide other opportunities.

²Ibid., 29.

APPENDIX 5
TEACHING SESSION 4 NOTES

One of the earliest symbols people used for Jesus and the Christian faith was the fish. For that reason we like to use the acronym FISH as a guide for understanding how Jesus can enable us to have heaven and eternal life.

F—Stands for failed

We have all failed to keep God's commands. Romans 3:23 (NKJV) - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." To illustrate this point ask the prospect "Have you ever done something that you knew was wrong, but you did it anyway?" Most people will say yes. Respond by saying "of course you have, everyone has." Explain that we have all failed to keep God's commands. This is called sin. We are all sinners.

Prayer and Evangelism

Prayer is essential to effective evangelism. It is essential because It is God who gives the increase. 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (NKJV) says — "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth." Prayer is essential because God answers our prayers. Our prayers make a difference. An example of God's response to prayer is found in 1 Kings 20:1-5 (NKJV):

In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'" Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, "Remember now, O LORD, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court,

the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “Return and say to Hezekiah the leader of My people, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David, “I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD.

God responded to Hezekiah's prayer. Prayer makes a difference.

What Should we pray for? Pray for the lost by name (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Pray for wisdom as you share your faith (Colossians 1:9). Pray for protection as you share your faith (Romans 15:30-31). Pray for boldness as you share your faith (Acts 4:31). Pray that God will make appointments for you to share your faith (Acts 8:26-41). Pray that God will open doors for you to share your faith (Colossians 4:2-6). Pray that converts will bear fruit (Colossians 1:9-11). Pray that the church will nurture new converts (Acts 2:42; 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12).¹

¹The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net, Mentor Handbook* (Alpharetta, GA: The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 104.

APPENDIX 6
TEACHING SESSION 5 NOTES

The second letter of the FISH outline stands for impossible. It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven.¹ The Bible teaches that God is perfectly holy. Because He is holy God cannot allow sin into His presence. For this reason, sinners cannot go to heaven. That is why the Bible says "for For the wages of sin *is* death," Romans 6:23a (NKJV). In the Bible, the word death means separation.² Physical death is the separation for your soul from your body. In the Bible death means not just physical death, but spiritual death as well. Spiritual death is the separation of your soul from fellowship with God. The proof text for the "I" point of the outline is Matthew 25:46 (NKJV) - "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" So, if God cannot let sinners into heaven, and we are all sinners, what hope do any of us have? We will see the answer to that question next week.

How to Be a Lifestyle Witness

¹Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey In Faith*, Journal (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1998), 111.

²Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 823.

We often think of Christianity as consisting of going to church. But think about the purpose of the church. The church exists, in part, to equip believers to be witnesses as they go through their daily lives. It has been said that the church gathers in order to scatter.³ Witnessing as we go involves four tasks. First, we must engage the lost. We have to develop relationships with lost people. That does not mean that we live the way they live. It means that we invest in their lives. We develop relationships. Second, we must endear the lost. This means that through acts of kindness and service we demonstrate the love of Christ. People will never care what you know until they know that you care for them. The gospel walks on the feet of our words, runs on the legs of our example and soars on the wings of service. Next, we must educate the lost. It is not enough to simply model the Christian life. Sooner or later you must explain the plan of salvation to a lost person. Do not be intimidated by this. If you are saved, then you know enough to tell someone else how to be saved. Also, you are currently learning how to share the plan of salvation in a simple and engaging manner. Finally, we must escort the lost to the throne of grace. We must invite them to receive the free gift of salvation offered by Christ. It does no good to engage the lost, endear the lost, and educate the lost if we never actually confront them with a choice. Fishers of men is designed to equip you to be a witness to your community in your daily life. It is not merely a tool to be used on visitation night, but a life skill to be used every day.⁴

³North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, *The Net: Apprentice Manual* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000), 49.

⁴Ibid.

APPENDIX 7
TEACHING SESSION 6 NOTES

Last week we talked about the I in FISH. We said that I stands for impossible. It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven. So, if God cannot let sinners into heaven, what hope do any of us have?

"S" Stands for Savior. We need a Savior. The Bible says that Jesus paid the penalty for our sin. He died on the cross so that we would not have to experience the second death. John 3:16 (KJV) says "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Because of his sacrifice we have hope of heaven and eternal life.

