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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A CURRICULUM FOR
TEACHING A BIBLICAL META-NARRATIVE TO THE
ADULTS AT COLLEGE PARK CHURCH IN
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

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the Faculty of
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Doctor of Ministry

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PREFACE

My experience in the Doctor of Ministry program at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was an important part of my development in my later years of ministry. Being the oldest person in all of my seminars was sobering and challenging but also very stimulating. It was good to see many young people stepping up to fill the gap in ministry as others of us will be moving on in life. I do not desire to leave too soon. Part of my role at College Park Church is to mentor the young leaders. This program, and particularly this project, were very helpful and important aspects to the legacy I desire to leave to my church.

Some hearty expressions of thanks are certainly in order as this project is completed. God is always to be thanked for his mercy and grace in redeeming his people. Our church is large and friendly and desires to be about kingdom work. God has blessed us to do so in the years we have been in existence. It would be very easy to lose sight of the foundations and to move ahead with a minimal regard for our theological underpinnings. That is one of the reasons for this project, and if it has helped in a small way to keep my church on the path of righteousness after I am gone, then all glory to God. I am also thankful to Cathy, my wife, who encouraged me all the way in this project, and to our daughters, son, spouses and wonderful grandkids, who kept my priorities straight. Thanks is also due to Dr. James Hamilton, who helped me love biblical theology and the Lord of that theology. God is good and the big story of his work is inspiring and is life.

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Indianapolis, Indiana

May 2015

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a curriculum for teaching the biblical meta-narrative to adults at College Park Church, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to revise and adapt current church material to be used in the teaching of the biblical meta-narrative.¹ These materials consisted of a four-part teaching video and accompanying booklets that reinforced the material in the videos.² The goal was measured by the assessment and approval of a qualified group of evaluators using an evaluation rubric (see appendix 2). The evaluators included two people with advanced degrees in education and the writer's assistant who is experienced in reviewing ministry material for its usability with people at College Park Church. This goal was considered successfully met when all the evaluation indicators were marked at sufficient or above.

The second goal was to train three leaders to utilize the training material in specific settings: the new members' class, a small group, and an adult Sunday school class. This training consisted of a one-on-one training session covering the material for

¹These materials were developed in the spring of 2013 after the first proposal was submitted in November 2012.

²College Park Church, "Videos," accessed August 26, 2013, <http://vimeo.com/collegeparkchurch/videos/page:2/sort:date>; idem, "Theology Booklets," accessed August 26, 2013, <http://lwww.yourchurch.com/groups/adults/college-park-institute/theology-basics-booklets/>.

the groups. This goal was measured as the leaders completed the questions in the workbook. This goal was successfully accomplished when the trainees verbally demonstrated that they were able to effectively utilize the training materials in their settings.

The third goal was to increase participants' knowledge concerning the biblical meta-narrative by having the leaders teach the new members' class, the adult Sunday school class, and the small group, using the video and workbooks. This goal was measured by a pre and post-test that assessed their knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative. This goal was successful when a t-test showed a positive statistical increase between the pre and post-tests, demonstrating that there was an increase in the knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative.

Ministry Context

College Park Church was founded in 1985 by a group of Baptist churches in Indiana. It is located in the town of Carmel, which was reported as the fastest growing town in the state and the largest town, with 79,191 people, growing at a rate of 50.3 percent during the ten-year time period between the census of 2000 and 2010.³ The church has experienced rapid growth during most years of its existence. In the first year of services, the average attendance was 36 people, and in 2012 through June of 2013, the average Sunday morning attendance was 3,695. Financial giving has increased commensurate with the attendance growth. Giving in 1985 was \$38,000, and College Park giving ended the year 2013 at \$5.68 million. God has blessed the church with much growth in many areas in its 28 years of ministry.

This level of growth has led to a concern surrounding the adequacy of the training of adults in many areas and particularly in the big picture, meta-narrative story of

³Indiana Economic Digest, "Census Data," accessed October 1, 2012, <http://www.indianaeconomicdigest.net/main.asp?SectionID=315&ArticleID=58449>.

the Bible. For this project three groups of adults were targeted in a quest to assure that every adult who comes to College Park and engages in these venues is exposed to the meta-narrative of the Bible. The first group of this focus were those in the new member class. The church has conducted an orientation class for new members for many years. The goal was to introduce prospective members to many of the activities and distinctions of the church. In the 1990s, the class consisted of four Sunday sessions which utilized a workbook that covered the structure of the church, the practice of the church, and the ministries of the church; the fourth week allowed prospective members to give their personal testimonies to the elders in smaller groups.

In recent years a similar program was offered on a Saturday morning once per quarter. Good records are kept of the people in attendance, and a brief description of their testimonies is on record. Exact statistics are not catalogued, but the reports of many of the elders indicate that some are joining who have a weak knowledge of the Bible on many points and certainly on the big-picture message of the Scripture. One elder estimated that one in five of his interviews shows a marked deficiency in biblical awareness. Some have been well-churched and move smoothly through this class, and others struggle to articulate their understanding of the Bible as indicated by reports from many elders. College Park is a nondenominational church which probably contributes to the issue of some people who apply to join being unclear on doctrinal issues.

The church has been blessed with many desiring to join the fellowship. In 2012, 250 new members were accepted into fellowship, which is an average of over 60 per quarterly class. The Pastor of Assimilation is skilled at encouraging people to join and makes the class enjoyable, informative, and edifying. He has expressed a desire to improve the theological education aspect of this class. Finding the best venue for that goal has been his challenge.

The second focus group of adults targeted in this project is small groups. The small group initiative began about twelve years ago. It was an attempt to make “the big

church smaller.” The groups are limited to a maximum of eight couples, and the goal is to see people grow together in their love for the Lord and for each other. It is designed to contain an atmosphere of transparency, where people can share life together. Currently there are about 120 groups with close to 1,700 people in groups. The groups meet at houses of people in the church and are led by couples trained in leading small groups.

In discussions with two small group leaders, some problems in the program have been recognized. Both acknowledged the benefits of the small group ministry. They also saw some deficiency in the teaching aspect of the small groups. It is understood that teaching is accomplished in other venues at the church, but the leaders agreed that there was not consistency in the members’ understanding of the Scripture and certainly not an understanding of the big picture of the Bible. Training for small group leaders discusses the necessity of teaching but generally, the teaching consists of a discussion of the sermon from the previous week. Both leaders felt that they represented the majority of the small groups in that there was a mixture of biblical aptitude in the small groups, particularly in the meta-narrative view of the Bible.

The final adult focus group was the Adult Bible Fellowship ministry. There are eleven groups, all of which meet on Sunday morning during one of the three preaching times. The groups are led by strong teachers, and many of the classes have been in existence for fifteen to twenty years. Approximately 500 people attend these groups, and all available space is filled for Sunday mornings, so there is not room for much growth.

The classes began before small groups existed, when the church was smaller, and they were intended to address the needs of the congregation to meet in smaller groups for edification, accountability, and other aspects of church life which were not done well in a larger worship venue. The classes have a time of prayer and sharing, which is followed by a time of teaching. Teaching styles vary, as about one half teach in a lecture format and others seek for more interaction. The common trait is that most teach through

a book of the Bible. The teaching is well done; however, I teach one of these classes and can attest to the fact that the meta-narrative of the Bible is seldom addressed.

Rationale

In light of the ministry context, the rationale for this project is presented here. The leadership at College Park Church is not content merely to hope that all adults are exposed to the fundamental message of the Bible in the meta-narrative story of the Bible. The three venues mentioned in the context are the main venues where adults meet on a regular basis and where there is no plan in place to expose the people to the big story of the Bible. The small groups and Adult Bible Fellowship groups generally study specific books of the Bible and do not spend time putting the big picture together. In the new members' class, most of the time is invested in informing potential members of the format of the assembly and the opportunities for one to grow and minister as members.

Membership interviews by elders have indicated that a significant percentage (as many as one fifth or more) of the people desiring to join the church are unfamiliar with the basic story line of the Bible and most of the details of that story line. They have a claim to faith but have not been grounded in the basic story the Bible is designed to communicate. The church does not have a formal program in the adult education functions of the church to help to remedy that situation. This project provided material to help adults in the three adult teaching contexts better understand the meta-narrative of the Bible. The videos and workbooks, posted online and available in hard copy, made accessibility to the material user-friendly and convenient. The material can be used in a group context or by individuals. There is no reason that every adult at College Park Church cannot access this teaching and learn the overarching message of the Bible.

Definitions and Limitations

Meta-narrative of the Bible. The purpose of this project was to teach the biblical meta-narrative to the adults of College Park Church in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Biblical meta-narrative is the grid through which the Scripture seeks to show the big themes of the Bible as the many parts cohere into one large story. The categories of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration (or consummation) were used for the teaching.⁴

A more in-depth definition of the meta-narrative of the Bible warrants a closer look at the sub-points of the study. The first section, on creation, discusses the basic nature of God in terms of His triune essence, which is explained more clearly in later portions of the Bible, and gives a sampling of His attributes, which are reflected in His creation. The second section, on the fall, discusses the nature of man before the fall and the effects of the fall on individual humans as well as the human race and all of creation. The third section, on redemption, discusses the person of Jesus, leading to the atoning work of Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection. A discussion also centers on the application of that redemption toward sinners, including election, regeneration, faith, justification, and sanctification. The final section discusses the return of the Lord, the final judgment, the resurrection to eternal life or eternal death, and the new heavens and earth.

The project had certain limitations. The project was limited to fifteen weeks, though the actual program will go on much longer. The test groups were one new member class, one Adult Bible Fellowship class, and one adult small group. The total number of people was approximately 120. It was a cross-sampling of sorts, with new members, which included some who are new believers and some who have not been taught the Bible in depth. The Adult Bible Fellowship consisted of members who were better grounded in the Word. Finally, the small group included people who were committed to community, some of whom were not well trained in the Bible.

⁴G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 5.

Research Methodology

The first goal was to revise and adapt current church material to be used in the teaching of the biblical meta-narrative. An evaluation rubric was developed and consisted of questions designed to assure that the training material would effectively communicate the biblical meta-narrative. The questions evaluated the clarity, comprehensiveness, and applicability of the material. The evaluators marked several questions on a scale of “1” to “4:” “1” was insufficient, “2” required attention, “3” was sufficient and “4” was exemplary. The questions were designed to include evaluations of the workbooks as well as the videos. The goal was measured by a qualified group of evaluators using the rubric as a guideline. The evaluators included two people with advanced degrees in education and the writer’s assistant who is experienced in reviewing ministry material for its usability with people at College Park Church. I recruited these evaluators and distributed the material and rubric to them. Following their review and completion of the rubric, a discussion occurred and necessary improvements implemented. This goal was considered successfully met when all the evaluation indicators were marked at sufficient or above.

The second goal was to train three leaders to utilize the training material in specific settings: the new members’ class, a small group, and an adult Sunday school class. I met with these leaders and distributed the material in the videos and workbooks. The leaders went over the material on their own time and met with me within two weeks to follow up. This goal was measured as the leaders completed the questions in the workbook. The questions were divided into the four sections of the presentations. The questions centered on the topics of creation, fall, redemption and completion. The questions covered the material in the workbooks and the videos with some application questions included. This goal was successfully accomplished when the trainees verbally demonstrated that they were able to utilize the training materials in their settings.

The third goal was to increase the students’ knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative as the leaders taught the new members’ class, the adult Sunday school class, and the small group, using the videos and workbooks. I administered the pre and post-test to

the groups. This test consisted of two sections. The first section had general questions covering basic areas of biblical knowledge. The intent of these questions was to determine if the students had a limited knowledge of basic biblical content, which helped to see if there is a correlation between the students' understanding of the basic truths of the Bible, such as who Abraham and Jesus were, and their understanding of the biblical meta-narrative. The second section of the test included objective questions that tested the students' understanding of the biblical meta-narrative. These questions included true and false as well as multiple choice questions. The questions covered areas taught in the training material and the pre and post-test indicated positive results from the teaching. A paper copy of the test was administered and completed at the first day of the class and on the last day. This goal was measured as the students took the pre and post-test. This goal was successful when a t- test showed a positive statistical increase between the pre and post-tests demonstrating that there had been an increase in the knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative.

CHAPTER 2

A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR TRAINING THE ASSEMBLY IN THE BIBLICAL METANARRATIVE

This chapter provides a biblical basis for training people of the church in the truths of Scripture. The perspective of this study shows the need to see the big picture of the Bible and how the parts fit into the whole making for a unified meta-narrative. In this chapter, two Old Testament sections are reviewed as they pertain to this discussion. Deuteronomy 6:1-8 is a classic passage from Torah that describes education in the law and the ways of God.¹ The focus in this exposition is the foundation and priority of education. The first six chapters of Proverbs also demonstrate, in wisdom format, the need of education for the propagation of the faith of the father to his children.

In the New Testament, several passages in 1 Timothy bring light to Paul's perspective of education as he writes to his student in the faith, Timothy. Second Peter 3:21 and Matthew 28:19-20 are also part of the exegesis as they contribute to the biblical record concerning education and the need to teach beyond the church walls.

The Foundation and Priority of Education: Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Context

Deuteronomy 6 presents a valuable and insightful discussion of education for the covenant people of God. The context of this text is important as it is in the concluding book of Torah. Deuteronomy is the law reiterated for the people of the

¹Scripture references are from the English Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

conquest. Christensen asserts that the central event of Torah is deliverance from slavery. He then goes on to say that “the event of exodus calls for its counterpart in the ‘eisodus.’”² To go out assumes that one will also go in. Deuteronomy precedes the “eisodus” as Moses sets the stage for a well-educated, trained, and committed group of God’s covenant people who will know their God and center their world-life view and their lives on him. Wright comments, “Deuteronomy bends every rhetorical, literary, emotional, and moral skill to the task of equipping and motivating God’s people to live for the purposes of God in each generation.”³

The book of Deuteronomy begins with a call from Yahweh to Moses for the purpose of getting the people moving toward the Promised Land. Leaders are selected and warnings are issued. There is a summary of the wanderings years and the conquest of the major kings—Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan. The sad story is recited recalling the judgment of Moses such that he cannot enter the land but can see it from afar. The Ten Commandments (words) are repeated in chapter 5, which lead to the text of chapter 6 and the need for continued education. Each generation must be taught the full picture of God and his working in Israel’s history, his expectations for the present and the hope for the future.

Content of Education Is Found in Torah: Deuteronomy 6:1-3

Deuteronomy 6:1-3 sets the stage for the famous “Shema.” Moses references the Ten Commandments (or the Ten Words) delineated in chapter 5. Those commandments are to be Israel’s guide as they go over into the land to possess it. In 5:22-6:3 derivatives of the word *דָּבַר* are used eleven times demonstrating the importance

²Duane Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1-29:9*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 6a (Dallas: Word, 2001), 88.

