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EQUIPPING YOUNG ADULTS AT KNOTT AVENUE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA,
TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

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EQUIPPING YOUNG ADULTS AT KNOTT AVENUE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA,
TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

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This project is dedicated to my loving wife, Lindsey, who has shared in the pursuit of the gospel with me since 2005 and without her patience and sacrifice this project would not have been possible to complete.

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PREFACE

Many people made the accomplishment of this project possible. First, Robert and Susan Kennedy made this endeavor financially possible. Before they ever heard that I wanted to pursue my doctorate, I made up my mind that it was not financially wise for me to go back to school. I had a great desire to continue my education so that I could serve the Lord better in the ministry that He so graciously called me into, but three years ago we were not financially stable enough to afford such a pursuit. The Kennedy's heard that I wanted to pursue a doctorate when my senior pastor made a side comment about it in one of his messages. Right after that service, Susan approached me and said that she would like to help pay for my schooling. Her husband and I talked the next morning. At that time, I expressed my appreciation and I said that even with some assistance I was not sure if going back to school was a foreseeable reality. God asked me to get back to him with the cost of the program. I did so the following day. He responded back in a small note that read, "We won't do any of the reading or writing, but we want to pay for all your school." This couple has been so gracious and kind to my family and I during these three years. They have not only paid for my school, but also some of the flights to Louisville. This couple has been one of the greatest blessings I have ever had in my life.

Second, David Hurtado gave me the confidence that I could accomplish such a task. I have never seen a boss who believed so much in his employees. The empowerment that everyone feels that works for him is incredible. I do not believe I would have tried to pursue this degree without his coaching and encouragement along the way.

Third, Dr. Temple provided the necessary guidance and direction to complete this project. His corrections to the project, as each chapter was being created, helped me

greatly. Without his involvement, this project would not have succeeded in achieving its goals.

Fourth, my wife, Lindsey Crandell, made this a practical possibility for our family. She sacrificed so much when we first moved to Kentucky to get my M.Div and has made just as many sacrifices for me to get my D.Min. She is the perfect “helpmate” for me. When God looked at me, in my singleness, he said the same words that He said when He saw Adam alone in the garden, “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). Without her patience and sacrifice this goal would have never been accomplished.

Fifth, God’s grace is evident in this degree coming to completion. God saved me at the age of twelve and put it in my heart to become a pastor. This ambition seemed like a silly thing at the time, because I could not even read. God graciously put the right pieces in place that allowed me to not only learn to read, but graduate in the top of my class. After that, He granted me a full-scholarship to California Baptist University to get a Bachelors in Theology. Then He made it financially possible for my wife and I to move to Louisville and complete my M.Div. Once again God has provided a way, through the generosity of the Kennedy’s, the encouragement of David Hurtado, the guidance of Dr. Temple and the sacrifice of my wife for me to earn a doctorate.

Paul Crandell

Buena Park, California

May 2015

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to equip the young adults at Knott Avenue Christian Church in Anaheim, California, with the knowledge and skills necessary to share the gospel effectively.

Goals

The first goal of the project was to evaluate the young adults' knowledge of the gospel and their skills at sharing the gospel. A survey was developed that measured their understanding of the key doctrines of the gospel, the frequency of how often they shared the gospel, their confidence in sharing the gospel, and the common problems that hinder them from sharing the gospel (see appendix 1). The survey was handed out on the first class meeting. The target for this goal was that 85 percent of the attendees complete the survey.

The second goal of the project was to develop a curriculum that equipped the participants with the proper knowledge and skills to share the gospel (see appendix 3). This curriculum took into account the results of the previously mentioned survey in order to meet the knowledge and skill needs that were identified. This curriculum was evaluated by a selected group of pastors. This group of pastors evaluated each lesson before it was taught each week (see appendix 2). Each member of the group either approved or disapproved the curriculum for training young adults. The target for this goal was to receive an 80 percent approval rating.

The third goal of the project was to train the young adults with the curriculum

in order to equip them with the proper knowledge and skills to share the gospel. This training took place over a thirteen-week period. After the completion of this training period, the initial survey was given again to measure their understanding of the gospel, the frequency of how often they shared the gospel, their confidence in sharing the gospel, and their ability to overcome problems in sharing the gospel. The targets of this goal were to observe a 30 percent increase in the participants' objective knowledge of the gospel, a 20 percent increase in their subjective opinion of their skills in sharing the gospel, and a 10 percent increase in the frequency of their attempts to share the gospel.

The fourth goal of the project was to challenge the participants to make a commitment to share the gospel with one friend within a three-month period after the class. This challenge was given to all the participants after they completed the training curriculum. The three-month period allowed them to patiently build up relational credibility with their friends, which promoted a more comfortable presentation of the gospel. The target of this goal was to receive a commitment from 50 percent of the participants.

Ministry Context

Knott Avenue Christian Church is a non-denominational church in west Anaheim, California. It represents the diverse cultures of Southern California by hosting a multi-ethnic congregation. The church embraces the diversity of its congregation and seeks to meet its diverse needs. This focus was what led the church to start a completely Spanish service on Sunday. Another result of seeking to reach the diversity around them, the church launched a young adult service on Sunday night. This service was designed with the intent of reaching adults from the ages of 19-29. Reaching this age demographic in California is very difficult. First, research shows that “only 13 percent of the Millennials [those born between 1980 and 2000] considered any type of spirituality to be important in their

lives.”¹ Second, the Barna group found that when ranking the most Bible-minded cities in America, “most of the major California cities are in the bottom third of the rankings. The Los Angeles media market represents a pretty normal range for California cities with 24% of the residents being Bible-minded (ranking 68th out of 96 cities).”² The target group for this ministry is “the least religious of any generation in modern American history”³ and they reside in one of the most unchristian states.

The young adult ministry at Knott Avenue Christian Church is called “Illuminate.” The average combined adult attendance at the church’s main services is 2,000. This count includes the Saturday night service, three Sunday morning services, and the Spanish service. The young adult service averages 100 on Sunday night. In 2012, the average attendance at the young adult service was 103. In 2013, the ministry hit a plateau, averaging 102 at each service. In the first three months of 2014, the ministry showed signs of decline with an average attendance of 88.

The majority of the young adult ministry programming and emphasis in evangelism has been on creating attractive and engaging events. Some examples of this type of programming are the weekly Sunday night worship service, the small groups (of which 70 percent meet on the church’s campus), recovery groups, worship nights, and a sport fitness outreach class. These ministries are designed to accommodate and involve unbelievers in an atmosphere controlled by the ministry. This strategy is a more passive form of evangelism. A believer is not actively sharing the gospel himself, but is inviting someone to hear the gospel from someone else. There is no intentional focus on having an infiltrating strategy for evangelism. The ministry does not have a focused strategy on

¹Thom S. Rainer and Jess W. Rainer, *The Millennials: Connecting to America’s Largest Generation* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), loc. 457, Kindle.

²Barna Group, “America’s Most and Least Bible-Minded Cities,” accessed March 7, 2014, <http://cities.barna.org/americas-most-and-least-bible-minded-cities/>.

³Rainer and Rainer, *The Millennial*, 789.

finding ways for the gospel to penetrate the post-Christian culture that characterizes the target group. There was not an intentional emphasis on equipping believers to go out into the culture and share the gospel actively in a secular context or environment.

These current ministry approaches made several things apparent. First, most young adults did not have either a proper understanding of the gospel or could not adequately share the complete gospel message without assistance. Second, young adults were not equipped to handle problems that come up in sharing the gospel with people of other religions and worldviews. Third, very few young adults were sharing the gospel on a frequent basis. Fourth, young adults did not feel confident in their ability to share their faith and they felt more comfortable with someone else, like a pastor, sharing the gospel with their friends.

Rationale

The primary purpose of any pastor is to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry, according to Ephesians 4:12. The members of the church are to actively seek to do ministry and not just allow this task to fall on a few. Part of doing the ministry of the church is practicing evangelism. The great commission is given to all believers and must be obeyed by all believers. Making disciples is not optional or the sole duty of the pastors of the church. Every member of the church is to be making disciples, and it is the pastor's job to equip the members to do so. Pastors must equip others to evangelize.

At Knott Avenue Christian Church, the young adult ministry leadership team believes in this simple ministry model just discussed. The trend is to leave the ministry in the hands of paid pastors as the sole ministers. Allowing this mindset to takeover in a ministry makes for a church body that feels very under-utilized and has no real ownership in the ministry. The imbalance of always being ministered to and never doing ministry is a primary reason why church members are not growing as much spiritually and are not more effective in reaching their peers. The most effective way to reach an unbeliever is through the relationship of a believing friend. John Mark Terry has found that 80 percent

of new converts come to Christ because of a relative or friend.⁴ Anyone that professes faith is a member of the church and should be equipped to do the ministry of the church.