Many people, even Christians, do not appreciate how wonderful this news really is. We have already seen that we are all sinners, and that on our own, we cannot get into heaven. That is why the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus is such great news. John 3:16 says that Jesus was God's only begotten son. That means that he is unique, one of a kind.¹ Jesus is unique because He is fully human. Jesus assumed full humanity so that He might bear the sins of humanity. He was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:16). He grew physically (Luke 2:40, 52). He had a body of flesh and bones (Hebrews 2:14). He got hungry (Luke 4:2). He got thirsty (John 19:28). He got tired and slept (Matthew 8:24,

¹Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 93.

John 4:6). Finally, He died (John 19:32-33).

Jesus is also fully God. In Isaiah 9:6 The messiah is called God. In John 8:56-58 Jesus takes the name of God for himself. In John 10:30-33 Jesus declares that "I and the Father are one." In John 14:6-9 the scripture records the words of Christ to Philip: "Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" In John 20:28 Thomas gives one of the clearest testimonies to the divinity of Jesus. Jesus appeared to him along with the other disciples "And Thomas answered and said to Him, "my Lord and my God!" All these passages clearly teach that Jesus is God. The Savior had to be fully man in order to represent us and to bear the sins of human beings; but He also had to be God so that His sacrifice had the necessary value to save all of those who believe. You see, our debt was infinitely large, so the value of his sacrifice had to be infinitely great as well. Only a person who was both God and man could offer such a sacrifice. Jesus is that unique Savior.

Of course, the term "Savior" implies that there is something to be saved from. In our natural state we are lost, alienated from God, under His just condemnation because of their sins. Jesus came to save us from the God's wrath. The Bible teaches that we are helpless and can do nothing to save ourselves. We need outside intervention if we are to be delivered from God's judgment. Because God is just, He has declared that the wages of sin is death. But in His love and mercy, God provided the very penalty His justice demands. Jesus bore our sin on the cross, and offered Himself as the only acceptable substitute for sinners. He paid the penalty we deserved. So, how can we receive the benefit of his death on the cross? How can we be sure that we will have heaven and

eternal life? That leads us to the H in FISH, which we will look at next week.

APPENDIX 8
TEACHING SESSION 7 NOTES

"H" Stands for heaven. To have heaven and eternal life you must do three things. First, you must repent of your sins. To repent means that you abandon your sins and your old way of living. Acts 3:19 (NKJV) instructs us to "repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

The lost person must understand that salvation only comes to those who are willing to surrender their lives in faith to Christ. When we surrender to Christ as our Savior, we are transformed. We are no longer slaves to sin and selfish desires. The Christian heart goes from being self-centered to being Christ centered. We live our lives for Christ rather than for ourselves.

Next, the lost person must believe that Jesus died for him or her personally. Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV) says that

. . . if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Belief involves more than simply believing the fact that Jesus was a real person who died on a cross. The Bible says that the devil believes that. To believe means that an individual must trust in Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross alone for salvation.

Finally, the lost person must receive Christ's gift of salvation by asking Jesus

to save him or her. Romans 10:13 (NKJV) says "For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" After explaining how to be saved, we must invite the lost person to receive Christ as their savior. Ask "would you like to ask Christ to save you and forgive you of your sins now?" If the answer is yes, then assist them in praying for forgiveness and salvation.

There is a model sinners prayer in most tracts. Ask the person to repeat after you as you read the prayer one line at a time. When you are finished assure the person that they are saved if they meant what they prayed. Welcome them to the family of God and celebrate their decision. Finally, invite the new believer to church on the following Sunday. Offer to accompany them or pick them up in your car. If they prefer to come alone, offer to meet them at the door or in the parking lot.