³Christopher Wright, *Deuteronomy*, Understanding the Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 19.

of the word of Yahweh for the life of the Hebrews and the essential response of hearing the word. The objective, propositional word from God was to govern the world view of all of Israel. It was to become the controlling reality for the story of God's working in his creation. The all-inclusive influence of the word is to be the unfolding of the meta-narrative of God's story as it relates to his people. Wright appropriately states,

It is also a constant reminder that Israel was a people summoned by God to hear God's word. They were not merely spectators at a divine 'show,' but the recipients of divine revelation in words. These two verses expose the falseness of view that religious truth and revelation are "personal, not propositional"—i.e., the view that God does not reveal timeless truths propositionally.⁴

As the first three verses of Deuteronomy 6 provide a bridge between the Ten Commandments in chapter 5 and the Shema, Moses sets up a logical progression from the commands of God, the call to obey by all generations, and the result in the blessing of God. The blessings are in a "big picture" (or meta-narrative) story form describing "long days," many offspring, and a prosperous land to possess. God's big picture is centered in his glory, and those who "fear" him will share in the benefits of his glory that extend to every facet of life. The future for the people of God had great potential and hope. This future hope was the basis and content for the education of the Israelites. The hope nuance is always tempered with the prerequisite of obedience. Teaching is important in the quest to achieve obedience.

**The Focus of Education is Yahweh:
Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

One of the most important verses in the Old Testament is now recorded. The word *שמעו* is the same word used often in this text and most particularly in Exodus 4:1 and 5:1 as Moses introduces the Deuteronomic Decalogue with a very similar formula. The famous phrase following the call to hear is translated in several ways. Christopher Wright

⁴Ibid., 99.

navigates the options in a very helpful manner.⁵ He takes the “our God” as a functional relative clause translated “Yahweh, who is our God.” Then the question of debate is the last section of the verse and how to translate it. It could refer to Yahweh’s uniqueness as in “there is no one like him.” It could be a statement of a unity of will and purpose. There is no vacillation or unfaithfulness in Yahweh. He is one. It could also be a statement distinguishing him from the plethora of gods in the surrounding nations. The conclusion of Wright is very helpful:

Whether, then, we read the verse in terms of Yahweh’s incomparability (from the context, but not the text itself), his singularity (explicit, and probably the most likely meaning), or his integrity (implied, but not directly stated), it is clearly a most important text in relation to Israel’s monotheism.⁶

Israel would repeat these words in cultic worship and would be reminded that there is only one God and their relationship to him was of utmost importance.

Establishing with profound brevity the object of Israel’s life, the text goes on to command the hearers to love Yahweh with all of their being—“heart, soul, might.” The words are fairly common Hebrew words which create a merism or a statement of the extremes of human activity.⁷ The word for “love” is אהב and represents ancient treaty language as well as a father/son relational verbiage.⁸ The people of Yahweh were to be devoted relationally to their one God. He was to be the object of their whole beings. Love is certainly not primarily emotional in this passage, but is covenantal and relational.

Their love was to extend to all their being. The words used to represent his full nuance are לֵבָב (“mind, emotions”), נַפְשׁוֹ (“entire being”), and מְאֵד (“substance, household”).”

⁵Ibid., 95-97.

⁶Ibid., 100.

⁷Eugene Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 164.

⁸Peter Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 170.

Daniel Block defines these words as noted in the parenthesis above and then summarizes them by stating, “Verse 5 is not a Greek psychological statement but an emphatic reinforcement of absolute singularity of devotion to God.”⁹ When setting the oneness of God before the people, the expectation is that the people will be single minded in total worship and commitment to Yahweh. There is no room for incomplete allegiance. The character of the LORD demands nothing less than total commitment from his people.

Extent of Education Is to All Generations of All Time: Deuteronomy 6:7-9

This passage concludes with a string of imperatives designed to lead the covenant people in the teaching and transmission of Torah to all generations of all time. In verses 4-9 there are six verbs with imperatival force: “hear, love, teach, speak, bind, and write.”¹⁰ These verbs are used to encourage and command the followers of Yahweh to tangibly live out their covenant loyalty and to impress their offspring to follow in the ways of the LORD. More specifically, in verses 7-9 the teaching and learning actions are important. The Jews are commanded to teach their children diligently. The Hebrew term translated “teach” is *למד* and the first translation in the lexicon is “whet, sharpen” but the term in Deuteronomy is defined as “teach the words incisively.”¹¹ The emphasis and reason for this word seems to be for the diligent and important need to teach and pass on the love for the LORD.

Moses was very clear that the teaching of the nation was not just a class to take in school, but was to extend to all of life. Wright is helpful again as he sees the law

⁹Daniel Block, “How Many Is God? An Investigation into the Meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4-5,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 2 (2004): 202.

¹⁰Daniel Block, “Recovering the Voice of Moses: The Basis of Deuteronomy,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 no. 3 (2001): 395.

¹¹Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 1042.

applying to the individual (hands and foreheads), families (houses), and the public arena (gates).¹² The vastness and importance of this truth to be taught mandates diligent teaching in every aspect of life. When teaching the meta-narrative of the Bible to God's people, this approach of seeing every dimension of life as belonging to God whose mission extends to all of his creation is very helpful. It is not merely a one dimensional category of life. The Lord demands to be worshipped in every facet of life and the education of covenant people shows that.

Obviously some of the Jewish people took some of the instructions literally. They use phylacteries (on their foreheads) and mezuzot (by doorposts) to show complete fulfillment of this command. These could well have been meant to be literally followed, but the heart of loving the LORD was the crucial foundation for being right before God. The seriousness of the task of education is the point of the illustrations. It should be all encompassing and should fill every corner of the life of a follower of God. Block sees the New Testament as affirming this famous Old Testament command as Paul (the New Testament Moses) saw Torah as the "effective agent for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, and equipping for every good work."¹³

Carrying on the education of God's people following the emphasis of Deuteronomy 6 is seen in the rest of Deuteronomy in passages such as 6:20, 11:19, 31:13, and 32:46. Education of the next generation is not an option. Jesus refers back to this passage from Deuteronomy 6 as cited in Matthew 12:37 and Mark 12:29-30. Education is important for the worldview of all the people of God from all time. To see the unifying picture of the Godhead and how that is fleshed out in creation and the redeemed community is of utmost importance. In conclusion of this exegetical survey of Deuteronomy 6, it is obvious that education for the community of faith is imperative. It

¹²Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 99.

¹³Block, "Recovering the Voice of Moses," 408.

is holistic and affects every area of life. The full picture of God and the meta-narrative of his actions are the object of the education. He is “front and center” and is to be glorified.

Principles of Education—Selections from Proverbs

Context

Proverbs is a fascinating collection of Jewish wisdom literature. Hamilton argues that they are writings intended to show Solomon’s teaching of “obedience to Deuteronomy 6 filtered through his obedience to Deuteronomy 17.”¹⁴ Solomon as the primary author of the Proverbs was well aware of Torah and particularly of Deuteronomy and the need to be instructed and to follow the words of the law. Hamilton goes on to say that the Proverbs are “communicating the great truths of the tradition (which in this case stems from the Pentateuch and chiefly Deuteronomy) in new, surprising, and memorable ways.”¹⁵ While Deuteronomy 6 shows the foundation and priority of education for the people of God, Proverbs shows the principles of teaching truth to the covenant community. Some of the helpful principles of teaching taught in the Proverbs are the need to teach, the need to obey, and the understanding that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the benefits that wisdom living will bring. This section evaluates a few sample passages in the first nine chapters of Proverbs to demonstrate these teaching principles.

Two Sides to Education Are Instruction and Obedience: Proverbs 1:1-7

This passage is the prologue to Proverbs and is a helpful summary of the intent of the book. The writer is identified as Solomon, son of David, king of Israel. Verse 1 combined with verse 7 shows the background of the writer as one who is the king of the covenant people of Yahweh. Wisdom is crucial to proper covenant living and that

¹⁴James Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 190.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 191.

wisdom comes from instruction and obedience. Waltke comments,

The preamble, which was written for parents and teachers who will use the book articulates the book's aim (vv. 2-6) and its addressees, namely, Israel's educable youth (vv. 4-5). It also founds the book's theology and epistemology on the "fear of the LORD" (v.7).¹⁶

This book was written to enhance and promote education in Israel. Education was not optional but essential for the furtherance of the covenant community in right relationship with their God.

Each verse from 2 through 6, with the exception of verse 5, begins with לְ.

This Hebrew prefix with the infinitive verb is designed to show purpose.¹⁷ The following verbs and objects, "to know wisdom and instruction, to understand words, to receive instruction, to give prudence to the simple, to understand a proverb," are all actions that will allow the continuation of the covenant community. The purpose of education is to realize a people who live in wisdom which comes from the fear of the Lord. These words are all fleshed out in the book but, in this preface, the goal is to set the stage for the importance of teaching and instruction.

Verse 5 fits in the middle with the other side of teaching. Not only is teaching necessary, but so is learning and understanding. The wise will increase in their learning, and the one who understands will receive guidance. The students need to be committed to assimilating the material in mind and heart for the proper effect to be realized. The derivatives from the word "wise" are crucial to the teaching and learning of Proverbs. This paper deals with that concept at a later time, but the word forms for wisdom are used at least five times in the first seven verses of this book.

The conclusion to the preface is verse 7 and it is the focus of this section. It uses a typical Hebrew poetic technique of antithetic parallelism. The first line states the

¹⁶Bruce Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 174.

¹⁷Ibid.

positive and the second line describes its antithesis. The contrasts are between those who fear the Lord with the fool. Those who fear the Lord are on the road to knowledge and the fools want nothing to do with the Lord and hence, nothing to do with wisdom and instruction. “Fear” translates *יִרְאָה* which is a common word in Old Testament literature and certainly in wisdom writings. The concept begins and ends this book as in 1:7: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” and in 31:30 the “woman who fears the LORD.” At the heart of all teaching is the “fear of the Lord.”

The “fear of the Lord” is well summarized by Waltke. He argues that the connection of “fear” and “Lord” gets lost if the two ideas are not studied together. Like trying to understand a butterfly by looking at the words “butter” and “fly” will not bring a satisfactory meaning, so “fear” and the “Lord” separately studied are not helpful in knowing the concepts merged together in one thought.¹⁸ He goes on to suggest that understanding this phrase entails both a rational and non-rational aspects at the same time. On the rational side, there is an objective revelation of the Lord that is presented in commands and statutes describing the Lord and his desires. These statutes come from the Lord himself and are certainly relational but are equally propositional and objective. The Lord has made himself known in revelation.

There is also a non-rational side to the notion of fear. Fear has an emotional aspect to it as well. This emotion is seen in Deuteronomy 5:29 where Moses’ fear (emotion) and keeping commandments (rational) are juxtaposed as those concepts are to be married together in meaning. Waltke summarizes this discussion with “the son accepts the revelation because he fears and stands in awe of the LORD, who upholds the teaching that promises life to the obedient and threatens death to the disobedient.”¹⁹ Proverbs 1:1-7 is an excellent summary of the foundational principle of education being

¹⁸Ibid., 100.

¹⁹Ibid., 101.

the fear of the Lord. This fear of the LORD needs to be passed down with accurate and sufficient instruction and then must be obeyed by the people of the covenant to maintain a proper relationship with their God.

The Principle of Wisdom Is the Ultimate Goal of Instruction: Proverbs 9:9-10

Proverbs 9 deals with the principle of wisdom. The contrast in that chapter is between wisdom and folly. Both are personified as women who desire to bring people under their control. Obviously, control by wisdom brings the greatest benefit, although the lure may not be as great. The word for “wisdom” in Hebrew is חָכְמוֹת and is very prominent in the Proverbs. Koptak has written an excellent commentary on Proverbs and comments on wisdom saying, “When the Proverbs speaks of wisdom, it answers the question, ‘What does a person need to come of age, to become mature and take on responsibility of adult life?’”²⁰ On the same page Koptak follows Waltke in using the rational and non-rational in defining wisdom: “One might go a little farther and say that experience and observation together persuade the wise of the truth of Torah.” A good summary illustration of wisdom is “just as God acted to save Israel from its enemies as reported in the historical books, here God acts in love to preserve Israel in times of peace by means of wisdom.”²¹ Wisdom is invaluable as the goal for instruction and it is a gift from God that he will give to his people who fear him. This will enable them to live life in the fullest manner.

The focus of the text in Proverbs 9, is in verses 9 and 10. The parallel structures are part of the brilliance of Hebrew poetry. A wise man will become wiser with instruction. The word “wise” is in parallel structure to “righteous” in verse 9. An aspect of wisdom is righteous or being right before God. That is a gift from God that is

²⁰Paul Koptak, *Proverbs*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 39.

²¹*Ibid.*, 38.

found in the Old Testament and amplified in the New Testament with the new covenant. A man is able to be wise as he experiences righteousness from God. פִּדְיָהּ is an important Old Testament concept that involves a proper relation with God. In the context of Proverbs 9 wisdom is related to the fear of the LORD. That fear of the LORD is the beginning of this wisdom as stated in verse 10. The parallel to that clause is “the knowledge of the Holy is insight.” Knowing God is a necessary prerequisite to wisdom. In conclusion, wisdom is absolutely necessary as a goal of teaching. Wisdom assumes a fear of God and will result in understanding the best ways to live in this world created by God. A student who knows the Holy One will be a good recipient of instruction and will be considered wise.

Good Teaching and Obedience Lead to Fullness of Life: Proverbs 3:1-3

Proverbs 3 is not unusual in the Old Testament and particularly in Proverbs as a whole. Some proverbial promises indicate that following the teaching of wisdom will result in fullness of life. Verse 2 promises long life and peace. Long life without peace is not valuable, but together they are of high value. In verse 3 the writer seems to be looking at Deuteronomy 6 and uses the metaphors of binding love and faithfulness on the neck and writing them on the heart. Proverbs 6:21-22 repeats a similar concept. The idea is that one who follows wisdom and “trusts in the LORD with all their heart” will find their path straight” (Prov 3:5-6), which is a blessing worth pursuing. It would be foolish to ignore good teaching in wisdom or to find one unwilling to obey the way of wisdom. The benefits of listening and obeying are overwhelmingly beneficial.

The question of these seeming promises is that there is evidence that they do not always come to pass. How can Solomon promise what does not seem to be delivered on every occasion? Waltke, again, gives some assistance on this quandary when he lists

three observations that make the proverbs helpful.²² First, the promises do have some level of fulfillment observed. Those who are sober diligent and living in wisdom do generally live longer. Secondly, Proverbs also gives the balancing reality that at times it appears that the wicked prosper while the righteous falter. His final argument is the strongest: “The righteous rise in a blessed future that outlasts death.” The facts of life go beyond a temporary grave. If this were not true, martyrs would be failures as would the Son of God himself who would come 1,000 years after this book and prove that death is the way to eternal life. Wisdom allows one committed to the covenant keeping God to experience fullness of life today and exceeding abundantly more than that in the life after death.