Allowing young adults to see evangelism as only inviting their friends to an event is not equipping them to fully participate in the great commission. Inviting a friend to hear an evangelist is a good and noble pursuit, but it must lead the individual to becoming an evangelist himself. The passive approach to evangelism should be a stepping-stone to the active approach to evangelism and not a deterrent. Believers need to know the gospel and know how to share it. The young adults of Knott Avenue Christian Church needed a class that would give them the knowledge and skills to share the gospel with confidence.

Therefore, the young adult ministry at Knott Avenue Christian Church believed that this project was necessary for four reasons. First, young adults needed a biblical view of the gospel in order to properly understand their salvation, sanctification, and the practice of evangelism. Second, young adults needed to know how to respond to worldviews that contradict Scripture in order to strengthen their faith and their ability to share the gospel. Third, young adults needed to realize the vital role that they play in evangelism as members of the church and as the primary influencers of their peers. Fourth, young adults needed to gain confidence in sharing their faith through adequate training so that they would stop relying completely on others or programmed events to do it for them.

The young adult ministry at Knott Avenue Christian Church hoped to benefit from this project in the following ways. First, young adults would gain the knowledge that they have a significant role in fulfilling the great commission by sharing the gospel. Second, young adults would gain a greater understanding of the gospel and confidence in sharing the gospel. Third, young adults would share the gospel more frequently by both taking part in the various evangelistic ministry activities that focus on an active approach

⁴John Mark Terry, *Evangelism: A Concise History* (Nashville: B & H, 1998), loc. 3481, Kindle.

to evangelism and by sharing their faith in their everyday life. Fourth, the young adult ministry would be more effective at reaching unbelievers, because it would utilize the power of peer influence.

Definitions

Three significant terms are used in this project that can be prone to ambiguity. These terms should be understood according to the following definitions.

Evangelism. For the purpose of this project, the term “evangelism” is used to describe the action of a believer sharing the gospel of Christ with someone that does not know Christ. T. P. Weber describes evangelism:

The proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ with a view to bringing about the reconciliation of the sinner to God the Father through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. The word derives from the Greek noun *euangelion*, good news, and verb *euangelizomai*, to announce or proclaim or bring.⁵

Evangelism is focused on the action of proclamation by the believer and not the response of the hearer. Therefore, the term evangelism is used in this project to refer to the act of proclaiming the gospel by a believer to an unbeliever with the hope of a positive response.

Gospel. For the purpose of this project, the term “gospel” is used to describe not only the historical and theological facts of God’s salvation for mankind, but also the response necessary in order for a person to participate in the salvation of God. R. H Mounce describes the gospel in the New Testament:

In briefest outline, this message contained: (1) a historical proclamation of the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus, set forth as the fulfillment of prophecy and involving man’s responsibility; (2) a theological evaluation of the person of Jesus as both Lord and Christ; (3) a summons to repent and receive the forgiveness of sins.⁶

⁵T. B. Weber, “Evangelism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 410.

⁶R. H. Mounce, “Gospel,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 514.

The gospel message in this project is portrayed as having historical, theological, and personal components. All three components must be presented in order to qualify as a biblical presentation.

Homogeneous movement. For the purpose of this project, the term “homogeneous” is used to describe a movement in evangelism. Donald A. McGavran writes,

“People like to become Christians without crossing social, linguistic, or class barriers,” said McGavran. Conversion, he argued, should occur within a minimum of social dislocation. . . . The homogeneous unit principle is an attempt to respect the dignity of individuals and allow their decisions for Christ to be religious rather than social decisions.⁷

Homogeneous evangelism is when one shares the gospel without having to cross cultural barriers. Homogeneous evangelism follows the path of least cultural resistance, maintaining the cross as the only hurdle or offence.

Limitations and Delimitations

The limitation for this project was that it took place over a fifteen-week period. The first week was used to survey the young adults (see appendix 1). The curriculum was taught over a thirteen-week period (see appendix 3). The last week was used for post-project evaluation. At this time, it was determined that the curriculum was effective at teaching the material and changing the behavior of the participants.

There were three delimitations for this project. First, the target group delimits this project because it focused on young adults between the ages of 19 and 29. Second, this target group was made up of only the young adults of Knott Avenue Christian Church in Anaheim, California. Therefore, with the first two delimitations the target group was made up of approximately 100 young adults. Third, this project focused on

⁷Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, ed. C. Peter Wagner, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 198.

equipping young adults to share the gospel by providing them with a curriculum and teaching them with that resource (see appendix 3).

Research Methodology

Prior to the project, a survey was developed and given to the young adults of Knott Avenue Christian Church. This survey measured four key areas of their evangelism (see appendix 1). First, it measured the young adults' understanding of the key doctrines of the gospel, such as sin, Christ's humanity, Christ's divinity, redemption, justification, faith, repentance, etc. Second, it measured the frequency of how often young adults are attempting to share their faith. In this section, young adults were asked how often they have shared the full gospel, started a spiritual conversation, talked about religion, or shared their testimony. Third, it measured their confidence in sharing the gospel. This portion of the survey focused on more subjective questions, as to how the young adults felt about their ability to share the gospel. Young adults were asked if they felt nervous, prepared, awkward, etc. Fourth, young adults were asked what the common problems were that hindered them from sharing the gospel. This portion of the survey was aimed at understanding other religions and worldviews that young adults were facing in sharing the gospel. This survey was broken up into these four categories and used a Likert scale for statistical analysis. The scale included the options of "strongly disagree," "disagree," "disagree somewhat," "agree somewhat," "agree," "strongly agree." The survey consisted of fifty questions with the last question having multiple options to choose from in order to get specific data, due to the open-ended nature of the question. The results of this survey were considered in the development of the training curriculum.

After each lesson of the curriculum (see appendix 3) was developed it was evaluated by a select group of pastors (see appendix 2). This group consisted of five people. The group evaluated the lesson on its content, clarity, and relevance. The evaluation was broken up into these three categories. These categories had several statements under each heading, such as "the curriculum used scripture correctly," "the

curriculum did not use confusing language,” and “the curriculum described actual conversations that young adults would have today.” The statements were given a grade by each evaluator on a scale of “1” to “5,” with “5” being the best and “1” being the lowest. The evaluators had the opportunity to explain their grading by filling out the strengths and weaknesses portion of the form, in order to fully communicate where the curriculum excelled and fell short. The curriculum lesson then underwent a revision before it was taught to the class.

After the curriculum had been taught to the young adults over the thirteen-week period, the participants were asked to complete the initial survey again. The results of this survey were compared to the initial survey’s results, in hopes of significant improvement. The improvement was evaluated by using a t-test to measure if the difference in scores were statistically significant. The categories that were compared were the young adults’ objective knowledge of the gospel, their subjective opinion of their skills in sharing the gospel, and the frequency at which they try to share the gospel. The initial survey had a fourth category, which revealed the other religions and worldviews that they encountered in sharing their faith, but the second survey did not have this category. This fourth category was simply useful to gain information valuable in creating the curriculum.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR THE
EQUIPPING OF YOUNG ADULTS TO
SHARE THE GOSPEL

Scripture teaches that every Christian has the responsibility to share the gospel and should be equipped to do so by the leaders of the church. The act of sharing the gospel, evangelism, is not separate from the process of growing as a believer in Christ, discipleship. The practice of evangelism is scattered throughout the process of discipleship. An individual first becomes a disciple by responding correctly to another's evangelistic efforts. After the individual's response of faith and repentance, the process of discipleship begins. It is during this process that the individual is encouraged and equipped to evangelize to others, just as they had previously been evangelized. Evangelism is an implication of discipleship. Just as a plant grows from a seed and will in turn produce more seeds, so too discipleship starts with evangelism and in turn results in more evangelism. Evangelism is the obligation of all believers. The leaders of the church are obligated to encourage and equip the believers in their church to grow as disciples. This obligation includes equipping believers to fulfill their responsibility of evangelism.

Ephesians 4:11-12

An exegesis of Ephesians 4:11-12 supports the thesis by showing that God has appointed leaders in the church with the purpose of equipping every member to do the ministry of the church, which includes sharing the gospel: "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."¹

¹All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version.

The context of this passage speaks of the risen Christ and His activity on behalf of all the saints individually and corporately. Verse 7 focuses on the individual grace given and verse 11 transitions the focus to the corporate grace given. With the transition from individual to corporate between verse 7 and 11, there is also a transition with reference to the nature of the grace or gift given. Lincoln comments on this transition when he writes, “What does the exalted Christ give to the Church? He gives people, these particular people who proclaim the word and lead. In relation to verses 7, 8b, He gives not just grace to people, but He gives specific people to the church.”² In Romans 12, gifts were ministries or functions and this is the way the term is also used in 1 Corinthians 12, though in the latter passage in verses 28 and 29, Paul also speaks of God appointing ministers. In contrast to its common use, here in Ephesians 4 the focus is narrowed to particular ministers of the word.