APPENDIX 9

TEACHING SESSION 8 NOTES

Every Christian has a testimony. Your testimony is authoritative. No one can argue with what you have experienced. Your testimony relevant. Your testimony comes from your real life experience. The lost people may see themselves in your testimony. Finally, your testimony is unique. Your testimony will be unlike anyone else's and that is a good thing.¹

How to Share Your Testimony:

Remember to keep your testimony brief. Eliminate unnecessary details. Also, do not use Christian jargon. Begin by asking the lost person "Can I share with you how I came to know for certain that I have heaven and eternal life?" If the prospect says yes, then share your testimony. If the answer is no, then stop. Do not force the issue, you do not want to be seen as the enemy.²

Your testimony has four parts. First, describe your life before you came to know Christ. Second, describe how you came to realize you needed Christ. Third, Describe how you became a Christian using the FISH outline. Finally, describe how your life is better now that you know Christ as your savior. Below are two models for writing

¹Bobby Welch, Doug Williams, and David Apple, *A Journey in FAITH*, facilitator guide, 43-45.

²Ibid.

an evangelistic testimony. Your testimony will vary slightly depending on whether you were saved as an adult, or as a child.³

Adult Conversion Experience

1. Ask "Can I share with you how I came to know for certain that I have heaven and eternal life?"
2. Say "There was a time in my life when . . ." Complete the statement using one of the following life conditions as a guide, such as "out of control", I felt "emptiness", or I was "guilt-ridden." Other life conditions might include confusion, fear, loneliness, rejection, depression, uncertainty, anger, bitterness, no direction, timid, or ashamed. Give an example of how this affected your life negatively.
3. Explain how you came to realize that you needed Christ. You might say "a friend told me about Jesus", or "I visited a church where they explained my need for Christ."
4. Say, "that is when I learned how to have heaven and eternal life." Go on to explain the gospel using the FISH outline.
5. Say, "now I . . ." (complete the statement using the opposite life change from the one used in #2 above. For example, if you stated in #2 that before Christ your life was out of control, you would say now that your life is "under control.") Give an example of how your life is better because of your relationship with Christ.
6. Conclude by asking "Would you like to ask Christ to save you and forgive

³Both the adult and childhood conversion models are adapted from an unpublished handout given to participants at a FAITH training session. Lifeway Church Resources, "Evangelistic Testimony," FAITH Training Conference, April, 2003, Nashville, TN.

you of your sins now?" If the answer is yes, invite them to pray the sinners prayer with you.

Childhood Conversion Experience

1. Ask "Can I share with you how I came to know for certain that I have heaven and eternal life?"
2. Explain how you came to realize you needed Christ. You might say "a friend told me about Jesus", or "I visited a church where they explained my need for Christ."
4. Say, "that is when I learned how to have heaven and eternal life." Go on to explain the gospel using the FISH outline.
5. Say, "now I . . ." (Complete the statement using one of the life changes from step five of the adult conversion model above.) For example, you might say "now I have meaning in my life." Give a current example of how your life is better because of your relationship with Christ.
6. Conclude by asking "would you like to ask Christ to save you and forgive you of your sins now?"

APPENDIX 10
TEACHING SESSION 9 NOTES

How to Use a Tract

Using a tract to share the gospel has a number of advantages.¹

1. It requires little preparation.
2. The effectiveness of tracts is enhanced by the hear/see/do principle:

I hear - I forget.

I see - I remember.

I do - I understand.

3. Tracts also allow you to present a witness when time or availability would otherwise create a barrier to witnessing. You can always leave a tract with a person or for a person.

Before you attempt to use a tract become familiar with its contents. Tracts follow a universal and biblical presentation of the gospel:

God's desire for a relationship with us.

Man's problem (sin).

God's solution to man's problem (Jesus Christ).

¹This lesson is adapted from an article which appeared on the website of the North American Mission Board. *Namb.net*, "Using Tracts," <http://www.namb.net/using-tracts/> (accessed October 20, 2013).

Man's response (the necessity of receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior).

Tips for using tracts

You can practice using the tract with friends or family members. Pack some tracts in your jacket, purse, glove compartment, desk—anywhere you can grab one quickly when a witnessing opportunity presents itself. Begin a witnessing encounter the same way you would begin if you were going to use the FISH outline. Use the friends/interests/spiritual background/how to be saved outline to begin a spiritual conversation. When you share Christ using a tract, be sure the person with whom you're sharing is able to see the pages. Sit or stand beside the person, not across from them. Go slowly. Give the person time to process the information before moving to the next page. If the person is hesitant about reading the entire tract, ask if you can leave it with him or her to read later. You may want to write your name and phone number on the back of the tract before giving it to the person.