In conclusion, Proverbs is a helpful book when considering education. It sets important principles for education such as the two parts of education as instruction and obedience. Both are essential. The instruction focus is on wisdom which finds its beginning in the fear of the Lord. The final principle mentioned is the positive results of teaching and obeying and following wisdom. There are many specific instructions in Proverbs such as teaching in relationships, both good and bad. Money is a topic as is hard work. Discipline of children and of oneself is commended. Solomon and the other writers took a holistic view of the world and spoke to the need to fear the LORD, which is the true act of wisdom. The writers understood, as did Moses in Deuteronomy, that the big picture of God and his working in the world will cause one to teach that story well and compel the students to obey. A student of wisdom will pour their efforts in seeing the big picture and making sure that his life conforms to the portrait of their Lord. That is wisdom and leads to the fullness of life.

²²Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs*, 108-9.

Training for the Preservation of Truth for the Household of Faith—Selections from the Letters of Paul to Timothy

Instruction Necessary for the Church in Light of False Teaching: 1 Timothy 1:3-5

The New Testament continues to admonish the need for the teaching of the people of God concerning his nature and his working in the world. The letters from Paul to Timothy speak to this issue with great passion. Timothy was the younger disciple of Paul and one of his best students. Paul continually encourages him to remember his training and to transfer that teaching to others who will continue the multiplication process. Mounce, in his lengthy commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, does a word analysis on Paul's use of terms speaking to the need for teaching. He lists 46 words in the Pastoral Epistles that describe "opponents' behavior and teaching."²³ These words are used 61 times. In another category, Mounce lists 62 words with 94 occurrences describing Paul's desire for positive teaching to occur in the church.²⁴ This kind of data affirms Paul's desire to see a teaching church function in light of the rise of false teaching.

Promptly at the beginning of the first letter from Paul to Timothy, the apostle discusses the problem of false teaching. In 1 Timothy 1:1, Paul tells Timothy that he was going to Macedonia and needed Timothy to remain in Ephesus in order to charge (ἵνα) false teachers to cease in their different doctrine. Paul did not merely give a command to Timothy without a purpose. The purpose is connected with a tough job. The word for "charge" (παραγγέλλω) with the infinitive and negative has the meaning of to "forbid to do something."²⁵ Timothy was urged to go after this real threat of false teaching by

²³William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 106.

²⁴*Ibid.*, cvi.

²⁵George Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Greek Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 72.

forbidding them from their continued action. Paul knew the danger of false teaching and also the advantage of biblical teaching in the truth.

In verse 4, Paul describes some of the flaws of the false teaching. It was certainly not in keeping with the Old Testament and the Judaism derived from there. The terms “myth” and “genealogies” give a background to their teaching. Mark Chavalas has a very helpful article that provides insight into myths and the Old Testament:

The goal of the Hebrews was to know God’s way in the world, since his wisdom was considered different than man’s wisdom. Myth was a product of man’s religious imagination, not the consequence of revelation. Myth emanated from man, not God. The biblical authors wrote from God’s perspective, a perspective where such myth had no place.²⁶

The Hebrew Old Testament was committed to an expression of God that was not tied into myths. It was a true story that summed up the person of God and his work in the world. The beauty of true doctrine is that it encompasses the meta-narrative of God’s person and work. False teaching attempts to minimize the big story by minimizing God and his work. The church must be continually sensitive to that challenge and teach the meta-narrative of God’s work in his world for his glory.

Paul then, in verse 5, expresses his heart. He uses the same word for “charge” in verse 3, but with a positive nuance. Before the word “charge” in verse 5, he inserts a conjunction that is not translated in the English Standard Version but is in the Greek text. The word $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ is a contrastive, adversative in this text to show Paul’s approach in his charge in contrast to the false teachers.²⁷ Paul was encouraging Timothy in his approach to the false teachers to demonstrate love which was not the “normal” approach to those with whom one disagrees. The love was to come from a “pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.” These three virtues set a backdrop for any educational endeavor.

²⁶Mark Chavalas, “The Historian, the Believer, and the Old Testament: A Study in the Supposed Conflict of Faith and Reason,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 2 (1993): 157.

²⁷Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 23.

When the teacher and learner realize that the goal of education can be best realized when the participants are living with a heart, conscience, and faith that is not speculative, but grounded in the God who has revealed himself.

In concluding this discussion, the fact of false teaching is a reality in a fallen world. That the church would be the object of this false teaching should not be a surprise. The word ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω (v. 3) is appropriate for the false teaching. It is teaching that is of “another sort.” It does not submit to the revelation of the true God and the big picture of his actions. The call to the church today is still the same. False teaching is combated by true teaching and is necessary for a pure church.

The Teacher must Live and Teach the Truth: 1 Timothy 4:14-16

First Timothy 4 is a helpful and sobering passage. It follows the requirements for an elder in chapter 3 which includes being able to teach. Chapter 4 begins with a section on those departing from the faith. Paul admonished Timothy to be a “good servant of Jesus Christ” as he does not fall into the trap of false teaching and leads others toward the truth. The end of the chapter includes instructions for Timothy in regard to the need to be continually aware of his need to stay true to his faith and to be faithful in his teaching and living.

In this short section of 1 Timothy 4:14-16, Paul issues five imperatives: “Do not neglect; practice; devote; keep a close watch; and persist.” Paul is instructing his younger student Timothy to remember his past recognition of his gifts. History can be very instructive in the perseverance during difficult times. The instructions continue with the words “practice” and “devote.” These are words of diligence and tenacity. Timothy cannot be a slacker in such important matters as preserving the truth. Paul ends this listing of imperatives with a strong appeal to Timothy and for all teachers of truth. He commands his student to “keep a close watch (ἐπέχω) on himself and the teaching.” Mounce comments on this word: “‘Watch’ can mean to ‘hold fast’ (Philippians 2:16

where the Philippians are to hold fast to the word of life) or to ‘aim at’ or to fix one’s attention on’ in Acts 3:5). Timothy must hold tightly to who he is and be persistent.”²⁸ There is intensity to the imperative that communicates diligent and close watch because the objects of the watching are so important as is the content of the teaching.

The objects of the watching are Timothy and his hearers as a teacher. His careful watch will insure the saving (σῶζω) of them both. Knight sees this saving as eschatological, not in the sense that Timothy can save himself or others, but rather that his teaching is a part of God’s means of supporting his people in persevering.²⁹ “Saving” requires persevering, and faithful teaching is a means whereby God completes the saving of his people who “persist” (ἐπιμένω) in the truth. False teachers will attempt to lure hearers away from the truth in the church and the teachers in the church must be faithful to watch their lives as they follow the truth, and to watch their teaching that it is faithful to God’s revelation. The end of false teaching will lead to a strong church, pursuing the kingdom of God with the gifts given to them by their King.

The Source of Truth in Teaching Is God’s Revelation: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Studying teaching in Timothy would not be complete without a review of one of the most familiar passages in Paul’s second letter to Timothy. Second Timothy 3:16-17 is a classic New Testament text for the significance of God’s revelation of himself in the Scripture as well as some of the effects that Scripture will have on the lives of its hearers and followers. This short passage contains a wealth of theological nuance. The scope of this paper does not warrant a full exegesis of all of the passage. Only a few items will be considered, but, in the end, this text is valuable for a sense of the value of teaching diligently the Scripture in the church and particularly the meta-narrative of the

²⁸Ibid., 265.

²⁹Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 212.

God-breathed text.

An interesting article devoted to the English reformers' view of inspiration is helpful to see the significance of this text. Philip Hughes writes on this topic and comments regarding these reformers insight into the value of Scripture:

The reformers were not mere academic theologians in retreat! They were in the thick of the battle. They proved for themselves the vitality and faithfulness of God's Word in the midst of fierce testing and persecution. The Bible was for them essentially a practical book, relevant to every circumstance of daily life and struggle.³⁰

Hughes goes on to quote Bishop Jewell:

"The holy Scriptures," says Jewel again, "are the mercy-seat, the registry of the mysteries of God, our charter for the life to come, and holy place in which God sheweth himself to the people, and mount Sion where God hath appointed to dwell forever. Heaven shall shake; the earth shall tremble; but the man of God shall stand upright. His foot shall not fail: his heart shall not faint: he shall not be moved. Such a ground, such a foundation, such a rock is the word of God."³¹

This older writer captured the value of Scripture as it presents the meta-narrative of the story of God as he reveals himself. It is the resource that sets the foundation for all teaching in truth. It is an essential and primary source to learning and understanding truth. It is the ultimate textbook of all teachers of truth.

Much is written on the exact content of the πᾶς γραφή. This paper adopts the position of many that it is referring to the Old Testament and could include the later inspired canon of the New Testament (though that would not be primary in Paul's mind). In thinking of the whole of the Old Testament, much of the meta-narrative of the story of God is there. It is clear to see creation, the fall, redemption (not fully but certainly in a shadow format), and consummation. Paul goes on in the text to comment that this γραφή has benefit for people. The first benefit mentioned is for "teaching" (διδασκαλία). Paul obviously knew that Scripture necessitates that it be taught. Knight writes,

³⁰Philip Hughes, "The Inspiration of Scripture in the English Reformers Illuminated by John Calvin," *Westminster Theological Journal* 23, no. 2 (1960): 138, quoting Bishop Jewell in "The Obedience of a Christian Man" in *Doctrinal Treatises*, 317.

³¹Hughes, "The Inspiration of Scripture," 139.

Paul makes a hermeneutical generalization to indicate to his readers why he is quoting a particular passage of scripture and applying its general truth to them. This is a practice that he, along with other writers of the NT and Jesus and the apostles in their preaching and teaching, followed regularly, as evidenced by the large number of OT quotations and allusions in the NT.³²

Obviously much can be taught of truth from natural revelation, but texts like 2 Timothy 3:16 make the Scripture the basis for all of truth as it is revelatory of God by his very breath in word form.

Much more could be said concerning education in the church from the letters to Timothy. There is a need to be faithful in teaching because the volume and tenacity of false teaching has not waned. If anything, it is stronger as the day approaches. Teachers must be careful to guard themselves and their character as well as the content of their teaching. It must be truth based. Finally, the Scripture is God-breathed (θεόπνευστος) and is the profitable source for teaching truth in Christ's church.

Training for the Discipleship of the World: Matthew 28:17-20

The last text to be studied regarding teaching the meta-narrative of the Bible is the concluding verses in Matthew's gospel. This passage has been quoted many times and used often in missions conferences. The scope of this paper and project is not education to those outside of the local church, but this passage helps to see one of the main purposes in education in a local church: to be equipped to go outside the church and make disciples by teaching. Teaching must not dead end in the church. This text of Matthew is an appropriate conclusion to this chapter. Keener divided these few verses in a very helpful outline that is followed next.³³ His outline divided into verses 16-17 as the faith and unbelief section; verses 18-20 as Jesus' identity; and finally, verses 19-20 as the mission of the church.

³²Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 449.

³³Craig Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 715-21.

Teaching the Bible Realizes Faith and Unbelief: Matthew 28:17

This verse is challenging and helpful in the quest to educate others in Christian truth. The text says that “when they saw him, they worshiped him and some doubted,” which is sobering. Why would all not believe as they anticipated the risen Lord’s appearance to them? The meaning of the short text has been debated. The text suggests that even among the most intimate of those following Jesus, there were still doubters. Bruner writes, “Matthew tells his church that the structure of Christian faith and life is bipolar: Disciples live their lives between worship and doubt. . . . Christians are both believers and doubters, adoring and wondering, trusting and questioning.”³⁴

For teachers and disciple makers, this realization is helpful. God ultimately gives the gift of faith. Teachers need to be faithful in proclaiming the truth, but must also realize that the goal of faith is not a legitimate educational goal. God alone can bring about belief. The word for doubt (δισταύζω) is an unsettling word for this context. Louw and Nida comment on suggested translations for this word into other languages: “In a number of languages ‘doubt’ is expressed by means of idioms, for example, ‘to have two thoughts’ or ‘to think only perhaps’ or ‘to believe only a little’ or ‘to question one’s heart about.’”³⁵ Those exposed to the truth of God and his kingdom will find times of doubt. By grace, many will be given the grace to overcome their doubt, but others may not. As teachers of God’s Word, the call is to be faithful regardless of the outcome.

Teaching the Bible Will Be Centered in Jesus: Matthew 28:18-20

There are two major comments about Jesus in this passage. First, he says he has been given all authority in heaven and earth. Secondly, he is included in the

³⁴Frederick Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990) 2:810.

³⁵J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 1:370.

Trinitarian statement of verse 19 making him the object of baptism. Unfolding these concepts is helpful in understanding Jesus as nothing less than God and seeing him as the center of the meta-narrative of the Bible.

First, in regard to his comment of authority in verse 18, the scope of that authority is in heaven and earth, which sets a context that spans from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 21:1, virtually the entire Bible. There is no place or time where the risen Lord does not possess authority. The teaching of the meta-narrative of the Bible sees the unifying factor of the message found in the triune God of whom Jesus is the authoritative manifestation of the godhead for all of humanity. It is his story. The nuance behind “ἐξουσία” probably comes from Daniel 7:13-14. Bruner describes,

Authority is Matthew’s favorite noun for describing Jesus (7:29; 8:9; 9:6; 10:1; 21:23,24,27) and it almost has the weight of our English “deity.” And when Jesus now claims all executive power, not only in heaven, but also on earth, he means that he is the chief executive officer of the universe, in complete control of the world.³⁶

In viewing education, the teaching must recognize the center of the meta-narrative to be in Jesus who has been given all authority in heaven and earth.

Secondly, the most profound Trinitarian formula of verse 19 centers on the dynamic reality of the essence of the Godhead. There is not enough space in any paper to deal with the reality of a triune God. The intent of this paper is not to tackle that topic, but as the topic of the message of the Bible and the teaching of that message is discussed, this verse throws out the core of all things. God himself is pictured in his triune Glory. Jesus who claims authority is also nothing less than God. He shares in his essence with the Father and Spirit. Taking verse 18 and 19 together allows the reader to see the centrality of Jesus for the story of the Bible. The Bible is Christo-centric and so the teaching of it should follow. Baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit is not merely a hollow formula. It is intended to demonstrate the focus and center of faith and practice. The disciple needs to be taught in the things of this God and his work in the

³⁶Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:813.

world and that begins with a statement of association and identity as the disciple is baptized. Jesus is indeed the center of all that is taught from God's self-revelation in his Word.

Teaching the Bible Will Extend to All the World: Matthew 28:19-20

Now the final section on Matthew 28 is explored. In Matthew 28 Jesus minces no words. The mission of God is to see to it that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14). The imperative in these verses is “make disciples” (μαθητευω). The two participles that follow modify and explain the process of discipleship. “Baptizing” and “teaching” are the functions of disciple making. Since this paper is concerned with teaching, the content of teaching extends to “all that I have commanded you” and the objects needing the teaching are the disciples of all nations (ἔθνος). Louw and Nida describe this term as the “largest unit into which the people of the world are divided on the basis of their constituting a socio-political community—‘nation, people.’”³⁷ Teaching the full message of the Bible is to go to all who are becoming disciples. Included in that number are the people in the church at College Park in Indianapolis. From that church (and others), the teaching is to extend to all the earth, which is the mission of God which he has entrusted to his church. The book of Matthew ends with some encouraging words for any educator and church. Jesus promised to be with “you always.” The very real presence of the Lord who has all authority is promised to his band of disciple-makers. The teachers are to tell the whole story of Jesus which is the greatest story ever.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a biblical and theological basis for teaching the church in the biblical meta-narrative. Several passages in both the Old and

³⁷Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:129.