According to Ephesians 4:11, the leaders that the risen Christ gave His church were “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.” This research does not focus on the specifics of each role, but their similarity of purpose. Christ gave these leaders, who are all ministers of the Word, for a shared purpose, which is explained in a series of prepositional phrases. This series or collection of phrases has two main interpretations. Each interpretation gives a significantly different meaning to the passage, and each meaning answers the main question of the text differently. Frank Thielman argues that the reader of this passage is forced to ask, “Who does the work of ministry in today’s church: the officers of the church or the people whom the officers equip?”³

First View of Ephesians 4:11-12

The two views pivot on how to interpret the prepositional phrase “for the work

²Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 268.

³Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 277.

of ministry.” Thielman summarizes the first view, with reference to its understanding of this prepositional phrase, by stating,

The first view takes this phrase as coordinate with the preceding phrase (προς τον καταρτισμον των αγιων), which is translated, “for the equipping of the saints.” On this view, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers not only bring the saints to full maturity, but they also do the work of ministry.⁴

In this interpretation, the leaders are the main subjects, who do the work. In this interpretation “καταρτισμον” is translated more as a noun like “maturity” or “completion,” instead of with a more verbal connotation like “equipping.”

This view or interpretation has several points of textual support. First, many who hold to this view argue that it gives the appropriate sense of the word “διακονιας” (ministry). Thielman explains, “This term often appears in Paul’s Letters and elsewhere in the NT as a reference to ‘the ministry of the word’ and frequently seems to carry an official nuance.”⁵ This prominence of an “official nuance” would point to the more fitting connection of “διακονιας” with the work of church leaders and not the saints.

Second, this view also appears to properly understand the nature of the word “καταρτισμον,” which is translated as “equipping.” Lincoln supports this idea by writing, “καταρτισμον, completion [or equipping] has a meaning which does not require supplementing by a further phrase.”⁶ He argues that this word stands freely on its own. The reader does not need an accompanying phrase to fill out its meaning. Therefore, “διακονιας,” or “service,” should be seen as independent of “καταρτισμον,” but dependent on the main verb “εδωκεν” or “he gave.” It follows then that “διακονιας” “is more likely to refer to the *ministry* of the *ministers* just named.”⁷

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 278.

⁶Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 254.

⁷Ibid.

Third, this interpretation fits the common grammatical practices of Paul. Lincoln observes, “What is more, to string together a number of prepositional phrases, all dependent on the main verb and coordinate with each other, is a characteristic feature of this writer’s style.”⁸ Paul uses the same basic grammatical structure of prepositional phrases throughout this letter. A collection of three coordinate prepositional phrases are seen in 1:3; 1:20, 21; 2:7, 4:13 and 4:14. There is a collection of four in 6:12 and five in 1:5, 6. To interpret the prepositional phrases in verse 12 in a different sense than coordinate would be to go against Paul’s common practice in this very letter.

Fourth, this interpretation fits better with the flow of the passage. The alternate interpretation diverts from the main subject, the ministers (apostles, prophets, evangelist, shepherds, and teachers), right after they are mentioned. This transition feels abrupt and forced. Lincoln believes that this transition between subjects is inappropriate. He argues, “The primary context here in v 12 is the function and role of Christ’s specific gifts, the ministers, not that of all the saints.”⁹

Many proponents of the first view see so much textual support for their interpretation that they call into question the motives of those that hold to the other interpretation. They feel as though the alternative to their interpretation is motivated by “a zeal to avoid clericalism and to support a ‘democratic’ model of the Church.”¹⁰

Second View of Ephesians 4:11-12

Thielman explains the second view: “The second view claims that the phrase ‘εις εργον διακονιας’ fills out the meaning of the term (καταρτισμων), now translated as ‘preparation’ or ‘equipping.’ The five groups in verse 11, then, prepare or equip the saints

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

‘for the work of ministry.’”¹¹ In this view, the second prepositional phrase “for the work of ministry” modifies the first prepositional phrase, “to equip the saints,” rather than the main verb “he gave.” In this interpretation, the leaders that Christ has given the church equip the saints, who then do the work of the ministry.

This view also has a significant amount of textual support. First, this string of prepositional phrases is not syntactically parallel. Thielman points out two significant variations: “This lack of parallelism is not merely a matter of the shift from ‘προς’ to ‘εις,’ which could be a stylistic variation. . . . In addition, the object of ‘προς’ has an article whereas the objects of ‘εις’ have no article.”¹² Proponents of this view argue that this break in parallelism is an indicator that each prepositional phrase should be looked at in a different light and not as simple modifiers of the main verb. When Paul normally uses coordinating prepositions there is a stronger parallelism between each modifying phrase.

Second, the first view oversimplifies Paul’s use of prepositional phrases. Even in the book of Ephesians, there is not a uniform interpretative rule for Paul’s stringing of prepositional phrases. Thielman comments on this lack of uniformity: “Syntactically, it is true that Ephesians frequently modifies verbs with strings of prepositional phrases, but these strings are sometimes as ambiguous as this one. . . . A similar ambiguity arises in 2:7; 4:14; and 6:12.”¹³ This ambiguity is almost completely avoided when the prepositional phrases are not made up of objects with verbal ideas (1:3, 20-21; 4:13). This pattern, however, is not found in this passage because of the presence of a verbal object. Thielman explains, “Here in 4:12, however, the noun ‘καταρτισμον’ is a verbal noun and could easily itself be modified by a prepositional phrase to indicate the purpose of its implied

¹¹Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

¹²Ibid., 278.

¹³Ibid.

verbal action.”¹⁴ Combine the lack of prepositional parallelism with the presence of a verbal object, and the syntactical case for a slightly abnormal interpretation gains strength.

Furthermore, the first preposition starts with a “pros ton” followed by two other prepositional phrases starting with “εις.” The parallelism between the last two phrases implies that they modify the same verbal idea. It appears very likely that this verbal idea is found in what follows “pros ton,” “καταρτισμον.” Also, since “pros” and “εις” are often used to indicate the purpose of the verb they modify, it appears strange that Paul would use a different preposition to communicate the very same meaning. This change from one preposition to another could be easily explained as Paul seeking to modify different verbal ideas with different prepositions. The preposition “pros” modifies “εδωκεν,” “he gave,” and the two “εις” prepositions modify καταρτισμον, “equipping.”

Third, the placement of the noun “saints” favors the second interpretation. If “saints” would have been placed at the conclusion of the verse 12, at the end of the prepositional phrases, then the emphasis would clearly be on the leaders of verse 11 and the first view would be the clear interpretation. Instead, Paul places the noun in the first part of verse 12. O’Brien explains,

If the three phrases described activities in which ministers alone were engaged, then one might have expected the term “saints” to appear at the point of change, namely, in v. 12c; instead, it occurs at the conclusion of the first phrase, vs. 12a. “for equipping the saints.”¹⁵

If the “saints” were at the end of the verse it would read something like this: “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, and to equip the saints.” If that were the construction there would be no interpretive debate. This of course is not the case and is another structural clue that Paul is indeed seeking to shift the focus from the activity of

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 302-3.

the leaders of the church to the activity of the members of the church.

Fourth, this interpretation fits more comfortably with the overall discussion of Ephesians 4. The theme of Ephesians 4:7-16 is how each individual believer is used to promote the unity and edification of the entire body. Verse 12 is sandwiched in between two discussions concerning the members of the church. Thielman expounds,

In verse 7 as the beginning of the passage, “each one” receives grace “according to the measure” that Christ decides. This matches the focus of verse 16 at the end of the passage when it says that “each single part” assists the body in its growth “in the measure” for which it has been empowered.¹⁶

Those in favor of the first interpretation often speak of how a shift from leaders (apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers) to members (saints) breaks the flow of the passage. When one looks at the larger context of Ephesians 4, the shift to leaders is actually a break in the emphasis on all members. Paul deviates to talk about leaders and not members.

Furthermore, the language of verse 16 should inform how to interpret similar language in verse 12. Ephesians 4:16 reads, “Each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” In this verse there is in emphasis on each member doing their part to build up the body as a whole. The very same language of “building” and “body” are used in Ephesians 4:12: “To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” With these verses being in such close proximity to one another and sharing the same illustrative language, it would appear out of sorts to not interpret them in a similar fashion. It is clear that Paul is picking up the same analogy in verse 12 and using it in verse 16. It is therefore safe to conclude that he is also using the same subject of the previous analogy. The subjects of verse 16 are the individual members; hence these individuals must also be the subjects of verse 12. The saints or members are building up the body of Christ in each instant.