APPENDIX 11
TEACHING SESSION 10 NOTES

Handling Difficulties

Tonight we will address some of the objections that you may encounter in when sharing the gospel.¹ First, when you ask if a person would like pray the sinner's prayer, they may respond by saying "I have already done that." If so, simply ask them to tell you about the time that they admitted they were a sinner and asked Christ to save them. If their previous experience does not seem genuine then review whatever part of the gospel presentation might help them to make a genuine profession of faith. If their previous experience does seem genuine then encourage them to make their commitment public.

Another objection that you may encounter is that the prospect does not believe the Bible. In this situation you might invite them to consider the evidence for the authoritative nature of the Bible. Invite them to consider the scientific evidence for the Bible. The Dead Sea Scrolls contain evidence that the Bible remained unchanged for more than a thousand years. Second, invite them to consider the archaeological evidence for the Bible. Numerous Biblical accounts have been validated by archaeology. For

¹This material is adapted from *A Journey in FAITH: facilitator guide*. Welch, Williams, and Apple, *A Journey in FAITH: facilitator guide*, 208-11.

example, archaeologists have discovered the burial place of Caiaphas, the high priest mentioned in the account of Christ's trial. Third, there is prophetic evidence to support the accuracy of the Bible. The Old Testament contains many references to the details of Christ's birth that can only be explained by supernatural revelation. Finally, no one can argue with your own experience. Give your testimony and show how Christ changed your life, and how you found strength from the Bible.

Finally, distractions can disrupt a visit. Phone calls, children, pets and television can all interfere with an attempt to present the gospel. Team members who are not presenting the gospel should help deal with distractions. This may involve talking to another family member, dealing with a pet, or playing with a child. Use good judgment. Never take a child into another room by yourself. Also, be sensitive to the needs of the person you are visiting. You may be an interruption to them. If you have arrived at a bad time, make an appointment to return at a more convenient time.

APPENDIX 12

PRE AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your confidence level and your knowledge level relating to sharing your faith. This research is being conducted by Timothy Harris for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer the following questions before we begin training and you will answer the same questions after we complete the training. Any information you provide 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.*

1. Please print your name

2. How long have you been a Christian? Place an X by the appropriate answer.

Less than a year.

1 to 5 years

6 to 10 years.

11 to 20 years.

more than 20 years.

3. Have you ever taken part in another evangelism training program?

___ Yes

___ No

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel sharing your faith with another person? _____

5. How often do you share your faith with others?

A. More than once a week.

B. Once a week.

C. At least once a month.

D. At least once every six months.

E. At least once a year.

F. Almost never.

6. Which of the following reasons best describes the reason you do not witness more? (Place an X by your answer).

___ Fear of how the other person will react.

___ Laziness on my part.

___ I lack the knowledge I need in order to witness effectively.

Using the following scale, rate how closely you agree with the following statements.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------|-------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

___ 7. I am afraid to tell others that I am a Christian.

- ___ 8. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with people I know.
- ___ 9. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers.
- ___ 10. I am confident with my ability to share the gospel with another person.
- ___ 11. I am confident in my ability to use Scripture to share the gospel with another person.
- ___ 12. I am confident in my ability to share my testimony with another person.
- ___ 13. I am confident with my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved.

APPENDIX 13
PRE-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Possible Responses: 1 = Strongly Agree
 2 = Agree
 3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 4 = Disagree
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table A1. Pre-project questionnaire responses: statements 7-13, all respondents

| Statements | Responses (16 Participants) | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I am afraid to tell others that I am a Christian. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| 8. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with people I know. | 1 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers. | 1 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| 10. I am confident with my ability to share the gospel with another person. | 0 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| 11. I am confident in my ability to use Scripture to share the gospel with another person. | 0 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| 12. I am confident in my ability to share my testimony with another person. | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 13. I am confident with my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved. | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 |