New Testament were considered. Deuteronomy was helpful in seeing the priority of education. Proverbs described some principles for the work of education. Timothy included some passages for the teaching of people in the body of Christ, and finally, Matthew showed the extension of church's teaching as it would be expanded to the nations. The conclusion of this study is that the church must be involved in teaching. The meta-narrative presentation is a way to see the "forest" of the story of God in the Bible, not merely the "trees." It fits well in the Old Testament injunction to educate in all the statutes and commandments of the LORD (Deut 6:2) and the New Testament instruction to "teaching them to observe all that I commanded you" (Matt 28:19). The Bible is the guide and the mission is to follow the Lord who has all authority and promises his presence with his people "until the end of the age."

CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES IN TEACHING
A BIBLICAL META-NARRATIVE

The purpose of this chapter is to present material that helped in the preparation and presentation of teaching the biblical meta-narrative for the church. The first section reviews the history and current state of the discipline of biblical theology. It is of utmost importance to know the content of the meta-narrative as demonstrated by the biblical authors in the composition of the Bible. There is a look at the history of the field, with particular focus on the evangelical presentation of the information. The section includes a presentation of the “big story” in a way that is digestible for laymen in the congregation. In light of the intended audience, this chapter also discusses methods of adult learning, with a goal to better understand how to communicate with that age group. Finally, chapter 3 analyzes some methods that have been successful in teaching adults, as a method to present the material was very important.

Foundation in the Study of Biblical Theology

Elmer Martens clearly defines biblical theology: “Biblical theology is that approach to Scripture which attempts to see material holistically and to describe this wholeness or synthesis in biblical categories.”¹ Hamilton takes the definition a bit deeper as he argues that “the biblical theologian who writes in the service of the church does so to elucidate the biblical worldview, not merely so it can be studied, but so that is can be

¹Elmer Martens, “Flourishing and Foundering of Old Testament Theology,” in *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 169.

adopted.”² The implications of this statement argue that the biblical writers had a worldview based on their knowledge of God and that it is stated in the consistent treatment of the material in the Bible. The goal of the biblical theologian (or any theologian) is to extract that information, not to create new information concerning God.

Biblical theology does not have as long a history chronologically as other biblical study disciplines. Martens traces the history of biblical theology to Gabler in 1787 as Gabler argued for this approach over systematic theology.³ Martens then sees the movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries toward historical criticism and a more liberal approach to the study of the Bible. It seems that evangelicals (in the twentieth century) shied away from biblical theology and pushed toward exegetical or systematic/dogmatic theology, which helped to secure beliefs they held dear and pure. Paul House sees an encouraging evangelical engagement in biblical theology:

Though biblical theology did fall on hard times among mainline authors, the situation was somewhat different among evangelicals during the 1970’s and 1980’s. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Elmer Martens, William J. Dumbrell and others wrote OT theological works. George Eldon Ladd, F. F. Bruce, Donald Guthrie, and others penned volumes on NT theology.⁴

Obviously others have authored good works and the movement of biblical theology continues making noise in the realm of biblical studies, even in conservative circles.

Strategies of Biblical Theology

The implementation of biblical theology has taken on many forms. The challenge is to think through all the material in the Bible and attempt to find the unifying, connecting theme(s) that are inherent in the text. This approach assumes that the Bible is

²James M. Hamilton, Jr., *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 41.

³Ibid., 169-81.

⁴Paul R. House, “Biblical Theology and the Wholeness of Scripture,” in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Scott J. Hafemann (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 271.

more one book rather than sixty-six separate books, and it is understood to be a unifying structure in the whole of the message of God's Word. Three authors are reviewed as to their different approaches to this study, believing that there are probably several angles from which to view the material in the Bible.

T. Desmond Alexander. T. Desmond Alexander has written a stimulating book called *From Eden to the New Jerusalem* in which he discusses biblical theology from the vantage point of several themes threaded through the Bible.⁵ He sets his study with the approach of starting at the end and then seeing the beginning and middle.⁶ This method allows the reader to see the "longed for" New Jerusalem and how the reality of Eden and the intervening history move toward that goal. One of the thread themes he weaves relates to experiencing the presence of God. He relates the presence of God in Eden (garden temple),⁷ the tabernacle, the temple, the church, and finally, the New Jerusalem. He relates the Ark of the Covenant to the footstool of God as his throne in heaven extends to the Holy of Holies and the Ark in particular.⁸ After an extended chapter on the theme of God's presence with man, Alexander moves to the theme of the challenge to God's throne and the reestablishment of his sovereignty.⁹ He enumerates four other themes and brilliantly weaves them through the pages of the Bible. The themes are exciting, and the unity of the Bible is demonstrated convincingly. The method does not demand only one unifying theme, but does seek to see themes woven throughout the whole canon as presented by the Bible, not as a template over the Bible.

⁵T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 5-6.

⁶Ibid., 10.

⁷Ibid., 25.

⁸Ibid., 33.

⁹Ibid., 91.

James M. Hamilton, Jr. The second strategy of the exercise of biblical theology is demonstrated very capably by James Hamilton in *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*. Hamilton argues for a single theme that unifies the Bible; that theme is expressed in the title of his book. He adds that his thesis is supported “by describing the literary contours of the individual books in canonical context with sensitivity to the unfolding meta-narrative.”¹⁰ His approach sees the nature of biblical revelation to support the reality of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.¹¹ He traces the unifying theme of God’s glory in salvation through judgment through the canonical Bible. He follows other theologians in looking at the Hebrew canon for the order of the specific books. In Torah, Hamilton traces the story of Exodus 34:6-7 throughout several strategic passages showing the unifying theme of the gracious God who also judges and does it all for his glory.¹²

In the section on the prophets, Hamilton works through the biblical data and shows judgment in the later prophets in fulfillment of Torah cursings, but also demonstrates the hope of restoration after exile to an eschatological Messianic reality.¹³ The Psalter is discussed with emphasis on the five-book structure, which helps in linking poetic literature to the narrative story line of Israel. Even the superscriptions are helpful in placing the poems in a context.¹⁴ The New Testament is covered in a similar fashion, with an important section on typology and its role in linking the texts together.¹⁵ In this short chapter on Revelation, Hamilton sees Revelation 11:15-19 as the center of the book

¹⁰Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, 44.

¹¹Ibid., 49.

¹²Ibid., 133.

¹³Ibid., 266.

¹⁴Ibid., 278

¹⁵Ibid., 365-66.

and of the whole Bible.¹⁶ “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever” (Rev 11:15). The beauty of Hamilton’s work is that there is only one central theme to follow. The corresponding challenge is being assured that there really is only one central theme. If there is, this meta-narrative suggestion fits the data very well.

Stephen Dempster. The final strategy of doing biblical theology is fleshed out in *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, by Stephen Dempster, in which Dempster presents a literary approach to biblical theology.¹⁷ The book is set to observe the Old Testament in light of the Hebrew canon, so it has a canonical approach of sorts, as does Hamilton. There is also an overarching theme, which is in the title, but Dempster seems to be more focused on the design of Tanakh and the unity of the whole of revelation. He states that “the overall design of the Tanakh provides a hermeneutical lens through which its content can be viewed.”¹⁸ This literary approach is well managed in the book. Going to the middle of Tanakh, the narrative of 2 Kings 25:27 tells of hope for an exiled king,¹⁹ and at the end of Tanakh, the idea of seven seventies promises restoration from the great exile.²⁰

The narrative principle of theme is carried throughout the book, with the thematic connection of dominion and dynasty leading the way. The emphasis seems to be on the structure, order, and message of the text more than on the repetition of the theme, which makes his approach seem a bit more robust than a biblical theology driven

¹⁶Ibid., 544.

¹⁷Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2003), 13.

¹⁸Ibid., 42.

¹⁹Ibid., 233.

²⁰Ibid., 50.

by one theme. The conclusion of the work sets the stage for the New Testament, with a theme connecting the testaments as Matthew opens with a genealogy showing the continuation and pinnacle of the dynasty.²¹ The three writers cited in this section show much similarity in their commitment to allowing Scripture to speak for itself and to finding the unity of the whole text. Dempster and Hamilton show much in common, and Alexander complements their approaches. Together, the lesson to follow is not to die for one approach, but to benefit from various complementary angles to view the dynamic message of God's Word.

Warrant for Biblical Theology from the Scripture

It is not hard to find a biblical warrant for practicing biblical theology. In 2 Timothy 3:15 Paul says of Timothy, "From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation." Mounce notes that the "anarthrous plural is a technical expression for the Hebrew Scripture."²² This does not diminish the eternal deity of Jesus, but shows his advent in the line of Old Testament promise. Jesus spoke to men on the road to Emmaus and "beginning with Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." These things must be similar to the learning achieved by Timothy. John Nolland suggests that the designation of Moses and the prophets probably expected the inclusion of the writings.²³ Jesus thought canonical Bible study was important, Timothy's mom and grandmother thought he needed it, and it seems to make sense that the church needs to have a full-orbed view of God's revelation to fully know him as revealed in Scripture.

²¹Ibid., 232.

²²William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 563

²³John Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35c (Dallas: Word, 1993), 2005.

In Old Testament literature the love of the law and the need to incorporate it seems inarguable. Psalm 119 is given in its entirety and in beautiful poetic fashion to the exaltation of Torah as representing the Word of God. The Psalm 19 exclaims the same notion, and in verse 10 God's words are described to be more desirable than "gold even much fine gold; sweeter than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb." Deuteronomy 6 has the children of Israel teaching their children diligently so that the words of God would be in their "hearts" as noted in verse 6. Duane Christensen makes an interesting observation as he relates the "heart" of Deuteronomy with the "heart" where the new covenant will be written in Jeremiah 31:31-33.²⁴ The connection between the Torah of Deuteronomy, the writings of Psalm 119, the prophecy of Jeremiah, the hermeneutics of Jesus, and the teaching to Timothy make a strong case for the need and value of biblical theology. It must be a reality for the people of God to have a heart for God who demands the hearts of his true people.

Value of Biblical Theology Seen by Example and Application

When one thinks of the message of the Bible and how it fits together, one theme that seems clear is that the story is redemptive in nature and God-exalting in its focus. The theme of "son" threads its way in the whole of the Bible, giving unity to some of its divergent parts. In Genesis 3:15, the seed of the woman will crush the serpent. This cryptic verbiage starts a redemptive thread that goes throughout Scripture. The seed theme is evidenced in the infertility of the women in Genesis and leads to the killing of Egyptian first born males preceding the exodus. The rise of the monarchy was highlighted by the statement of God through Nathan to David in 2 Samuel 7:14 that God "will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son."

The seed continues in the vice regent of God in Israel's king. Psalm 2 carries

²⁴Duane Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1-29:9*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 6a (Dallas: Word, 1991), 144.

this same idea as the son is begotten, referring to the king and the future anointed, messianic king of God's people. Peter Craigie comments on this passage: "I have begotten you means more than simple adoption . . . and implies that a 'new birth' of a divine nature took place during the coronation."²⁵ This "son" theme is expressed in Isaiah 9:6 and looks for the messianic son to be born who will shoulder the government of God's people as the true son of David. The New Testament continues the theme as a son is born who will save his people (Matt 1:21). The apostle John, in John 1:12, carries the son theme to all those who receive Jesus and even uses "new birth" verbiage to describe the sons of God in chapter 3. Revelation 21:7 brings the story to its triumphal climax with the statement that "the one who conquers will have his heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son." What a marvelous thread of redemptive history as the Son brings many sons to glory.

Christopher Wright's book, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, gives some application of the type of themes seen in the preceding paragraphs.²⁶ Wright sees the grand theme of the Bible to be the mission of God. The people of God are responsible to get in line with His mission.²⁷ His mission is to redeem the world by making sons of the rebels. Wright calls God's people to see how they can fit into God's story, rather than debate how God fits into their story. Looking to make one's life fit his purpose is more important than finding the purpose for one's life.²⁸ Biblical theology done well will call the church to a life that is befitting the life of a son of God.

²⁵Peter Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Waco: Word, 1983), 67.

²⁶Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2006), 533-34.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 30.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 533-34.

In recent months, several new evangelical treatments of biblical theology have been published that offer much value in study. G. K. Beale wrote a volume that is a massive treatment of New Testament biblical theology and includes several hundred pages dealing with the Old Testament and a full scope of biblical theology.²⁹ Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum added to the literature with a book on the value of covenant in thinking through biblical theology.³⁰ Finally, Thomas Schreiner wrote a biblical theology following his New Testament theology.³¹ His goal was to weave the kingdom of God throughout the entirety of the Bible. God has blessed his church with many great resources to know him and to better study his Word. These aids will all be of service to the church in knowing the meta-narrative of God's revelation and to minister in the context of God's revelation not man's viewpoint.

The call to the people of God is to get to the task of knowing God through his scriptures as he revealed them. A study of the meta-narrative is the way to see the large picture of the Bible which fits the details into their proper place. Work and proverbial "blood, sweat, and tears" is necessary to grasp the meta-narrative, but there is no way around it. Bruce Waltke says that "many Christians should feel undernourished because they live lives on ten Bible texts."³² There is a need to revive the spirit of Timothy, the psalmists, and all of the biblical writers. Humans need to delight in the law of the Lord (Ps 1:2) and to commit their lives to the knowledge and service of the King, because "to Him be the glory forever." A better ability to evaluate biblical theology helps the teacher and student learn the meta-narrative of the Bible for the health and growth of the church.

²⁹G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011).

³⁰Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

³¹Thomas Schreiner, *The King In His Beauty* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013).

³²Bruce Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007) 16.

Analysis of Studies Concerning Adult Learning

A discussion concerning the topic of adult learning is helpful when thinking of the best approach to teach the biblical meta-narrative to the church. This section includes a review of the significance of Bloom's taxonomy as it relates to levels of learning. Some theories of adult learning are considered and applied to education of adults in a church setting. Finally, an analysis of methods of teaching yields some conclusions to help apply the theory to the reality of teaching in the church to the beauty of the big story of the Bible.

Bloom's Taxonomy and Human Learning

In the discipline of education, Benjamin Bloom wrote over one half a century ago, but his basic classification of learning domains is still of value. He divided learning into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor.³³ These categories have aided educators in encouraging the development of robust teaching objectives that speak to the various domains of human learning. Education in a church context is important, as the first chapter of this paper demonstrated, and this education is best achieved when the body of Christ is committed to knowing God and learning in community.

LeRoy Ford gives a more contemporary description of Bloom's taxonomy in the area of cognitive learning. Cognitive learning is learning that relates to recall and assimilation of data. Ford describes six cognitive classes. The first is knowledge, which involves simple fact recall. The second level is comprehension, where the learner can express the concepts in other words. Third is application, and the learning suggests new areas in which to use the knowledge. Fourth is analysis, where the learner breaks down the material into its various parts. Fifth, the learner applies synthesis and puts parts together to come up with something totally new. Finally, evaluation is where the student

³³Benjamin Bloom, ed., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I* (New York: David McKay, 1956), 7.

makes value judgments on the data learned.³⁴ All these areas are important for positive learning and need to be considered as a teaching strategy is developed. Teaching the meta-narrative of the Bible lends itself to thinking in most of these learning categories.