¹⁶Thielman, *Ephesians*, 278.

Fifth, this interpretation is more harmonious with Paul's thoughts across all his writings. Paul frequently uses the analogy of the body with many parts to focus on how each member makes a valuable contribution to the whole. One sees this language used in Romans 12:4-6: "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." Paul uses the same "gift" and "body" language as in Ephesians 4 to emphasize how each member is given a gift that promotes the overall health of the entire body. Paul picks up this same language in 1 Corinthians 12:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are varieties of service, but same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." (vv. 4-7)

Here Paul explains that each member receives a gift from God, which is tied to a work or activity that benefits the entire church. He goes on to incorporate the body analogy in verses 12 through 27:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body . . . God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose . . . that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

Each time Paul uses the idea of God giving gifts for the growing of the body, the emphasis is on each individual member more than the leaders. O'Brien comments, "If it is only the leaders of v. 11 who perfect the saints, do the work of ministry, and edify the body of Christ, then this is a departure from Paul's usual insistence that every member is equipped for ministry."¹⁷ Paul does mention the leaders that God gives to the church, but to apply all three prepositional phrases in Ephesians 4:12 to these leaders appears to be out of balance with Paul's common practice.

¹⁷O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 303.

Conclusion on Ephesians 4:11-12

Based on all the evidence presented, the second interpretation seems to be the most accurate. Syntactically and contextually the second interpretation has a more reasonable foundation to stand on than the first. Therefore, the reading given by the majority of major American translations is preferred: “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

If the saints are to be equipped by the leaders of the church to do ministry, then what does this ministry include? What is the best way to understand the phrase “work of ministry”? The use of “διακονιας” could connect this ministry back to the office of deacon in Paul’s writings to Timothy. The context of Ephesians 4 is broad whereas the office of deacon was selective and made up of the few, therefore this group could not be what was in Paul’s mind at the time. This term is widely used throughout the letters of Paul and has both a narrow and broad meaning. O’Brien writes,

In Paul’s letters the latter term occasionally refers to the specific ministry of the word (2 cor. 3:6-8; 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; Romans 11:13; Col. 4:17); but here it is used more comprehensively for the service of believers generally—as, indeed, it is in the parallel list of 1 Corinthians 12:5.¹⁸

The leaders of the church are described in Ephesians 4 as readying their members for a wide range of ministerial services.

One of those services is the preaching of the gospel. Paul makes it very clear in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 that the work of sharing the gospel is a communal activity and not simply a clerical one. Paul writes,

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

In the first part of this verse, Paul connects those who have been reconciled

¹⁸Ibid., 304.

with those who now have the ministry of reconciliation. This ministry is given by God, just as the gifts and leaders were in Ephesians 4. In Paul's mind those who have experienced the benefits of reconciliation in the gospel should share these benefits. The qualification for the ministry of reconciliation is that you have been reconciled. This ministry is not left to ambiguity, but is further clarified with the term "message." The ministry of reconciliation cannot be divorced from the message of reconciliation. To do this ministry one must speak the message of Christ's reconciling work. Furthermore, the minister was not only to speak the message, but also "implore" and "appeal" for an obedient response. The ministry that the leaders of the church are to equip the saints for in Ephesians 4 must include the ministry of speaking the message of reconciliation.

Examining Ephesians 4 shows that the leadership should equip membership to evangelize. This text makes it clear that all the leaders fall under the equipping mandate, but it is not clear if all members fall under the evangelizing mandate. This mandate can be inferred from the passage, but it cannot be proven from the passage. The focus moves to Matthew 28 in determining to whom the evangelism mandate has been precisely given.

Matthew 28:18-20

An exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 supports the thesis by showing that the command to make disciples applies to all Christians and it includes sharing the gospel:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of The Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The Context of Matthew 28:18-20

Before Jesus commissions His disciples, He finds them in a very uncomfortable state. The disciples went up to the mountain in Galilee, where Jesus instructed the women to tell them to go. Matthew 28:17 reads, "and when they saw they worshiped him, but some doubted." The disciples' reaction has caused much debate among commentators,

but determining the true nature of the disciples' response aids in understanding Jesus' commission.

One interpretation concludes that the doubt of the disciples was in reference to Christ's actual resurrection. Many who hold to this view understand οι δε in a partitive sense, which would mean that some of the disciples doubted, but the rest worshiped. Still others, holding to this view, see οι δε as referring to another group that was there along with the disciples. In both cases, the pairing of worship and doubt is viewed as inappropriately assigned to the same individuals. It is believed that both actions require a different subject. Carson argues, "Doubt about who Jesus is or about the reality of his resurrection does not seem appropriate for true worship."¹⁹ It is argued that the group categorized as doubting is the "brothers" in verse 10 and should not be confused with the disciples in verse 7.²⁰ Michael J. Wilkins argues that this interpretation makes the best sense of what we know of the post-resurrection appearances:

"The eleven disciples, who have received at least two or three appearances from the risen Jesus in Jerusalem prior to this appearance (Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-28), are prepared to worship him. However, those disciples in Judea and Galilee who have not yet seen the risen Jesus"²¹

If the doubters in this passage are understood as the "brothers" or those who have not seen the risen Christ, then their doubt is similar to that of Thomas'. They doubt that he has actually risen from the grave. Some scholars that assign doubt to a group in the Eleven argue for a different sense of doubt. Wilkins explains, "The cause for their doubt may be that Jesus is and is not the same as prior to the resurrection. While some among the Eleven have a fuller understanding, others are still puzzled, perhaps even

¹⁹Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 949.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*

fearful, of all of these events.”²² The resurrected body of Christ could have appeared to the disciples as familiar and unfamiliar. There could have been things that they could recognize about His person and things that they could not. Just as Jesus had to reveal himself to His followers along the road to Emmaus before they could recognize him, maybe now these disciples would need similar revelation about Jesus’ identity.

This interpretation seems to overplay the contradictory nature of worship and doubt. This mixture of emotional responses is not something unfamiliar to the writings of Matthew. One sees a mixture of responses with the same subjects in Matthew’s account of the Transfiguration. In Matthew 17:5, after Christ reveals himself, a voice from heaven says, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” After the Father speaks “the disciples had a mixture of worship and fear until Jesus appeared to them with a touch and word of admonition and commission.”²³ Matthew does not shy away from describing several emotional responses from the same subjects, even if the responses appear to be at odds with one another.

The mixture of fear and worship in chapter 17 is easier to explain than the mixture of worship and doubt in chapter 28. Looking at a previous account in Matthew helps one to understand how these two responses can coexist. This latter account is in chapter 14 where the only other occurrence of this word for “doubt” (δισταζω) is found. This word is used with reference to Peter and his walking on water experience. Douglas Hare explains,

Peter walks on the water until he sees the wind and becomes afraid. Then Jesus addresses him as ολιγοπιστε, “O little faith,” and asks εις τι εδιστασας, “Why did you doubt?” The doubt here amounts to hesitation, indecision, and perhaps uncertainty. In Peter’s case the doubt indicates a divided mind brought about by a lack of an adequate measure of faith, not a lack of faith altogether.²⁴

²²Ibid., 948.

²³Ibid., 949.

²⁴Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox, 1993), 885.

Peter was not in unbelief about the identity of Christ or about His divine power to keep him afloat. He was insecure about his current situation and partially reluctant to partake in this miraculous experience. He displayed faith, but according to Christ not enough of it. If faith and doubt can both coincide, it is reasonable to believe that both worship and doubt can as well. It is with this understanding, that Wilkins argues, “The verb *δισταζω* should not be rendered as ‘doubted’ in the sense of unbelief or disbelief, for which other terms are used, but rather more like ‘were uncertain.’”²⁵ The object of this doubt or uncertainty should not be placed on the identity of Christ. Just as with Peter, whose doubt arose from the storm and not from his view of Christ, so too the disciples doubt comes not from how they identify Christ.

Their uncertainty comes from their view of themselves and their future responsibilities. Wilkins describes this uncertainty when he writes,

The disciples had been focused on assisting Jesus in establishing the kingdom on earth, but now that he is crucified and raised, they do not know what they should be doing. According to Acts 1:6, they are still expecting Jesus to restore the kingdom to Israel, even after the resurrection.²⁶

The disciples are confused and uncertain as to what Jesus wants them to do now. They are not sure if they should charge the city of Rome and unseat Caesar or take back Jerusalem. Some of the disciples, who finally understand why Christ had to suffer, now are uncertain as to what remains to be done after that climactic work. They do not yet fully understand how the cross changes things for them. Hare writes, “If their faith was too small in measure, that was because they were in a state of uncertainty about what the recent events meant and what might happen next.”²⁷

Their uncertainty also came from their evaluation of themselves. They had

²⁵Wilkins, *Matthew*, 948-49.