APPENDIX 14
POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Possible Responses: 1 = Strongly Agree
 2 = Agree
 3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 4 = Disagree
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table A2. Post-project questionnaire responses: Statements 7-13, all respondents

| Statements | Responses (10 Participants) | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I am afraid to tell others that I am a Christian. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with people I know. | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers. | 1 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 10. I am confident with my ability to share the gospel with another person. | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 11. I am confident in my ability to use Scripture to share the gospel with another person. | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 12. I am confident in my ability to share my testimony with another person. | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. I am confident with my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved. | 2 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

APPENDIX 15

STATEMENT 4 PRE AND POST-TEST RESPONSES

Table A3. Statement 4 pre and post-test responses

| On a scale from 1-10, how comfortable do you feel sharing your faith with another person? | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | Responses | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Pre-test (16 Respondents) | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Post-test (10 Respondents) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 |

APPENDIX 16
FISH OUTLINE

To start a spiritual conversation use the acronym FISH to stand for friends, interests, spiritual background, and how to be saved.

The FISH Gospel Presentation:

Diagnostic Questions:

Do you any kind of church or religious background?

What must you do to have Heaven and eternal life?

Can I share with you how the Bible answers that question?

FISH Outline:

One of the earliest symbols people used for Jesus and the Christian faith was the fish. For that reason we like to use the word fish as a guide for understanding how Jesus can enable us to have heaven and eternal life.

F . . . Stands for failed

We have all failed to keep God's commands.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) - *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Have you ever done something that you knew was wrong, but you did it anyway?

I . . . Stands for impossible

It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven.

God cannot allow sin into his presence. So, sinners cannot go to heaven.

Romans 6:23a (NKJV) - *The wages of sin is death.*

Death means not just physical death, but spiritual death as well.

Matthew 25:46 (NKJV) - *And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*

So, if God cannot let sinners into heaven, what hope do any of us have?

S . . . Stands for Savior

We need a Savior.

The Bible says that Jesus paid the penalty for our sin. He died on the cross so that we would not have to experience the second death.

John 3:16 (KJV)- *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

So, now we have hope. Hope of heaven and eternal life.

H . . . Stands for heaven

To have heaven and eternal life you must do three things.

1. Repent

First, you must repent of your sins.

To repent means that you abandon your sins and your old way of living.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV)

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

2. Believe

Believe that Jesus died for you.

Romans 10:9 - 10 (NKJV)

" . . . if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

3. Third, you must Receive.

You must receive God's gift of salvation by asking Jesus to save you.

Romans 10:13 (NKJV) - *"For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.'"*

After you have presented the Gospel, invite the prospect to receive the gift of salvation.

Ask, "would you like to ask Christ to save you and forgive you of your sins now?"

APPENDIX 17
COMMITMENT CARD

COMMITMENT CARD

I PLEDGE TO FAITHFULLY ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN THE 12 WEEK SEMESTER OF "*FISHERS OF MEN*" AT HILLSDALE BAPTIST CHURCH. I RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS A WAY TO HELP MY CHURCH GROW, TO HELP MYSELF GROW AS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST, AND A WAY TO BE OBEDIENT TO THE COMMAND OF CHRIST TO BE FISHERS OF MEN.

THIS SEMESTER I COMMIT TO BE :

- A TEAM LEADER
- A LEARNER

SIGNATURE

DATE

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ABSTRACT

IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF MENTOR BASED PERSONAL EVANGELISM TRAINING AT HILLSDALE BAPTIST CHURCH LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014
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The project seeks to design and implement a mentor based program for training Christians to share their faith. Chapter 1 presents the purpose, goals, context, rationale, definitions, and limitations of the project.

Chapter 2 establishes the biblical mandate for evangelism through the exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 4:19. The chapter also establishes a biblical precedent for mentor based Christian training as seen in the lives of Moses and Joshua, Jesus and His disciples, Paul and Timothy, and in the Apostle Paul's command in Philippians 3:17.

Chapter 3 surveys the field of mentoring and presents a model for Christian mentoring relationships. This chapter also examines and evaluates three popular mentor based evangelism training programs.

Chapter 4 explains the creation and implementation of the Fishers of Men evangelism training program. A description of the process includes recruitment of participants, twelve training sessions and a training curriculum.

Chapter 5 provides an evaluation of the project goals, along with modifications that could be made to strengthen the project for future use. This project asserts that mentor based evangelism training is the most biblical model.

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