Ford then discusses the categories of learning in the affective domain. The affective domain involves learning in the areas of attitudes and values and appreciation. This domain is more difficult to evaluate, but is important in teaching and learning. Ford discusses the five levels of learning in this domain. First, the learner receives the material and learns that it exists. Second, the person receiving the material responds to it with many options of perception. Third, the student places some value on the material under consideration. Fourth, organization takes place as the student brings several values to bear on the situation. Finally, characterization happens as the learner's lifestyle is changed, or not, by virtue of exposure to the material.³⁵ These categories may be difficult to see and analyze, but they are important as goals for teaching adults. The study completed by Bloom years ago is still valuable in developing educational material for adults in the church today. Goals for teaching in the church should strive to address these levels of learning in the cognitive and affective domains of human learning.

Theories of Adult Learning

Bloom helps the teacher and student to realize what levels of learning are needed for a robust learning environment. There are also several theories as to the reality behind adult learning. Reviewing some of these theories helps to develop methods for teaching adults in the church. Rick and Shera Mellick wrote a helpful book that is used to guide this discussion of the theories of adult learning.³⁶ They argue that adults and

³⁴LeRoy Ford, *Design for Teaching and Training* (Nashville: Broadman, 1978), 81.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 271.

³⁶Shera Mellick and Rick Mellick, *Teaching that Transforms: Facilitating Life Change through Adult Bible teaching* (Nashville: B & H, 2010).

children learn differently and that the goals of teaching are often somewhat different. The goal is not merely to force material to the adult for learning, but to help the adult learner desire and seek after learning for the purpose of transformation. A good adult education opportunity should not have the learners doubting the value of the teaching. The learners participate in the class such that the teaching and learning combine to bring transformational principles to the learner.

In simplistic categories the educational concept of learning can be thought of in two extremes.³⁷ One view is more behaviorist, with the teacher being central and learning being unidirectional. The teacher teaches content, and the student learns and behaves accordingly. On the other extreme, the constructivists emphasize thinking rather than rote behavior. The students are the focus and are given experiences whereby they can develop thinking skills and arrive at conclusions. Given these extremes, the most advantageous theory of learning combines both concepts. The best teaching and learning environments include both memory and behavior skills. With adults, there is also opportunity to work through situations to arrive at self-directed conclusions.

Three general categories of adult learning theory help to summarize the studies completed in recent years. The categories tend to move up from the simplest to the more complex. The first category is “andragogy,” which is generally defined as adult education in contrast to education of children. Its vague definition caused it to be of questionable value in the discussion of adult learning, as is demonstrated next. The second category of adult learning is called “self-directed.” This moves toward the learning style that requires the learner to be more active in learning. The third and final category of learning is “transformative learning theory.” This theory moves to the upper level of learning, where the learner learns to experience transformation of some area of life. This kind of perspective fits well into a church setting as the teaching and learning

³⁷Ibid., 102-7.

of the meta-narrative of the Bible is designed to be an instrument of the Spirit to transform people into the image of Jesus. The final category would be preferred and relies on other categories to set the stage for that to be realized.

Andragogy—Theory 1 of adult learning. Andragogy was popularized by Malcolm Knowles in 1968 as an attempt to separate adult education theory from child education (pedagogy) and other areas in the discipline of education. Melich summarizes the basis of the work of Knowles: “As a person matures his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directed human being.”³⁸ Adult education realizes that the learner is different than a child and that the motivation for learning is different with a great ability to see the results of learning in a more practical manner. Adult learning styles should recognize differences from those of children.

Knowles is criticized for a weak definition of his theory; it is too general in its scope and definition. While this is true, some real benefits were derived from his work. He helped others to recognize that adult students need to be more active in the process of learning. Principles for teaching adults should include the adult learners in goals, techniques, and outcomes. Andragogy did not work out all of the theory of adult education, but did stimulate studies that fleshed out adult learning styles and perceived needs.

Rick Melick, a Christian educator, evaluates andragogy in regard to education in the church. He suggests that andragogy has a more secular, humanistic premise that creates some tension in church education. The student becomes the director of his or her own needs. The educator is merely a facilitator to help meet needs. Christian education sees topics such as the meta-narrative of the Bible as centered on God, and the goal of education is to bring humanity into submission to God. Human needs are defined by

³⁸Ibid., 108.

God's Word and purposes.³⁹ With that said, the principle of self-learning for adults and the recognition that adult experience can be helpful in the educational process have allowed Christian educators to develop more meaningful experiences for adults in the church.

Self-directed learning—Theory 2 of adult learning. Self-directed learning is a further development of the more general explanation of adult learning in the andragogy theory. Caffarella explains,

Currently three principal, but distinct, ideas are incorporated into the concept of self-directed learning: a self-initiated process of learning that stresses the ability of individuals to plan and manage their own learning, an attribute or characteristic of learners with personal autonomy as its hallmark, and a way of organizing instruction in formal settings that allow for greater learner control.⁴⁰

The various models of self-directed learning mentioned in the literature tend to move the learning process from the instructor to the adult learner. One of the clearer models of self-directed learning listed four stages, from dependent on the teacher, to interested motivated learner, to an involved student who is engaged with the teacher, and concludes the learning with a study group activity or an internship type result.⁴¹

Rick Melick summarizes this model for a Christian educator well when he says, "Self-directed learning . . . enables the conception of an instructional model that pictures the instructor moving from authority, to facilitator, to consultant, as the Christian learner moves from being hand-fed baby food to self directed meat eater."⁴²

Transformative learning theory—Theory 3 of adult learning. The final learning theory to be discussed is the transformative learning theory. As the name

³⁹Ibid., 114.

⁴⁰Rosemary Caffarella, "Self Directed Learning," in *An Update on Adult Learning Theory*, ed. Sharon B. Merriam (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 25-26.

⁴¹Melick and Melick, *Teaching that Transforms*, 124.

⁴²Ibid., 126.

suggests it is a progression in the discussion of learning, which includes the results that lead to changes in the student. Jack Mezirow is credited with the initial formalizing of this theory and describes it as

the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating and integrating perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings.⁴³

The literature suggests four approaches to the transformative learning model. First, the cognitive-rational approach uses critical reflection and rational thought to generate discussions that bring about change. A second approach is emancipatory and seeks the result of liberation and empowerment and social justice. Third, is an approach called developmental, which recognizes transitions in the learning and a need for mentors to facilitate the transformation. Finally, the spiritual theory looks at the soul and inner reality beyond merely the rational and seeks to find growth in that human domain.⁴⁴

From the vantage point of a Christian educator, the last approach is interesting. Christians desire change in life and seek to grow through knowing God. A study of the biblical meta-narrative is designed to open the minds of Christians and to help them to grow spiritually, to be transformed, and to see how their lives fit into the big story of God in his Word. Melick and Melick, in their helpful book, bring to light three major problems with the secular view of transformative learning.⁴⁵ The transformative theorists believe that truth and knowledge are relative. The epistemological basis of the theory is in the innate goodness of man and his ability to determine truth, which contradicts the biblical reality of truth that sees man as blind and in need of help to see truth that will transform lives. Second, the transformative theorists generally value inclusiveness and

⁴³J. Mezirow, *Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1991), 167.

⁴⁴Melick and Melick, *Teaching that Transforms*, 135.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 145.

acceptance. The Bible argues strongly for exclusiveness and the absolute reality of truth. The final critique of this approach, suggested by secular educators, is that it looks for greater truth as dialogue synthesizes various concepts into a new paradigm that is superior. Truth is constantly developing. The biblical approach, seen well in a study of the meta-narrative, does not see a progressing God, but a God who is immutable and who works out his will in his creation to his glory. The need of the educator and the student is to believe in him and his plan for his world and to bring that to bear on their own lives and on their world. Transformation is important, but only as it moves the student to the absolute truth of God and his kingdom.

Melick and Melick utilize some of the principles of the transformative theory of learning and bring them into a model that fits a Christian world-life view. A five-step system is described in the end of their book. The steps are helpful for Christian educators and were helpful for the project proposed in this paper. Step 1 is “relationship,” which has the teacher connecting to God and the learners. Step 2 is “relevance,” where the teacher connects the learner to the governing objectives of the learning session. Step 3 is “revelation,” as the teacher connects the learner to the biblical, historical truth of the Scripture passage. “Responsibility” is the title of the step 4, as the teacher connects the learner to biblical application of the study. Finally, the last step is “results,” where the teacher connects the learner to appropriate life responses.⁴⁶ An understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in transformation is accepted in this model, and the goal is transformed believers.

This learning theory was a backdrop to the teaching methods in this project. The teaching was in a church context, using a new members class, an ABF class, and a small group. Relationship is encouraged in those venues. The relevance of the teaching was expressed in the very beginning as the study of the meta-narrative is not merely an

⁴⁶Ibid., 257.

intellectual exercise but a life-transforming tool. The Bible was the main text and applications are suggested. The desired final results were for conversion, if needed, as students were confronted with the big story of the Bible and should evaluate their lives in the light of God's revelation. The students were also encouraged to share the story with others.

Methods of Teaching Adults

This chapter reviewed the study of biblical theology in the first section. The second section was designed to look at some theories of creating educational objectives, theories, and now, methods of teaching. There are many approaches to methodology of teaching. Melick and Melick organized their teaching lessons into four categories: “objective”—desired outcomes; “descriptions”—active responses of obedience from students; “methods”—ways to challenge the learners; and “evaluation”—criteria to determine success in the teaching endeavor.⁴⁷

Another book that deals with methods of teaching suggested a more detailed and helpful approach to methodology in teaching. McKenzie and Harton outline five steps in setting the method for instructional planning. Step 1 is the formulation of instructional objectives. This paper already addressed this step with a review of Bloom's taxonomy. These objectives should be stated behaviorally so that they can be evaluated. They should also include objectives that are objective and affective. Objectives should be clearly communicated to the students. Step 2 is the selection of resources, which can involve a purchased curriculum or one that can be procured by the teacher. The challenge is to find material that helps to realize the objectives.⁴⁸

Step 3 is the selection of techniques. Techniques used are “lecture, role play,

⁴⁷Ibid., 293.

⁴⁸Leon McKenzie and R. Michael Harton, *The Religious Education of Adults* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2002), 181-210.

group discussion, video presentation, simulation games, panel, forum, and symposium.”⁴⁹

In this project the teaching methods consisted of an online video series and online workbooks (see chapter 1). These resources were complemented with questions for discussion and teaching in the various settings. The videos were used to train the teachers and the students alike. In selecting methods, consideration must be given to the objectives and desired outcomes. The teacher must also be sensitive to the time allocation for the teaching session. The abilities of the teacher and knowledge of the audience are important in selecting methods. Changing of methods can be helpful in teaching and in learning material over a period of time.⁵⁰

Step 4 is to sequence the instructional events. An outline of the teaching plan is very helpful and should include methods and objectives to be addressed in the various sessions. Flexibility is important, but a plan is very helpful to accomplish the desired results. Step 5 is the evaluation. No teaching would be considered complete without evaluation. Evaluation may take various forms and occur at different times. The teacher and students could work together to determine a helpful valuation process.⁵¹

Conclusion

The selection of methods and their implementation is very important in teaching adults. The project described in this paper was dependent on much of what is in this chapter. The desire to teach adults comes from my role in the church. The value of biblical meta-narrative is clearly stated in chapter 2, and the challenge was to put together material that helped to educate adults in the church in the content and value of that study. Recognizing the tendencies of adult learners and the need for appropriate methods was very helpful for this project. The desire was to see lives transformed by an encounter

⁴⁹Ibid., 196.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

with God as shown in the big picture of the Bible and the need for humans to intersect with the story of God as revealed in the Bible.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

The elders and pastors of College Park Church in Indianapolis have frequently expressed a concern that the people of this fast-growing church may not have been sufficiently exposed to some of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. This project was an attempt to help to remedy that concern. In this chapter the stages and details of the project are discussed in detail. The fifteen-week project began in late Spring 2014. The sequencing of the project involved two weeks of preparation, twelve weeks of teaching to three distinct groups, and one week of evaluation.

Preparation for the Project—Weeks 1-2

Several efforts have been made in the past to encourage people to attend classes to learn more of the Christian faith. The classes were not well attended, and this project intended to provide materials to help overcome the problem of time and space in offering this kind of training. It also was intended to provide video teaching from the lead pastor of the church and the writer of this paper to make the presentation more standard in classroom settings. The intention was for the material to be available online that covered the content of a biblical meta-narrative and that could be digestible to those new to Christianity. These resources could be accessed in a digital form from the website of the church and could be used by groups or individuals. In anticipation of this project, video and written material were created in April 2013. In fulfilling the requirements of this project, the videos and booklets were revised in response to comments from some who viewed and read the material.

Content for the Project and Review of the Videos and Booklets

Four videos and booklets were reviewed by three people in preparation for the project. One person has a Ph.D. in education, another has an M.A. in education, and the third person was my administrative assistant who is very proficient at editing. The comments for changes were mostly typographical and stylistic. The content was considered acceptable, and all categories of the rubric found in appendix 2 were either sufficient or exemplary. One comment on the videos related to a suggestion that the verses imbedded in sections of the videos should be expanded to include the actual words of the Bible and not merely the reference. That recommendation will be considered for future editions.

To understand the project, the compilation and content of the training material should be summarized. The decision was made to use a series of four videos with accompanying booklets as the teaching material. The booklets were created first in order to summarize the big picture of the Bible in a manner helpful for one with a limited exposure to that material.¹ The booklets were entitled, “How Did It All Get Started?” “What Went Wrong?” “What Is the Solution to Sin in the World?” and “How Is It Going to End?” It was decided to use this theological perspective with a view to the meta-narrative rather than a more traditional systematic theological approach. The decision was well received by those who used that material based on the positive comments after completion. The following section is a summary of the material in the booklets and videos used for this training.

Session 1—“How Did It All Get Started?” The booklets were about six pages each. The first booklet had an introduction of the whole series and a description of the meta-narrative view of the Bible. Each of the four acts of the Bible story, creation, fall, redemption, and consummation, were explained. Participants were encouraged to

¹See College Park Church, “Basics of Christianity,” accessed August 1, 2014, <http://www.yourchurch.com/groups/adults/college-park-institute/>.

view the videos and then look at the booklets. The first booklet dealt with the beginning of the world. Genesis 1:1 was the starting point and the booklet material began with a short discussion of God. A few of the rational proofs for the existence of God were mentioned, with the conclusion that the validity of God's existence is obtained through faith, not evidence. There is, however, good evidence for a God. Some of the attributes of God were discussed as revealed in the Bible with some verses and questions to guide the student. A brief affirmation of the triune nature of God was mentioned in the booklet as well.