²⁶Ibid., 954.

²⁷Hare, *Matthew*, 885.

been tasked with performing the same miracles as Christ, from healing to exorcism, and preaching the same message as Christ in Matthew 10. In that commissioning experience, Jesus even warns them of the possibility of persecution. They experienced success in their first ministry ventures, but they do not last when persecution comes. In Matthew 26:56, after Christ is arrested, Matthew records, “All the disciples left him and fled.” Matthew does not record any post-resurrection experiences prior to chapter 28, so the uncertainty of the disciples is highlighted for Matthew’s readers. R. T. France describes this tension: “The last time these eleven disciples had seen Jesus was as they ran away from him in Gethsemane; so what sort of reception could they now expect from the master they had deserted.”²⁸ On that mountain, it would be hard to argue that the disciples were confident that they were up for whatever task their Savior had for them. Their recent failures were undoubtedly in their mind; one of them betrayed Him, another one renounced Him, even more could not stay up and pray with Him at His last hour, and all of them abandon Him.

Uncertainty is a common characteristic found throughout commissioning accounts in Scripture. Matthew’s choice to highlight the disciples’ doubt falls in line with other such accounts. R. T. France explains,

In OT commissioning scenes the assurance of God’s presence was to empower his often inadequate servants to fulfill the task he had called them to (Exod 3:12; 4:12; Josh 1:5, 9; Judg 6:16; Jer 1:8; cf. also the angel sent with the Israelites in Exod 23:20-23).²⁹

Moses was uncertain if his people would follow him and was doubtful of his communication skills. Joshua and Jeremiah were young. Gideon was the least of a weak clan. Despite their uncertainty God used these men mightily. It appears that Matthew is trying to set up a similar commission account with the disciples here. They are not up to the challenge on their own, but Christ assures that His presence will guarantee their victory.

²⁸R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 1112.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 1119.

Christ's Authority in Matthew 28:18-20

It is in the background of the disciples' uncertainty that Jesus asserts His complete authority and power. The first thing He says to His doubtful disciples is that "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." This commissioning is not given because of Christ's confidence in those that He gives it to. His commission is based off of His authority and power, which is the first reason to believe that this commission includes all believers. The commission did not start with the adequacy of its hearers and therefore does not end with their death. Christ's authority and dominion have not diminished; therefore His commission has not ceased. Those that try and tie only the first-century disciples to this commission and see its extinction with their deaths seem to miss Matthew's point.

Christ's Orders in Matthew 28:18-20

After Jesus asserts His authority, He explains what the disciples are to do. Jesus explains what He wants from His followers before He ascends to heaven. His words are later described as the Great Commission. Wilkins explains the structure of this commission:

The Great Commission contains one primary, central command, the imperative "make disciples," with three subordinate participles, "go," "baptizing," and "teaching." The imperative explains the central thrust of the commission while the participles describe aspects of the process. These subordinate participles take on imperatival force because of the imperative main verb and so characterize the ongoing mandatory process of discipleship to Jesus.³⁰

He tells them to make more disciples. Jesus tells them to replicate themselves. The definition of a disciple essentially means a student or follower. In the passage here, one does not have to look outside of the text for a definition of disciple in order to glean an understanding of what Jesus means by disciple. Jesus tells the essential characteristics of a disciple in the following participles. In Jesus' mind a disciple is one who obeys His

³⁰Wilkins, *Matthew*, 951.

commands and is baptized in the name of the Trinity.

Before Jesus explains how to make a disciple, He tells them to “go.” This small word has carried with it much dispute. This small participle is sometimes treated as an insignificant circumstantial idea, which is the case when the phrase is translated “as you go” or “while you are going.” This translation minimizes the sending nature of the commission and diminishes the scope of one’s disciple making activity merely to where one is currently located. On the other hand, too much attention can be given to this participle, so that it is translated as its own independent imperative. This translation would read, “Go, then make disciples” or “First Go, then make disciples.” This kind of translation carries with it the idea that foreign missions are the highest spiritual calling and all other Christian activity is seen as inferior.

Craig Blomberg clears up this confusion by showing the common nature of this grammatical construction in Matthew: “Matthew frequently uses ‘go’ as an introductory circumstantial participle that is rightly translated as coordinate to the main verb—here ‘Go and make’ (cf. 2:8; 9:13; 11:4; 17:27; 28:7).”³¹ In each of these instances the main verb is the central focus. The “go” participle could be removed and the imperative would still be clear. In the last example cited, 28:7, the women are commanded to go and tell the disciples. In order to tell the disciples it is implied that they would have to go to them, because they are not where they are. Each example in Matthew has this same understanding. The “go” participle is subordinate and circumstantial to the imperative. With that said, the imperative force of the participle is felt in each occurrence. Just as the women had to leave the tomb to tell the disciples, so too the disciples must leave the mountain and share the gospel.

The real force of “go” is felt in light of the scope of Christ’s commission. They

³¹Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 431.

are to go to “all the nations.” They are not instructed to casually go through the comfortable and familiar areas making disciples. They must begin to step out from where they are and walk with no borders in mind. To translate the passage here as “while you go” and to give it the meaning that disciple making occurs according to personally established places of familiarity is to devalue the phrase “of all the nations.” When “go” has no boundaries or borders both domestic and foreign missions are done with equal value.

There are also differing views in how to understand the phrase *παντα τα εθνη*, “of all the nations.” The word *εθνη* is often used in the New Testament to refer to the Gentiles, non-Jews. Some argue that this usage is Matthew’s intent in chapter 28. They would argue that this passage is the start of the great Gentile mission. The disciples were instructed to limit their focus on the nation of Israel in chapter 10’s commission. Israel for the most part rejected Christ. Furthermore, Matthew 28:15 reads, “This story has been spread among the Jews to this day.” This was the story that the Jews made up to reject the resurrection of Jesus. It is believed that Matthew uses this description of the Jewish rejection of Christ as a springboard to the new Gentile mission that looks beyond Israel.

This interpretation has many weak points. First, Mathew’s use of *παντα τα εθνη* is often very broad. Ulrich Luz writes, “The expression *παντα τα εθνη* in 24:9, 14, and 25:32 is presumably to be translated universally in the sense of ‘all nations.’ In none of these texts is Israel explicitly excluded or included.”³² The phrase itself does not obligate a simply “gentile” translation. In the last example that Luz gives, this point is blatantly obvious. Matthew 25:32 reads, “Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” It would be difficult to argue here that Matthew is thinking the Jews will be exempt from this apocalyptic judgment.

Also, the addition of *παντα* to *τα εθνη* strengthens the case that this should be

³²Ulrich Luz, *Matthew*, Hermeneia, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 630.

translated as nations and not Gentiles. The construction τα ἔθνη is often times correctly translated as Gentiles, with the understanding of excluding the Jews. Examples of this in Matthew are found in 6:32; 10:5, 18; 20:19. France argues that these examples are “a specialized use which does not apply to all Matthew’s uses of *ethnos*, and is most unlikely when *ta ethna* is qualified by *panta*, ‘all.’”³³

The immediate context of πάντα τα ἔθνη is global and universal. Jesus says that all authority has been given to Him in heaven and on Earth. Matthew’s readers would not see Jesus as limiting His authority and power by this expression, but would see it as an all-inclusive statement of complete authority. Jesus’ universal dominion implies a universal dimension of this mission. An exclusive mission does not flow with this passages’ emphasis on inclusion.

Lastly, an all-inclusive mission coincides with Jesus’ past teaching. A global mission here matches the “sayings of Jesus that envisage a universal mission of the disciples in the entire world (*kosmos*).”³⁴ One example is found in Matthew 5:14: “You are the light of the world.” Also, in Matthew 13:37-18 Jesus hints at a universal mission when He explains His parable of the weeds: “The one who sow the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom.”

This all-inclusive mission is the second reason to believe that this commission includes all Christians. The disciples who were given this mission were not able to go to the ends of the earth themselves, nor did they see their followers bring the gospel to all the nations. If Jesus only meant this commission for His first-century disciples, He was setting them up for failure. This behavior does not reflect the character of Christ or His omniscience. Jesus knew His immediate disciples would not fully complete this mission. It is clear that Jesus was looking beyond them when He gave this commission.

³³France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1114.

³⁴Luz, *Matthew*, 630.

Jesus explains the process of disciple making by using two participles that are translated “baptizing” and “teaching.” Hare explains,

The tense of the participles (“baptizing,” “teaching”) does not indicate that the Gentiles must be disciple before they are baptized, or baptized before they are taught. It looks as if Matthew perceives baptism as occurring in the middle of a discipling-and-teaching process that must continue indefinitely.³⁵

The teaching of the disciple is understood as continual, whereas baptism would be a one-time act. This balance between an instant and a process shows the nature of the Christian experience. There is a moment of conversion and a continual process of sanctification. This also shows the nature of disciple making. There is an obligation to both initiate a gospel decision with a person and mentor that individual to maturity.

The instruction for the disciples to teach is a watershed moment in the gospel of Matthew. Prior to this point Jesus has been the teacher. The only time that one can infer that the disciples taught is when Jesus sent them out in Matthew 10, and Matthew does not record any of their teachings as they went out. R. T. France notes the importance of this transition:

Now the verb “teach” is used with the disciples as subject, marking the decisive change, which follows Jesus’ death and resurrection. But even so their duty of teaching derives from the authority of the risen Lord (v. 18). So they are to teach not their own ideas, but what Jesus has “commanded.”³⁶

The students have finally become the teachers, although they do not teach their own prerogatives, but what their master has taught them. They are required to also teach every command that Christ did and not just select those of their own choosing. The disciples are not left to their own memories and notes to recall all that Jesus has taught them. In John 14:16, Jesus promises that “the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

³⁵Hare, *Matthew*, 334.

³⁶France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1118.

The instruction to teach all that Christ has commanded includes teaching the command to make disciples, which is the third reason to believe that this commission includes all Christians. This command is self-replicating. Each time a new disciple is made he is taught, during his discipleship, to make another disciple. When he obeys this command he will teach his new disciple to make a new disciple. This process continues until all the nations are reached. If Jesus intended this commission only for His immediate disciples, He would have to put an end to this self-replicating command. He could have done this by saying, “Teaching them to obey some of the things I have commanded you.” Of course, this is not what Christ said or meant to communicate. He wanted all of His commands to be taught and obeyed, including the command of making more disciples. Every disciple is bound by all of Christ’s commands: every disciple is bound by this great commission.

This instruction, to teach all that Christ has commanded, also includes the preaching of the gospel (evangelism). One of the first commands that Christ ever gave was concerning obedience to the gospel. In Mark 1:15, He said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” To become a disciple one must obey this first command, and in the process of discipleship one must teach others to obey this command. One becomes a disciple when he repents and believes in the gospel. Disciples are obligated to all that Jesus has commanded. Disciples obey His command to make more disciples by telling others to repent and believe as they first did. Hence, every disciple is compelled to proselytize. Therefore, every Christian is obligated to share the gospel.

If every disciple is called to make disciples, which Matthew 28:18-20 teaches, then every disciple must preach the gospel message to others as the first step to become a disciple. The preaching of the gospel is the necessary and initial action in making a new disciple. Paul makes this point very clear in Romans 10:14-17:

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without

someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Paul puts together four consecutive rhetorical questions that each began with the interrogative “how.” Each question begins with the same verb of the preceding question. The verbs are call, believe, hear, preach, and sent. Moo comments on this construction: “Paul creates a connected chain of steps that must be followed if a person is to be saved.”³⁷ Salvation only happens when someone calls on the God they believe is real, because they have heard about Him from a sent preacher. Evangelism (preaching the good news) is necessary in order for a disciple to be made, because, as Paul argued, belief cannot arise without proclamation. Therefore, the command to make disciples in Matthew 28:18-20 includes a command to evangelize. Evangelism does not completely fulfill the command of making disciples, but it is the indispensable catalyst of first making a disciple.

Christ’s Promise in Matthew 28:18-20

In Matthew 28:20, the last thing that Christ says to His disciples is a promise that He will be with them “even till the end of the age.” Matthew uses this phrase “end of the age” often. Matthew records Jesus using this phrase in explaining the parable of the weeds. In Matthew 13:39-40, Jesus says, “And the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire so will it be at the end of the age.” Jesus uses this phrase again in verse 49: “So it will be at the end of the age. The Angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous.” Each time Matthew uses this phrase He is depicting a time of eschatological judgment that closes out the present era, which is the fourth

³⁷D. J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1996). 663.

reason to believe that this commission includes all Christians. David Turner argues, “This makes clear that the commission is not only for the original eleven disciples but also for their disciples and their disciples’ disciples in perpetuity until Jesus returns.”³⁸ This promise was clearly looking beyond the first-century disciples because they did not live till the “end of the age.” If Jesus meant this commission to only apply to the first-century disciples, it would have made more sense to promise to be with them to the end of their lives as opposed to the end of the age.

Conclusion on Matthew 28:18-20

It is clear, for several reasons, that the Great Commission of Matthew 28 applies to all Christians. Jesus expected His first-century disciples to follow this mission and He also expects subsequent followers to as well. The mission will not be complete until all nations are reached and the end of the age comes. This mission of disciple making includes the sharing of the gospel and calling on others to repent and believe.

³⁸David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 690.

CHAPTER 3
SOCIOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL SUPPORT FOR
THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF EQUIPPING
YOUNG ADULTS TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

Young adults have been at the center of many revivals throughout history. Sociological research shows that young adults are essential in indigenously reaching their own age demographic. Based on these observed phenomena, today's young adults are essential in reaching their current culture that is more unchurched and institutionally skeptical, yet surprisingly spiritual.

Historical Support

Historical accounts of revival through the twentieth century support the thesis by showing that young adults have played a significant role in these evangelistic movements. The First Great Awakening is recognized by many as one of the most significant revival experiences in the history of America and Europe. This great revival has at its roots the youth of its day. Jonathan Edwards was one of the key leaders during this revival. He records in “A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God” how the youth in his town first affected this great spiritual awakening.

In the beginning of Edwards's account, he describes his disapproval of the youth behavior in town prior to the revival:

Many of them [were] very much addicted to night walking, frequenting the tavern, and lewd practices. It was their manner very frequently to get together in conventions of both sexes for mirth and jollity, which they called frolics, and they would often spend the greater part of the night in them.¹

¹Jonathan Edwards, quoted in John Mark Terry, *Evangelism: A Concise History* (Nashville: B & H, 1998), loc. 2048, Kindle.

Edward's reaction to this low sense of morality was to privately visit the homes of these youth. After several visitations, he documents that he saw a small amount of improvement in their behaviors and a growing concern in their hearts for spiritual matters.

This sense of spiritual inquiry heightened with the occurrence of two major events. The first event was the unexpected death of a well-known young man. Edwards preached from Psalms 90 about the frailty of life and God's sovereign hand, even in death. Hansen and Woodbridge comment on the impact: "The untimely death and Edwards's weighty sermon left an impression. Edwards reported that the young people became serious and began studying the Bible and praying together in small groups."² These small groups met throughout the town and drew much notice from many of the town's members. The second event that acted as a catalyst to this spiritual movement was the conversion of a young woman. Hansen and Woodbridge report, "One of the town's most promiscuous young women converted and reached out to her rowdy friends."³ In studying Edwards' account, Alvin Reid concludes that in Edwards' mind "the First Great Awakening . . . was essentially a youth movement."⁴ Edwards would not deny the fact that people of all ages were converted and affected by this great spiritual awakening. With that said, he is not bashful to attribute the genesis of this awakening to youth.

Young adults were also at the center of the revival that hit Yale's campus at the turn of the nineteenth century. In 1797, a group of twenty-five students formed a spiritual accountability group called the Moral Society of Yale College. This group functioned similarly to Wesley's Holy Clubs at Oxford. Yale's student body was predominantly irreligious at this time. It is recorded that in 1796 "only ten students would have publicly

²Collin Hansen and John D. Woodbridge, *A God-Sized Vision: Revival Stories that Stretch and Stir* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), loc. 572, Kindle.

³Ibid.

⁴Alvin L. Reid, *As You Go: Creating a Missional Culture of Gospel-Centered Students* (Colorado Springs: Think, 2013), loc. 405, Kindle.

professed Christian belief, and eight of them were seniors.”⁵ In six years, the spiritual climate of this institution radically changed due to the remarkable leadership of its revival-minded president Timothy Dwight and student clubs like the Moral Society. Hansen and Woodbridge write, “There was sufficient cause for great celebration in 1802 when one-third of the Yale student body, then numbering 230, professed new faith in Christ. Freshman Heman Humphrey remembered the revival as a mighty rushing wind.”⁶ This rushing wind began in a very discrete manner “with a small band of students meeting weekly over several months to pray that God would visit Yale the way he had been visiting the frontier with revival.”⁷ The president created the revival-friendly environment, but the students were the kindling that the Holy Spirit caught on fire.