The next section of the first booklet spoke to the method of knowing God. The answer centered on the prime way of knowing God, through his Word. Second Timothy 3:16 was explained in order to draw the student to see the high priority of the Bible in Christianity. Following this section on revelation, the booklet spoke to the topic of creation. God is infinite and was the creator of all. The beginning of the world is found in the person of God himself. Finally, the booklet briefly spoke of the pinnacle of creation, which is man. Humans are created in the image of God. In this short booklet, the style is narrative, and the doctrines are expressed in a way that flows as story.

The church has a staff person who is very proficient at creating video material. A connection was made with him to shoot videos of the lead pastor of the church and of me to record ten to fifteen minute videos to correspond to the booklets. The videos were fairly simple and filmed as we were seated on the platform of the church sanctuary. Four videos were shot in sequence. I led the discussion and the lead pastor contributed as appropriate. The video was designed to be a dialogue, and there was not a strict script. The basic outline followed the booklets; the desire was for the discussion to appear natural, with a verbal introduction and conclusion. The videos are on the web site of the church with a link next to the booklet link.

Session 2—“What Went Wrong?” This section dealt with the problem of sin in the world. A definition of sin was discussed as the action of one in rebellion against

God and his law and falling short of his glory (Rom 3:23). Some effects of the fall were listed, including death to all, judgment, broken relationships, and a broken universe. The booklet concluded with the universality of sin and the fallen nature of humanity in depravity. The relative comparison of different humans may give some hope, since they may not be as bad as some others. In reality any sin puts the sinner in the state of alienation from God. There is no hope within the sinner. The wrong in the world is very devastating. The booklet and video intended to paint the bleak picture created in the cosmos by the fall.

Session 3—“What is the Solution to Sin in the World?” This section is the session of hope, the core of the gospel. The intent of this session was to expose the student to some core truths of the message of salvation for a sin-cursed world. The material began with a discussion of the person of Jesus. Philippians 2:5-8 was used as the focus of the discussion, showing that Jesus is fully God and fully man. The passage mentions the cross and the teaching moved from the person of Jesus to his work on the cross. A few important terms were discussed to help paint a biblical picture of the results of Jesus’ death. Substitutionary atonement was discussed as necessary to redeem sinners. Humanity needs a perfect substitute to provide salvation. The word redemption was also developed, as Jesus paid the price for sin in the giving of his life in sacrifice. Propitiation is a tough word, but it was decided to include it, as it helped to introduce the concept of the wrath of God and the satisfaction in the death of Jesus.

Upon completion of the discussion of the person and work of Jesus and the effects of the cross, the resurrection was discussed and its benefits for the world and for the redeemed. Resurrection is the conquering of death by Jesus, which is the first fruit of the redeemed who will also experience resurrection. Resurrection gives the solution to death and provides hope and joy for the people of God.

A few benefits of salvation were mentioned. Decisions of what to include and what to exclude were a part of every session of this project. The goal was to keep the

sessions brief enough that a novice could engage and benefit from the presentation but with the realization that much more could be said. The benefits mentioned here were adoption, justification, and reconciliation. The saved are joined in union with Jesus and are made a part of the family. Justification is the declaration of sinners as righteous by the imputed righteousness of the obedient, sinless Jesus. Sinners are forgiven of sin and have his righteousness imputed. Reconciliation was listed as a benefit as well. Sinners are able to be brought into a right relationship with a holy God. These are a few of the blessings of the Word of God in redeeming his people.

There was a brief section discussing “what must I do to be saved?” On the video the two pastors share their own conversion experiences. In the booklet and on the video an encouragement was presented to the students to consider their relationship to Jesus. There was a call for all to put their trust and faith in Christ for salvation. The last part of this booklet and video very briefly discussed sanctification and living as a truly regenerate person. Care was given to separate sanctification and justification, but clarity was given that sanctification is not an option.

Session 4—“How Is It Going to End?” The final booklet and video dealt with the conclusion of the redemptive story of the Bible. Care was taken to deal with the major issues of end times and to stay away from the more controversial and less helpful debates. The first topic related to the event that marks the completion of God’s work in the present world. The return of the Lord will conclude God’s work. Emphasis was placed on his return as a statement of completion, not escape. The Lord finishes his work of redemption in his coming to his earth for his people and his kingdom.

Some details that most Christians accept and find agreeable were discussed. The final resurrection and some of its implications were taught. It is the statement of God’s victory over death in all areas. It is the restoration of God’s created intention. The reality of judgment was described as the statement of God’s making wrongs right and bringing about justice even in the damnation of the unrepentant to eternal hell. The

redeemed will experience the realization of hope, as their final abode is secure in the new heaven and earth, where God's glory covers the earth as the water covers the sea. The end is glorious, and the King is the one glorified. The hope of eternal salvation and the hope that sin will not rise again was affirmed in Revelation verbiage with pictures of the lake of fire and the absence of evil in the eternal kingdom.

The study ended with the question of "how should we then live?" Passages from the Bible were cited to encourage righteous living in preparation for the eternal kingdom. Hope should characterize all the redeemed as they realize the conclusion of this great story. There should be an urgency to spread the gospel and tell others of the good news of salvation. It also gives hope for all who die in the Lord that there is more to the story. It becomes comfort and hope for all the people of God. This teaching ended the material, as the Bible ends on a very positive note, with the realization that response is necessary to participate in that good ending of this story. The prayer of College Park Church is that all of the members know this wonderful story and that they have experienced this grace and are motivated to live it out by sharing it with the world in need.

Setting Up the Venues and Participants for the Project

In preparation for the project phase, venues needed to be arranged, the material finalized and compiled, and the leaders trained.

Venues arranged. The venues were determined and permission was granted to complete the project with the various groups. The first group to participate was a small group of mostly single men in their 20s. The leader of this small group was very helpful in setting apart four weeks for the videos and discussion. The group of 10 to 12 single men was varied in terms of their longevity in the Christian faith. The group was a good mix of those fairly knowledgeable in the Scripture and those new to the faith.

The second group to participate was an Adult Bible Fellowship class in the church. This class of about 40 people meets on Sunday morning. I am the usual leader

of this group, so getting their participation was not difficult. They were very eager and willing to participate. Most were mature believers and were ready to discuss and interact with the material even though it was not totally new material.

The third group was the most difficult to monitor. This group was made up of a group of about 50 people in the New Members Class. These people were again a mix of new believers and more mature believers. They were given four weeks to complete the project, but their work was all done remotely and online. This venue gave more information concerning the feasibility of people watching the videos and reading the material without the atmosphere of a group teaching context. Over half of the group agreed to participate.

Compiling the material. The videos were created in 2013 and posted on the church website in week 1 for all to access. The booklets were also posted on the web, and hard copies were printed to have available for the small group and the Adult Bible Fellowship class. The new member class also was given a book mark with the information for accessing the material online to complete the training.

Training of leaders. Next, the leaders were trained. One young man from the small group was trained in the teaching and leading of the class. He was shown the printed material and previewed the videos. He was very knowledgeable and easily able to relate to the information and prepare to teach it. I determined that this young man was very prepared to lead this group after interaction with him upon completion of his viewing the videos and booklets. He initially helped to develop some of the material and also assisted with the new members' training, as he is responsible for the organization of the new members' orientation and training.

The second person to be trained was an older man in the Adult Bible Fellowship class. He was very knowledgeable in the Scriptures and has often been a substitute teacher in this class. He reviewed the booklets and videos and showed proficiency in the

discussion of the results of the questions in the booklet and the viewing of the videos. I was involved in all the venues, attended the opening and ending weeks, and worked through the first video and workbook with the new members.

Implementation the Project—Weeks 3-14

The same material was presented to the different groups. In week 3 through week 6, the small group interacted with the project. In week 7 through week 10, the Adult Bible Fellowship experienced the training. Then, in week 11 through week 14, the new members were given the material for training.

Teaching the Small Group—Weeks 3-6

The first week of the project consisted of an introduction of the teaching section that provided an introductory training in the basics of the Christian faith, using an approach which reviewed the meta-narrative, or big picture, overview of the Bible. I facilitated the beginning session and found the group to be a bit reserved but willing to participate. Each of the 11 people in the small group was given the pre-project questionnaire. The results were interesting. A more detailed statistical analysis occurs later in this paper, but the pre-test showed an average of 80 percent correct answers for the 20 questions. Question 7 pushed the average down, as about 20 percent knew the meaning of the name “Jesus.” The question was in the “fill in the blank” section and that entire section graded lower than the multiple choice section, as would be expected.

Following the pre-test, the group viewed the first video with the booklets at hand. The video lasted about twelve minutes and seemed to keep their interest. As mentioned above, the topic of creation was the theme, and it included brief discussions of God, man, and creation. We then went through the booklet and answered the questions together. The group was not really talkative and seemed to be getting oriented to the format and the topic. They all agreed to prepare with the booklet reading and answering the questions for the following sessions. I asked them of their initial evaluation of the

material, and they were generally positive. They thought that it might be helpful to have the verses quoted on the video to be put on the screen, and some wondered if it was too complex for a new believer. There was mixed feelings on that topic.

The second two weeks of the teaching consisted of the small group viewing the videos and discussing the booklets for the sections on the fall and redemption. The young man in the group led these discussions and teaching times. His report was encouraging. It seemed a bit slow the first week, and his report was that it picked up in terms of discussion and following the flow. The men watched the videos, which were about fifteen minutes each, and about an hour was left for discussion and review of their work in the booklets. The report received was that the time was profitable and the men answered their questions well as evidenced by their involvement in the discussion. No major negatives were reported, and the teacher was encouraged with the flow of the class.

I led the last week and the conclusion to the teaching. The group was much more responsive this week than they had been in the first week. Gratitude was expressed for their participation. The video topic was around the subject of the consummation of the big story of the Bible. This topic can usually generate interest. The video was well received, and the discussion was robust. The attendees worked on their booklets and came with good questions and answers. No new suggestions for improvement were given, and many said they would probably use this venue with others in their discipleship and evangelism.

The post-test was administered and the score improved for the group from 80 percent to 89 percent, which was encouraging. The most difficult questions were the “fill in the blanks,” and special teaching (in addition to the videos) was added before the test that reviewed the meta-narrative of the Bible that helped the students in improving the scores. The group taking the test at the beginning and end were not exactly the same people, as the entire group did not attend every session. The statistics comparing exact attendees is detailed later in this paper.

Teaching the Adult Bible Fellowship Class—Weeks 7-10

Following the four weeks with the small group, I transitioned the material to the Adult Bible Fellowship class. The group has been together for many years and the relational capital was strong. They were excited to participate in this class. Similar to the small group experience, explanation was given to the class of the desire to teach the basics of the Christian faith and thinking through the big picture of the Bible. Everyone agreed to participate, and the pre-test was given. Thirty-six people took the test, and the test itself generated some good discussion, particularly after class. The test stimulated them to think more deeply. The grades for this group were the highest of the three, using a simple percentage. They scored 89 percent accurate answers on the pre-test. The group had a good background in the Bible, but was still excited to participate in the class.

Similar to the small group experience, I had some speaking engagements and had to miss the next two classes. A member in the class had been trained and handled the second and third week of class. He was well known by the class and worked to understand the material and to be prepared to lead the discussion around the questions in the booklets. His report was positive, as the discussion and responses to the questions were positive and the class showed interest and learning.

I led the final week of this four-week study. The group was prepared, and the discussion of the consummation of God's work was fruitful and profitable. The class did well discussing the questions and staying away from some of the controversial topics of eschatology. This discussion enhanced the purpose of the study, which was to appreciate the clear and important aspects of God's goal in redeeming the world. The post test was given at the end. Similar to the small group results, some of the participants were not the same as those who took the pre-test. The raw scores saw a difference from 89 percent accurate answers to the 20 questions in the beginning to 92 percent accurate answers. The group was expected to be the most biblically literate, but progress was made, enhanced by the discussion of the general Bible questions, similar to that in the small group.

Teaching the New Member's Class—Week 11-14

The New Member's class was the group with the most uncertainty and potential for benefit. This was a group of people who are considering joining the church. College Park Church offers a three-hour time on a Saturday morning for anyone interesting in joining the church as a member. The class involves an overview of the beliefs, practice and culture of the church. A pastor leads this session four times a year. There were about 50 people in the summer session in which this project was implemented. The leader allowed me one hour to facilitate the pre-test, present the first video, work through the answers in the booklet, and challenge the people to view the other three videos and work through the booklets. Of the 50 people in the class, 36 agreed to take the pre-test and follow up with the rest of the videos on their own in the next three weeks. They were later sent the post-test by email.

The video presentation seemed to be well received. The discussion was a little stiff, as the people were mostly new, and the group was fairly large. Even though it was not totally smooth, I encouraged only those who wanted to participate in the four-week program to hand in the pre-test, and 36 handed in the tests. That was 72 percent participation, which was encouraging. The result of the pre-tests was 78 percent. This fit what was expected, as some of the new members were well versed in the Bible and some were not. It was the lowest pre-test score of all the groups but with the most potential to see benefit.

At the end of the class, a card was distributed to the attendees which gave them information to access the material on the website of the church. Those who agreed to participate in viewing the other videos were sent a follow up email the next week, thanking them for their willingness to help with this training. After three weeks another email was sent out with the link to the material and an attachment of the post-test. The request was to finish the other three videos with the booklets and submit the post-test within the next week. A deadline was given to the participants.

The results were a bit discouraging. Those who responded were very positive; however, only 6 responded, and 1 of them did not fill out all the answers, so the data could not be used. Those who filled out the post-test were well versed in the content and all of their post-test results were almost 100 percent, as was their pre-test results. In discussing the problem with fellow pastors on staff, some think that those coming to investigate the church were not excited about the testing format. Hopefully some did review the material but want to complete the testing. It could also be that the month of August was not a favorable month for this kind of presentation. The New Member's leaders are committed to making this information available to new members in the future and to work to find a way to assure higher participation. It may also be that doing this kind of thinking independently, without a classroom or small group setting, was not the best way to present the material. College Park needs to do more work to help any new people that need education on this basic Bible material.

Evaluation of the Effect of the Teaching Project—Week 15

The final week of this project was given to evaluate the data and determine the effect of the teaching. In the small group and the Adult Bible Fellowship classes, the number of people who took the pre-test and the post-test were about the same. The small group had 11 people take the pre and post-tests. In the Adult Bible Fellowship, 36 people completed the tests. In carefully reviewing the data, those taking the tests in each group were not exactly the same. Of the 47 who took the pre-test in both groups, only 29 took both tests. The final data used for this project took into account the data from the people who took both pre- and post-tests.

As mentioned previously, of the 39 people who took the pre-test in the new member's class, only 5 post-tests were usable. The reason for this includes some who chose not to join the church. Some also contacted me to say that they did not have the time to complete the material in the time allocated. It also appears that some did not like

taking a test in church, even though they completed the pre-test in a group setting. It seems that simply asking people to work independently online was not effective.

A t-test was used to determine the benefit of the teaching those who submitted pre- and post-tests for all three groups was compiled and. The results of the 33 (from all 3 groups) who completed the tests are seen in the table 1.