God also used five Williams College students to start a mission’s revival. These five young students met in the summer of 1806 in a field to discuss theology and missions. During their discussion a great rainstorm interrupted and they sought shelter underneath a haystack. This event in history would be later entitled the “Haystack Prayer Meeting.” It was this prayer meeting that four years later gave rise to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. In the board’s first fifty years they sent out just over 1,250 missionaries.

During the time of World War II, God began to stir up the spirit of revival in youth. In 1944, a Baptist pastor Tory Johnson led an evangelistic campaign in the city of Chicago. This event was housed in a stadium and was titled “Chicagoland for Christ,” which was the beginning of an organization called Youth for Christ. Youth for Christ began putting on similar youth rallies across the country. In 1944, Tory Johnson was elected the first president of Youth for Christ and Billy Graham became the

⁵Hansen and Woodbridge, *A God-Sized Vision*, loc. 958.

⁶Ibid., loc. 983.

⁷Ibid., loc. 991.

organization's first full-time worker. Billy Graham was only 26 years old at the time. He quickly became the prominent speaker at these rallies.

At their first annual convention in 1945, the leaders of Youth for Christ documented the great work that God had done the previous year. They acknowledged a "visitation of the Spirit of God in convicting and regenerating power among the youth, such as has not been seen in recent times."⁸ The movement gained further strength while Graham traveled throughout both the United States and Europe. Graham later went on to become the most successful American evangelist. It is reported that more than 3.2 million people responded to Grahams' invitations to follow Christ. His monumental success began with his work with youth when he was but a youth.

Youth for Christ has also been identified as one of the primary causes for the revivals in the 1950s. Historian Garth Rosell writes, "With rare exception, the cities with the strongest Youth for Christ presence in the 1940s became the cities most deeply touched by the revivals of the 1950s."⁹ God used the young leaders in this organization to reach young people, whose efforts laid the spiritual foundation for other great spiritual movements in America.

In February of 1970, revival broke out at Asbury College and the students were at the center of it. Asbury is an interdenominational college in a small city of just over 4,000. Students, at the time, went to the required chapel services three times a week. Another routine meeting was expected by the students and faculty that went into Hughes auditorium on February 3. This Tuesday, the academic dean, Custer Reynolds was in charge. Instead of preaching, Reynolds gave his testimony and then opened up the floor for any students that wanted to share their testimonies. One student responded and shared and then another came up after him. This started a chain of events with one student

⁸Ibid., loc. 2598.

⁹Ibid.

coming up after another. The service was schedule to last only 50 minutes, but instead it lasted almost eight days. The chapel was open and occupied twenty-four hours a day.

Both students and teachers were singing, praying, and weeping. They confessed sin to one another and sought forgiveness from fellow students that they had wronged. President Kinlaw was traveling when the revival first broke out. He wanted to come back and identify if the revival was really an act of God. Kinlaw walked into the auditorium at about 2 a.m. When he got to the chapel he was approached by a young woman. She confessed that she was a habitual liar and needed to ask her fellow students for forgiveness. After that experience, Kinlaw did nothing to stop the revival.

The news of this revival began to spread throughout the county. People started going to the college to witness what was happening with the students. Revival began to breakout at the nearby seminary. Many teachers canceled their classes during the revival. The news of what was happening spread to other Christian institutions. These institutions asked some students of Asbury to come and speak to their students. Revival seemed to follow these students wherever they went. Through this visit over 130 colleges, seminaries, and churches experienced revival.

The most significant visit was at a Church of God in Anderson, Indiana. After some students gave their testimonies the church experienced a movement of God and revival lasted for 50 consecutive nights. The churches services became so crowded that they had to move them to a local gymnasium. These services were attended by as many as 2,500 people. The Asbury revival traveled across the nation from New York to California, and even made its way into South America.

A similar revival occurred at Wheaton College in 1995. Howard Payne University in Texas had just experienced revival and some of the students from this school were asked to speak at Wheaton's World Christian Fellowship service on Sunday night. The two students from Howard Payne spoke and gave their testimonies. The Wheaton students responded by confessing their sins. Student after student began to

follow in suit and as each one confessed groups would form around them and pray for them. The service went on until 6am the next morning.

The students came back again that night to the chapel and experienced the same thing as before. They sang for a brief period of time and then began confessing their sins until the next morning. This pattern was repeated again Tuesday and Wednesday. The revival ended on Thursday with a service of praise and testimony that most of the student body attended. At the end of the service there was a special time of prayer for those students who had responded to the call of full-time ministry. This prayer of dedication was made on behalf of several hundred students. Just as in the Asbury revival, students were asked by other churches and institutions to go out and share what had happened. These visits also sparked revival, just as previous visits from Asbury students did to their destinations.

God has oftentimes used young pastors to start revival. God used twenty-seven year old Nikolaus von Zinzendorf to start a hundred-year long Moravian prayer revival. This Moravian movement later effected two young preachers who would be recognized in history as some of the greatest traveling evangelist. “John Wesley found his faith wanting compared to Moravian believers who weathered a violent storm with calm disposition.”¹⁰ Wesley attributed his conversion as taking place at a Moravian meeting in 1738. Wesley began his traveling preaching ministry at a young age and is considered one of the primary founders of the Methodist denomination. “The Moravians left a lasting impression on another young preacher, George Whitefield. Before he turned twenty-three, Whitefield was a household name in London.”¹¹ He preached over 18,000 sermons and spoke to audiences numbering in the thousands without the use of a microphone. Whitefield, Wesley, and Edwards are considered the primary leaders of the First Great Awakening.

¹⁰Hansen and Woodbridge, *A God-Sized Vision*, loc. 373.

¹¹*Ibid.*, loc. 615.

It is obvious throughout history that God has not chosen to pass over youth in starting revival. In fact, He has chosen to utilize them as not only the recipients of revival, but the catalysts of it as well. One should conclude that since God has chosen to use such instruments, that it would be foolish to overlook and underutilize youth in any evangelistic efforts to reach their own age demographic.

Sociological Support

The sociological research of several church growth experts support the thesis by showing the superior effectiveness of indigenous and homogeneous movements in evangelism. Donald McGavran defines a homogeneous movement when he writes, “People like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers.”¹² McGavran observed this phenomenon and gathered that those attempting to evangelize someone should respect the social dignity of the one they are seeking to convert. McGavran argued for the importance of a Christian decision being free from social hurdles. A Christian decision should be made up of only faith and repentance. Social change is an unnecessary obstacle for a Christian decision. McGavran describes this further when he writes,

The fact is that men and women, high and low, advanced and primitive, usually turn to Christian faith in numbers only when some way is found for them to become Christian without leaving their kith and kin. The great obstacles to conversion are social, not theological. Great turning of Muslims and Hindus can be expected as soon as ways are found for them to become Christian without renouncing their loved ones, which seems to them a betrayal.¹³

Christians are called to sacrifice everything for the sake of following Christ. Part of this sacrifice can include family (Luke 14:26). Christ is not asking that everyone cut ties with their family and ostracize themselves. The New Testament supports the Old Testament commandment of honoring one’s mother and father. The balance between these two ideas

¹²Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1990), loc. 685, Kindle.

¹³*Ibid.*, loc. 1947.

is found in how one prioritizes their devotion. Christ commands the preeminent position in devotion. If anything conflicts with devotion to Him it must be sacrificed, even if that is a family relationship. McGavran is writing against the idea of unnecessarily forcing sacrifices on converts that are not in conflict to their devotion to Christ. He believes that many social customs and constructs do not need to be abandoned before conversion, because they do not conflict with Christ's call for faith and repentance.

Anthropologist Charles H. Karft agrees with McGavran's observations of homogeneous movements in evangelism. He warns of the potential danger of bringing unnecessary hurdles into the conversion experience, when he points out,

When the Christian faith moves from one culture to another, the churches in the second culture would not be expected to look exactly like the churches from the missionaries' culture. Missionaries who do not understand this and who feel that their mode of church government, their requirements for ordination, their sense of punctuality, their liturgical tastes, their musical idioms, their rules for baptism, their ethical taboos, and what have you need to be cloned in the churches in the new culture raise artificial barriers to church growth.¹⁴

Christians create inappropriate requirements when they impose their cultural expressions of Christianity on another culture. The principles of Christianity transcend culture, but they are expressed in cultural forms. The danger is to take these cultural expressions and put them on the same level of importance as the principles behind them. An example of this is the clothing one wears at church. A member of a suburban white-collar church could be evangelizing an urban blue-collar worker and unknowingly be placing a cultural hurdle in the way of his evangelism. When the urban blue-collar worker is invited to the suburban white-collar man's church, he may feel terribly out of place because he does not dress in a suit and tie. McGavran and Karft are arguing that Christians must be mindful of these cultural barriers and seek to eliminate as many as possible to allow the gospel and its requirements to be seen more clearly.