Table 1. Test results

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	20	20	18	19	20
2	19	20	19	16	18
3	20	20	20	19	20
4	20	20	21	20	20
5	17	20	22	17	19
6	19	18	23	18	19
7	18	19	24	17	18
8	14	16	25	20	19
9	19	20	26	20	20
10	19	20	27	18	20
11	14	16	28	14	19
12	17	20	29	18	19
13	15	17	30	20	20
14	14	18	31	18	19
15	16	20	32	17	19
16	19	20	33	18	19
17	19	20	Total	17.82	19.15

This data was inserted into the formula for the t-test. A member of College Park Church, who works as a statistician, performed the test with helpful conclusions. The results showed that using a paired t-test, the t value was 5.625 with the standard error of difference of 0.237 at a 99.99 percent confidence level and the p value was 0.0012. These results conclude that the teaching of the material in the project did make a difference in the students who completed the teaching. This result was helpful as it showed the need and value of teaching regarding the big picture of the Bible.

The students were also asked to reply on the post-test concerning their

willingness and desire to use this tool with others. The overwhelming response was that they would share the material to others. They also commented on their appreciation of the content and the benefits of the material for themselves. In talking to the students, the response to the experience was positive and hopeful for future use of the material

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

Coming to the conclusion of this project was met with mixed emotions. It created some frustration and perseverance to bring it to fruition, but it also provided an opportunity to bring several helpful ministry tools to College Park Church and to connect some people in ministry. This church has been a vibrant witness to the gospel for close to thirty years. Growth has come quickly, and Christ and His Word has remained the focus of the ministry. The elders continually attempt to determine if the church leadership is moving toward the mission of “igniting a passion to follow Jesus.” As shepherds of the flock, the question frequently asked concerns the spiritual state of the membership.

Answering the questions concerning the spiritual health of the body is challenging, as the metrics for determining the answer are not as quantifiable as metrics for businesses and other groups. High among the health questions was the concern of the aptitude of the congregation in regard to their understanding of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. Many, if not most, members are well versed in the basics of the Bible, but with well over 2,000 members, and close to 4,000 in attendance on Sunday mornings, some are certainly not informed in the meta-narrative of the Bible. This deficiency was also evident in some discussions with people who had been attending for some time, as they did not show an awareness of some of the basics of Christianity.

College Park Church has also determined that there is a need for more opportunities for the membership to evangelize the unchurched of the city. Plans are being formulated to start a campus on the north east side of the city in the next year as well as in the south and west sectors of Indianapolis. A tool to help in basic training of

the people will be a great asset to the start of these outpost ministry locations. This project will be the start of other, similar projects which will make theological training available online. Obviously there are many online resources, but this will be unique in that material will be generated by the leaders of the church, and people can receive interaction with the flavor of the church included in the material.

This last chapter brings to conclusion this specific project and helps pave the way for future improved projects that will be used as the church desires to spread the knowledge of the glory of God in the areas where God has given us opportunity. This chapter includes a section evaluating whether or not the purpose of the project was successfully accomplished. An analysis of the goals determines whether or not they were realized. The methods selected are reviewed to determine their value or need for modification. A section on strengths and weaknesses describes a desire to incorporate the strengths and improve the weakness for future ministry endeavors. The chapter ends with personal reflections concerning the theology described in the project and the effects personally.

Evaluation of Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a curriculum for teaching the biblical meta-narrative to adults at College Park Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. The observed need of the church was to be assured that the members and attendees had a sufficient knowledge of the basic beliefs of the Christian faith. Upon completion of the project, the question as to the deficiency of the people in that regard is somewhat in question. The pre-tests showed some deficiency, but not as radical as expected. The sampling was fairly small, but it was a broad group. While the tests did not show glaring ignorance, the reality remains that the leaders want to be sure that no one is left out in having an opportunity to be exposed to the beautiful truths of the faith. The tests also showed enough deficiency to argue for continued efforts to encourage the people to be active in growing in their knowledge of their Lord. The purpose statement

assumed a need, and the need is real.

The purpose statement says that the biblical meta-narrative will be the topic of teaching. This decision was very well and positively received. A more traditional way to teach basic Christianity is to follow a systematic theology approach. While that certainly has merit, approaching the discussion from a narrative perspective was very effective. It was wonderful to see the people think of the story line of the Bible and see God and the topics of systematic theology at work in the story. The beauty of biblical revelation was obvious in the project, and the main actor, God, was elevated and portrayed front and center. The students were able to see the four-fold story line of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation in full color, even with the brief presentations. This observation was noted in comments made and written as the project was completed. The project did not have a flavor of data and details but of action and relevance to real life. The purpose, which included presenting the content in a meta-narrative style, worked very effectively.

The purpose of using others to develop, implement, and teach in this project had a great and unexpected value. This purpose said that the actions to be performed were developing, implementing, and teaching. These actions required others to partner and the joint effort was great to see. The lead pastor and I, the pastor of theological development, were the dialogue partners on the film clips which showed good interaction and synergy. The technology crew was very involved with the videography, editing and working to bring the discussion to life. Two teachers supported in teaching.

Three people helped to evaluate the material. The communication team took the task of putting the material in a format that was accessible on the web for wide usage. About 87 students were exposed to the material, and many of them stated that they planned to share it with others. Seeing all these people in the church work together to make this project a reality was very encouraging and demonstrated a unity in working to see Bible content available to many for the glory of God. Cooperation and unity are huge Christian values, and the purpose of this project helped that to occur in a tangible manner.

The way is also set for future projects that will have similar purposes as the church grows and looks for more ways to live out the mission.

In reviewing the purpose, the assumption was that the project would successfully teach some adults at College Park Church. The tool used to assess the successful teaching of the material suggests that the purpose set the stage for a successful project. The favorable “t-test” demonstrated the positive results of the teaching. From a more subjective perspective, the teaching was well received by the students as evidenced by their participation in the class and verbal feedback. It is certainly not the final task of the church in educating adults, but it was a fruitful and productive effort that will set a good stage to continue the ministry of teaching adults in the church.

Evaluation of the Goals

The goals of this project intended to give substance and accountability to the actual project. Looking at the project as a whole, the goals were met. There are certainly areas where improvements may be made, but the overall data was encouraging and substantiates the success of the project. In this section the three goals are evaluated with specific measurable evaluative tools. There were some slight variations from the goals as mentioned in chapter 1, but the substance of the goals was carried out in the project.

The first goal was to revise and adapt current church material to be used in the teaching of the biblical meta-narrative. Understood in this goal was that much of the material was prepared in anticipation of the project before the actual project proposal had been approved. The goal was then to evaluate and adapt the material for use in this project. The material consisted of four videos and four booklets that reinforced the videos. The content covered the biblical meta-narrative with the categories of creation, fall, redemption, and completion. Revisions were based on the evaluation of several people who reviewed the material and filled out an evaluation rubric (see appendix 2) to determine what was helpful and what needed adjustment for use in this project.

In the proposal, the goal stated that three people would review the material.

Two of the people had advanced degrees in education and the third was the writer's assistant who is experienced in reviewing ministry material for its usability with people at College Park Church. The results showed in all of the categories a rating of "sufficient" or "exemplary." The one exception was in the category of the "quality of the materials is appropriate for the teaching venues." This critique was adjusted by a more thorough proofreading and corrections of stylistic errors by the communication team at the church. That same team also made the material easily accessible through the church's website, so anyone could easily utilize the tools for the teaching of the biblical meta-narrative.

The second goal was to train three leaders to utilize the training material in specific settings: the new member's class, a small group, and an adult Sunday School class. I was involved in all the teaching venues, but another person was trained for each venue who carried out some of the teaching. The training consisted of providing the material to the teachers for their study. I taught the first class as a model and the additional teachers taught the second and third class, except for the new member's class, which was only for one week. Before they taught, I spent time with the teachers, reviewing the material and going over booklets. The teachers' aptitude in teaching and Bible knowledge was demonstrated as they followed and assimilated the material well. The videos and booklets helped to set the format for the teaching. I was very satisfied with their ability to carry out the teaching. This goal was met and simplified by the gifts of the teachers and the ease of use of the teaching material. The feedback from the class was also very positive. The small group leader was also involved in the new member's class' teaching so only two people needed training. The assimilation pastor had recruited him to help with the class, and he will probably use this material for the next classes.

The third goal was the major goal of the project. This goal was to increase the student's knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative by having the leaders teach the new member's class, the adult Sunday school class, and the small group using the videos and workbooks. The evaluation of this goal determined the value and success of the project.

Each group was given a pre-test and a post-test. Using a t-test as an evaluation tool, comparing the results of the two tests, the compared results were very encouraging. The results showed that using a paired t-test, the t-value was 5.625, with the standard error of difference of 0.237 at a 99.99 percent confidence level, and the p-value was 0.0012. This data came from a total of 33 people from the three groups who completed the full pre- and post-tests.

The data would have been more encouraging if more of the new member's class had completed both tests: the number taking the post-test was very small (4) compared to the number taking the pre-test (39). While this was disappointing, the data proves that the teaching was successful to make a difference in the students' knowledge of the biblical meta-narrative. One final point of evaluation was in the structure of the exam. It became obvious that the first part of the test, which consisted of fill in the blank questions, was the area where most answers were incorrect in the pre-test. Those questions were more Bible "fact" questions. In the final class there was a short time given to teaching the big picture of the Bible, with an emphasis on some of those fact questions as they fit into the story. A worksheet was used to supplement the videos and booklets. That was very helpful in the final results, and the students' sense of preparation for the post-test.

Evaluation of Methodology

The previous section, evaluating the goals of this project, spoke to much of the evaluation of methodology. There are a few other areas to discuss for completeness. In reviewing the first goal and the method of reviewing the teaching material, it was obvious that the teaching videos and booklets were produced well and that little was needed to improve the material. The three people who reviewed the venue were very helpful, and the rubric was clear and required little explanations. The decision to use three people as reviewers was based on efficiency and the early comments of the sufficiency of the product. It was affirming to have the method of the video teaching accepted by these

people. That innovation was unique and that could have been problematic.

The method of training the teachers was informal but effective. The teachers were familiar with the material, as they have been involved in groups where I have taught on the meta-narrative of the Bible, and they were excited about this approach. In the interaction with the material before teaching, the teachers showed a passion for the teaching goals and were willing to use the videos and booklets as aids. The training of the teachers was convenient and uniform since both teachers were given the same material and their responsibility was to facilitate discussion around the material and questions in the booklets. This training also allowed them to be free to open the discussion as the class discussion would lead. The training was not overbearing but was sufficient, and this less formal training was successful.

Strengths of the Project

Assessing the strengths and weaknesses is profitable because this project will probably be the beginning of other similar projects at College Park Church as the plans to help in the education of the adults is further developed in an effort to have well-taught believers doing the work of ministry.

The first and greatest strength of the project was probably the value of the material and the presentation in the videos and booklets. The main goal was not merely to create material, but to teach that material to the adults of the church. Poor material is not helpful, and biblically saturated material is what is needed for growing churches. Material presented in a manner that does justice to the overarching flow of the Scriptures was a delightful and helpful technique for teaching the basic truths of the Bible. This kind of material could be procured from many sources, but having the most recognized preacher at College Park Church share in the videos stamped a personal image on the message.

The booklets complemented the spoken videos to address different styles of learning and to put in tandem the spoken and written word in a manner that assisted the

learning process. The research that went behind the teaching was strengthened by the Doctor of Ministry classes at the Southern Baptist Seminary. James Hamilton was the main teacher engaging the topic of the biblical meta-narrative, and the insights and study involved in several of his classes were invaluable for the construction of this teaching material. After extensive reading and attending seminars on biblical theology, I also taught several classes on the meta-narrative of the Bible. The ability to summarize great thought into introductory teaching was challenged in this project. The results were encouraging, and the prayer is that the perspective of the meta-narrative story of the Bible will continue to permeate the teaching of the church for the glory of God.

A second strength of the project was the people who participated. From the start of the project, there was no lack of support and participation from many people. It was a team effort. It seems appropriate for a church to have members who will use their gifts for the advancement of the gospel. A crucial part of the project was to secure the support of the lead pastor and especially to have him participate. He did not hesitate to support the allocation of church resources, and particularly his time, to the project. He made himself available to review the material and to sit for several hours as the video clips were shot. He was encouraging all along the way, and his presence in the videos gave recognition to all in the church and to potential new members as well.

The technology staff was also very helpful. Much of their ministry is behind the scenes, as was this project. In particular, the videographer had excellent ideas for staging and editing. He had a heart for the goal of the project, which was evident in the quality of the end product. He expressed interest in further projects that will help to enhance the biblical teaching of the people. The staff in the communication area helped to get the material in a presentable form and posted online for accessibility. They were willing servants with gifts that enhance the kingdom.

In reflecting on the people of the project, the two major groups implementing the project were the teachers and students. They were strengths as well. Selecting and

encouraging teachers is a major task in the church. The men who taught and facilitated this teaching were the type of teachers all churches need. They came in with a good background of the material. They were good students themselves. They also had a teachable spirit and were willing to participate in this teaching. Their attitude was very much one of the strengths of this project. People are more likely to follow gifted teachers who love their topic. Finally, the students in the three venues were delightful. They willingly participated in the classes and the testing as a whole and gave positive feedback. Most who completed the final test said they would be willing to share the material with someone else. As will be discussed in the weaknesses, the new member class did not show great participation in the full project. Their excitement was evident on the day when it was presented to them in the new member's class, so it seems that the problem was not the material, but the venue. In any case, the people as a whole were one of the strengths in that they were willing hearers of the Word. Calling "people" one of the strengths of the project is a recognition that a good church is made up of those willing to work together with varying gifts to pursue the kingdom, and that was evident in this project.

A third strength centers on the experience of studying the meta-narrative. The church is large, and obviously all the members did not all participate in the teaching of the Bible. The goal of reading the Bible as a unified story was enhanced by this project for the whole church. There have been several intentional venues where this meta-narrative perspective has been presented to the church. I taught several classes of close to 100 people on this topic. James Hamilton came to one of the theology conferences of College Park Church and taught for a weekend on this topic to about 900 people. The lead pastor incorporated this perspective in a series of sermons he delivered on Exodus. The video series is a part of several efforts to incorporate the meta-narrative view of the Bible into the teaching of the church. The congregation of this church are hungry for the Word. This project was an effort to include the newer or less trained people in a healthy

and robust teaching of the story of the Bible. That is a huge strength.

A fourth strength to note concerns the follow-up to the project. An encouraging story from one of the people who evaluated the material at the beginning was recently in the hospital, having a cancerous kidney removed. In talking to his wife, she made mention of the videos and said they had completed three of the videos with their unsaved neighbor. When her husband recovered from the surgery, they planned to view the final video with their neighbor and continue their proclamation of the gospel. This testimony was encouraging and provided hope for further fruit from this venture. In summary, the big goal of the project was to provide a tool for the church to use in helping people to grow in their knowledge of and love for the Lord. While there were certainly weaknesses, that bigger goal was met, and that is a blessing.

Weaknesses of the Project

It would be gratifying if the project was accomplished with no problems or weaknesses, however, there is always room for improvement. The recognition of some weaknesses will help in future endeavors similar to this one. In this section three areas will be exposed. None of the issues is major in terms of accomplishing the goals.

First, the test used at the beginning and end was helpful, but not as robust as it could have been. The test was divided into two sections, the first of which was fill-in-the-blank and covered general biblical knowledge. This format intended to demonstrate if the students had a background in the Bible. This section of the test showed the students' great weakness. The purpose of the teaching was not to provide Bible facts but an overview of the biblical meta-narrative. The questions on the meta-narrative were generally answered more correctly. The format of multiple choice made it easier for the students to answer the questions.

In normal church usage, the testing would probably not be used. For this project, the results from the tests showed the benefit of the teaching. If the testing were to be done again, it could be improved. The two sections were helpful. In the teaching,

the factual questions could be covered in the videos to make the first questions more relevant, which would help give some more details on which to hang the meta-narrative story. The questions on the meta-narrative should include various types of questions to stimulate the students and their thinking and to alert them of areas to watch carefully in the videos. In conclusion, the test was not as robust as it could have been, but it provided helpful feedback in the project.

The second area of weakness was probably the most problematic. A major hope of the project was to provide a method to teach people in a large church who struggle to attend extra meetings. The use of online videos and booklets was an attempt to provide a study that would not require the students to attend a class and coordinate schedules. The project was set up well to make this happen. The first video was shown with the whole group in the new member class. The group seemed to enjoy it and responded well to the teaching as indicated by the large group of people who said they would complete the program. They were reminded twice to finish the videos. The number who actually reported that they had finished the last three videos was disappointing. Only four responded, and several apologized for not completing the program.

It seems that having a volunteer group of new people take a class online is not very viable. Perhaps the people were not committed enough to complete the program, as they were new to the church. Some did not join the church, as is normal for the class. In all probability, a group like this needs a community or group teaching to successfully complete this program. It could also be that most did not perceive a need on their part for this kind of teaching. There may be a need to require all new members to attend a class covering the basic tenants of the faith or to have a testing mechanism to determine who should take the class and who are proficient.

The third area of weakness related to the ability of the students to engage with the material. In the small group, the comment was made that people new to Christianity

or those investigating the true claims of Christianity would struggle with some of the verbiage in the videos and booklets. That comment was made one other time, which made me pause to consider the validity of the critique. There were more who wrote and said that it could be understood by the novice group. The video material will remain the same for the foreseeable future. There may be some change in the printed material to give help in some areas. Another video may be created that could also deal with those issues and some of the basic facts of the meta-narrative. In reviewing this weakness, it appears that its validity is questionable, but it is helpful to mention it here for future reference. With the description of these weaknesses, the need for improvement is certainly there, but the value of the teaching as it presently stands is also validated.

Theological Reflection

This project was a part of my passion for adult teaching at College Park Church. It is not only a part of the vision for the teaching at the church, but it is important for the basic thought process of the members of the church. To have the church members know their Bible in the way it was intended to be known is of utmost importance for the church to be the church God intends. Teaching the Bible with an overarching view of the meta-narrative has been my goal since the start of this post-graduate program at Southern Baptist Seminary and the teaching of James Hamilton. The classes on biblical theology have been the source of material for several classes at College Park Church and have influenced several of the pastors and teachers in their approach to the Scriptures.

Theological reflections bring several thoughts to mind. Setting this teaching in the format of the meta-narrative brought to light the connection between systematic and biblical theology. God is certainly seen clearly in the narrative story of the Bible. The categories of a more systematic theology are seen. The doctrine of God is beautiful in the story line of creation, fall, redemption, and completion. God is the focal point in all stages and glory will be His from first to last. The Bible is a story of Him; who He is and

what He does. His attributes are seen in his actions of salvation, judgment, mercy and other activities as He deals with His creation in the pages of the Bible.

The doctrine of the Bible is also best engaged with a robust reading of that Bible. To see it merely as a few independent writings misses the glory of God's revelation. Reading the Bible as a unified whole, while also appreciating the individual sections, helps the people of God to see a triune God who lives out the reality of unity in diversity. The Holy Spirit's work in inspiration is well demonstrated in the unity of the Bible story line.

The doctrine of Christ jumps off the pages of the Scriptures as they are read as a whole. Jesus is all over the pages of this holy book. He is present in creation and is the one revealed in the Apocalypse. He is the one promised in Genesis 3:15, typified in the Exodus, prophesied by the prophets, and incarnated as shown in the gospels. Jesus Christ is the hope of all of creation as the firstborn of creation and the first fruits of the resurrection. The greatest value of reading and hearing the Bible in a meta-narrative form is to see Jesus for all he is worth. He is the hero and the victorious character in the story. It is from Him and through Him and to Him that all things exist. In completing this project and study, there was not a sweeter theological reflection than reflecting on the beauty of Jesus. Even if one is a skeptic, the story is compelling. For those who believe, the story of Jesus from Genesis to Revelation is life and life eternal.

The doctrine of the church is amplified with a view of the role the church plays in the grand story of God's work in the world. If it is true that Jesus is the focus of the Bible, as argued in the last paragraph, then it follows that His body (the church) would be significant to the story. The church is the fulfillment of much of the Old Testament description of how the people of God should appear in this present world. The church is the blood-bought children of God. The church is to represent and image God in proclaiming and living the gospel of the saving work of the triune God. Even in this project, the beauty and messiness of the church was obvious. The church is the bride of

Christ, justified by faith, and becoming pure through the sanctifying work of the Spirit. The church helps twentieth-century believers to see their place in the story of the Bible. The text of Matthew 28:19-20 gives the marching orders and the purpose of the church in the plan of God for his world.

The final theological reflection centers in eschatology as the goal and future of God's plan and story. One of the beauties of the Bible is that the story is complete, and the readers are not left to create their own ending. The Bible does not give all the details of the end in a western novel format, but tells the major conclusions and demonstrates to the reader that, in spite of the difficult situations, God is in control, and He will victoriously overcome in the end, to His great glory. The wonder of God's use of evil as His servant is helpful for every church member who experiences trials and pain.

The end of the story is not merely an improvisation of God, but a God-ordained, well planned conclusion to a marvelous work of God in creation and salvation. The future gives motivation for the present to pursue the kingdom. The redeemed should strive for holiness, without which no one will see God. In teaching the full picture of the Bible, the future is best seen in light of the past. God's work in the future is a continuation of His work in the past. He will accomplish His will, and humanity is responsible to respond to Him in faith and faithfulness. Faithfulness on the part of the creature is possible only because of the faithfulness of God. Reflecting on the theological impact of this project is a part of my growth in appreciating God and His relevance to all of life. Biblical theology has been one of the most helpful disciplines in my life to draw me closer to God and to enhance my ministry to the people of God. Some of the members of College Park Church are also seeing the big picture and responding with lives glorifying God.

Personal Reflection

I have been changed by the study of biblical theology and seeing the meta-narrative of the Bible. My wife hears all the time of the threads of the story line of the Bible as we read the Scripture together. She has become quite proficient in looking for

them as well, and it has enriched our union with a greater love for the Lord in His Word. As a pastor, I have been a strong and vocal advocate of reading the Bible in the context of the big picture of God's work in the world. There has been some healthy movement in that regard. To be able to do a project for my Doctor of Ministry program that was in this domain made it much more exciting and relevant. It helped me to grow, as I was involved in the lives of many people with the content of this project. It makes me love the Bible and Christ's church even more.

I also must admit that there were times of disappointment in this project. I began the Doctor of Ministry program in the winter of 2010. I am in the later stages of ministry and did not see this as a stepping stone to advancement. I desired it to be a part of the process of lifelong education. I wanted to continue learning and to be sharpened in the skills of biblical interpretation for my current ministry. The program was very helpful in doing that. This project, however, experienced changes in the requirements that were imposed on former students toward the end of the program. I was not prepared for them, and the start of the project was fraught with misunderstandings and many delays. My personal reflection on those events now is that they helped me mature in my sanctification and the graces of patience and tolerance. In the overall scheme of life, this challenge is very minor. I had brothers in the church as well as my wife encouraging me to persevere regardless of circumstances. It was good for me to have godly people who gave good counsel, and I am thankful for coming to the conclusion of the project. Even the struggles were for my good, and I can see that more clearly now. It was helpful to humble me to be a better servant of the one who is the center of the Bible.

My final personal observation is an appreciation for the church where God has given me the privilege of serving. The people are wonderful and make our pastors rejoice. There certainly are hardships in such a large church, but the vast majority of the people are willing to follow biblical leadership. They desire to be taught and pursue Christ. This was another opportunity to realize the gift College Park Church is to me

personally. God has graced me to be there and to see his kingdom furthered in that context. To Him alone be the glory!

Conclusion

The purpose of this project were to teach the biblical meta-narrative to adults at College Park Church. A helpful forum of video and booklet was created. That goal was accomplished, and the results confirm the success of that goal. A couple of men were trained in teaching the content, which was a blessing to the church. There is satisfaction in accomplishing much of what was desired in this project. There are areas to improve as the teaching mission continues, but this project will be very helpful in that mission. Many thanks go to those involved in all stages, both at College Park Church and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In the conclusion, the main thanks belongs to the one who motivated the project and all of life. Thanks goes to the God of creation who did not give up on His people in the fall but brought about a wonderful means of salvation in Jesus and who promises to complete the mission to His glory. The prayer at the end is “Come Lord Jesus” and “Soli Deo Gloria.”

APPENDIX 1

PRE-AND POST-SEMINAR QUESTIONNAIRE

Agreement to participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your knowledge of the basic elements of the Bible's storyline and how you share that understanding. This research is being conducted by Joe Bartemus for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will simply answer the questions before we begin the training, and you will answer the same questions after we complete the training. Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, nor will your name be identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Background Information

1. Please write your name: _____
2. Circle the number of years you have been a Christian:
1-5 years 5-10 years 11-15 years over 15 years
3. Circle the number of years you have attended College Park Church:
0-1 year 2-5 years 5-10 years over 10 years
4. Have you ever participated in a formal class designed to teach the big picture of the Bible? Yes _____ No _____

General Bible Knowledge Questions

1. How many books are in the Bible? _____
2. What human author wrote the first five books of the Bible? _____
3. Who was the father of the nation of Israel? _____
4. Who led the Israelites out of Egypt? _____
5. Who was the first king of Israel? _____
6. Name one of the writing prophets of Israel _____
7. What does the name Jesus mean? _____

8. Who wrote the book of Ephesians? _____
9. Which disciple was a tax collector before following Jesus? _____
10. Write out one verse you have memorized from the Bible other than John 3:16.

The Big Story of the Bible

(put a check mark by the correct answer):

1. The Bible is one big story that accounts for all of God's actions relating to his work to redeem his creation.
 True _____ False _____
2. Jesus is revealed to us only in the New Testament while the Old Testament tells stories not related to Him
 True _____ False _____
3. When Jesus was crucified, his death accomplished much. Which statement was not associated with his death?
 - a. Satan was defeated
 - b. creation will be restored
 - c. Worship in the temple would increase
 - d. Sins could be forgiven
 - e. God's wrath was satisfied
4. Which of these words does not comprise a part of the pattern of the big picture of the Bible?
 - a. Fall
 - b. Creation
 - c. Completion
 - d. Redemption
 - e. They all fit
5. Adam's sin resulted in his removal from the Garden of Eden, but did not affect the rest of the world.
 True _____ False _____
6. The event that will mark the completion of God's work in this present world is:
 - a. The death of the Antichrist
 - b. The return of the Lord in his final victory
 - c. The rapture
 - d. Wars and natural disaster
 - e. The bliss of heaven somewhere far away

7. What is the focal point or the center of attention in the big picture (called the meta-narrative) of the Bible?
 - a. The glory of God seen in Jesus and his work of salvation
 - b. The healing of people throughout the Bible from Genesis to Exodus
 - c. The great battles against evil in the final book of Revelation
 - d. The creation of all that exists
 - e. The fall of humans and the sinfulness of the world

8. One of God's motivations to save the world was to redeem the world that he created in the first place.
 True _____ False _____

9. In order for people to be saved they must:
 - a. Understand most of the Bible and the big picture of its message
 - b. Repent of sin and believe on Jesus as their Lord and Savior
 - c. Be baptized and join a church
 - d. Live as good a life as is possible—follow Jesus' will
 - e. All of the above

10. For a person to really appreciate the beauty and benefit of the Bible for life, that person should:
 - a. Pray for help from the Holy Spirit
 - b. Trust in Jesus for salvation and become a true follower of Jesus
 - c. Be in a community (like a church) where the Bible can be read together as well as individually
 - d. Be diligent in the reading and studying of the Bible
 - e. Realize the Bible is the real Word from God and have a desire to know God in his Word
 - f. All of the above

Questions upon Completing the Study—Group Discussion

1. With whom have you shared the material from the class? _____
2. What areas of the teaching were successful as the student answered the questions correctly? _____
3. What areas of the teaching did the student fail to answer the questions correctly?

4. Will you share this material with anyone else in the future?
 Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX 2

RUBRIC FOR EVALUATION

Rubric to evaluate research instrument for DMin project—Joe Bartemus To those completing this rubric: Please review the videos and workbooks provided. Upon your review, please fill out this evaluation. Add comments as needed. Thanks					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The questions written clearly and understandably for the adult audience.					
The questions covered the topics of the teaching material.					
The questions in the workbook give adequate feedback to evaluate the learning of the students.					
The material in the video is presented in a manner that is clear for the adult audience.					
The material in the workbooks is presented in a manner that is clear for the adult audience.					
The material in the workbooks and videos complement each other.					
The length of the videos is appropriate for the adult audience.					
The length of the workbooks is appropriate for the adult audience.					
The quality of the materials is appropriate for the teaching venues.					
There is sufficient application to life evidenced in the material.					
The material is faithful the Scripture.					

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A CURRICULUM FOR TEACHING A BIBLICAL META-NARRATIVE TO THE ADULTS AT COLLEGE PARK CHURCH IN INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Joseph Robert Bartemus, D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. James M. Hamilton

Chapter 1 of this project describes the planning and objectives of the project. The development of a curriculum that covers relevant material on the meta-narrative of the Bible was revised and developed. The curriculum involved a video series with two pastors discussing the concept and details of the biblical meta-narrative. Booklets were also developed to complement the spoken material. Facilitators or teachers were trained to utilize the tools to bring about the actual implementation of the project in teaching smaller groups of adults the essence of the overarching biblical meta-narrative of the Bible.

Chapter 2 discusses passages from the Old and New Testament which were analyzed to provide biblical validation concerning the need for such a project. Chapter 3 includes an overview of basic educational literature which was summarized in regard to adult learning and curriculum. Chapter 4 describes the steps of the project in detail to show how the implementation occurred. In chapter 5 the project was evaluated and found to be successful based on several factors, including a statistical affirmation. This chapter includes concluding evaluations of the project in terms of accomplishing goals, strengths and weaknesses, and future plans.

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