George Hunter believes this homogeneous, or sometimes called "indigenous,"

¹⁴Ibid., loc. 1228.

principle in evangelism was one of the reasons for the effective spread of the gospel in Ireland during the Middle Ages:

The Celtic Christian movement did not impose one establishment-certified institutionalized expression of Christianity everywhere; they implemented the principle of “indigenous” Christianity before we knew what to call it, and the movement seems to have adapted to local cultures everywhere.¹⁵

The leaders of this movement in Ireland shared Christianity in a way that showed it was not owned by one culture, but could be expressed in a diversity of cultures.

The gospel flows more freely when social barriers are diminished. Therefore, the gospel is more likely to avoid these barriers when the sharer is inside the target culture, than outside of it. An outsider must learn the social barriers and study the best ways to avoid them, whereas an insider is innately aware of them and naturally handles them. McGavran writes, “Again and again I observed that though Christians are surrounded by thousands of fellow citizens, the Christian faith flows best from relative to relative or close friend to close friend. This was true whatever the nationality or language.”¹⁶ Peer to peer evangelism is the most natural and effective form of evangelism. McGavran saw this to also be true of college students: “Campus Crusade for Christ built its vast organization on the fact that college students can speak normally and effectively to other collegians.”¹⁷

Church growth experts agree that homogeneous and indigenous movements in evangelism are the most effective. They are not the only movements, but they are superior. Therefore the most adequate evangelists for young adults are young adults. They naturally know the culture and can more easily communicate Christianity within their culture, than those outside their culture.

¹⁵Ibid., loc. 1691.

¹⁶Ibid., loc. 3131.

¹⁷Ibid., loc. 3188.

Cultural Support

Cultural information gathered by several sociological researchers support this thesis by showing the necessity of personal evangelism in light of the young adult culture being more unchurched, institutionally skeptical, yet spiritual. The culture of the twenty-first century young adult is drastically different compared to the culture of the great revival times just discussed.

The current worldview of those between the ages of 18 to 29 is far from being biblical. With that said, their worldview is not atheistic. Rainer describes, “Millennials [those born after 1980, but before 2000] are the least religious of any generation in modern American history. Millennials are still spiritual.”¹⁸ It appears that Rainer’s description is not that far off from how the Millennials would describe themselves. Ed Stetzer discovered that “43 percent of the younger unchurched said they were spiritual, but not religious.”¹⁹ Wuthnow classifies this age group as spiritual tinkers instead of religious service attendees.²⁰ He draws this conclusion based on the research:

A general decline in religious attendance has occurred among American younger adults, other measures of belief and spirituality have not suffered such a decline. For instance, little change has occurred since the 1970s in the proportion of young adults who believe the Bible to be the Word of God.²¹

When researching teenagers in America, Christian Smith and Melina Denton summarize their findings on their religious worldview by describing it as “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.”²² They found that this religious perspective continued from teenage years to

¹⁸Thom S. Rainer and Jess W. Rainer, *The Millennials: Connecting to America’s Largest Generation* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), loc. 789, Kindle.

¹⁹Robert Wuthnow, quoted in Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them* (Nashville: B & H, 2009), loc. 408, Kindle.

²⁰*Ibid.*, loc. 139.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²Christian Smith and Melina Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), loc. 3526, Kindle.

adulthood. They write, “The latest wave of research reveals that MTD [Moralistic Therapeutic Deism] is still alive and well among 18- to 23-year-old American youth.”²³ In summary, those who hold to this religious worldview believe God wants them to be good (moralistic), the goal of their life is to feel good (therapeutic), and God is their creator, but is rarely involved in their lives (deism). The research indicates that the majority of young adults in America are not biblical monotheist, yet at the same time, they are not secular atheists. They fall somewhere in the middle of this spectrum, which some researchers have called “spiritual, but not religious.”

Young Adults’ View of God

The meaning of the classification of “spiritual, but not religious” needs further explanation. One can gain further understanding of this description by looking at how young adults have answered important doctrinal questions. Christian Smith and Patricia Snell state, “Four out of five unchurched adults in America between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine believe that a supreme being exists.”²⁴ Eighty percent of young adults are not atheists, and this sample does not even include young adults involved in church. A slightly smaller percentage of those who believe in a supreme being, three out of four, identified that this beings’ existence has an impact on their lives.²⁵ Rainer found that “72 percent, assign traditional theistic and Christian concepts to God. They believe he is all-powerful, all-knowing, and perfect in all he does.”²⁶ Near 55 percent of unchurched young adults believed this supreme being is the only God and God of the Bible.²⁷ These

²³Christian Smith and Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), loc. 3301, Kindle.

²⁴Ibid., loc. 439.

²⁵Ibid., loc. 443.

²⁶Rainer and Rainer, *The Millennials*, loc. 3509.

²⁷Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 450.

statistics seem very promising, but further investigation shows that they are not as positive. Stetzer explains, “Furthermore, of those who agree that only the biblical God exists, 53 percent still agree that God is no different from other gods. Put simply, an abundance of spiritual confusion permeates the belief system of the young unchurched.”²⁸ Furthermore, Smith and Denton clarify,

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism is about belief in a particular kind of God: one who exists, created the world, and defines our general moral order, but not one who is particularly personally involved in one’s affairs—especially affairs in which one would prefer not to have God involved.²⁹

Any reference an unchurched young adult makes to the God of the Bible does not reflect that they understand who the God of the Bible is.

Young Adults’ View of Christ

The young unchurched appear to also have a positive stance on Christ. 66 percent agreed that Jesus died and came back to life.³⁰ Even more, 77 percent agreed that belief in Jesus has a positive effect on someone’s life.³¹ Strangely, more unchurched young adults believe that Jesus rose from the dead, than believe in the God of the Bible. Even those that do not believe in Jesus’ resurrection think that believing in Him is a positive thing. This generation has a very high view of Jesus. They believe in the central piece of the story of Jesus and feel that, even after 2,000 years, He has a positive impact on those that follow Him. Stetzer, points out that “the younger unchurched are not staying away from church because they have a problem with Jesus.”³²

²⁸Ibid., loc. 457.

²⁹Smith and Denton, *Soul Searching*, loc. 3573.

³⁰Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 521.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., loc. 532.

Young Adults' View of the Church

If this young generation has such a high view of God and Jesus, then why are they not flooding the churches? The reason is because they do not have a positive view of the church, like they do of God and Jesus. Thirty-nine percent of the younger unchurched felt their lifestyle would not be accepted in church.³³ Sixty-seven percent believed the church was full of hypocrites and did not practice what they preached.³⁴ This generation also thinks churches are out of step with their generation. Rainer concluded, “The Millennial Generation is largely anti-institutional church in its attitude. An amazing 70 percent of these young adults agree that American churches are irrelevant today.”³⁵ Even those inside the church were often found describing it as “‘tradition bound’ and ‘irrelevant’ and ‘focus on themselves.’”³⁶ Furthermore, 90 percent believed they could have a good relationship with God without going to church and 91 percent believed church was not the only place to learn about being a Christian.³⁷ On a positive note, 73 percent said the church was a helpful institution to society.³⁸

Young adults do not feel welcome at church because of their behaviors and lifestyle choices. They feel like an outsider and believe the insiders are frauds. They also do not believe they need church to connect with God. God and Jesus get high marks, but the church is mostly viewed in a negative light. These statistics may lead some to believe that the church has systematically and personally offended the majority of the Millennial generation. The picture is not that bleak. Dan Kimball explains,

³³Ibid., loc. 592.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Rainer and Rainer, *The Millennials*, loc. 3523.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 592.

³⁸Ibid.

But we have to remember that more and more individuals in our emerging culture have not grown up in a church. Most don't see the church as a place they would naturally go to seek God and spiritual growth. Instead, they have no problem going on with their lives and praying to and developing a relationship with God on their own.³⁹

It is not that this generation has had a negative experience with church, but that they have not really experienced church very much. Kimball goes on to explain, “The negative impressions and stereotypes that emerging generations have of Christians and the church keep them away.”⁴⁰ The church has gotten some bad press and this young generation is buying it. With that in mind, it is important to realize that “young outsiders attribute their image of Christianity primarily to conversations and firsthand experiences.”⁴¹ Individual Christians are the most significant cause for the church's bad press.

This bad press has left many young adults with the perception that Christians are not focused on what they believe is the message of the Bible. Seventy-seven percent said they believe today's Christianity is more focused on religion than loving God and neighbor.⁴² David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons reveal, “The three most common perceptions of present-day Christianity are antihomosexual (an image held by 91 percent of young outsiders), judgmental (87 percent), and hypocritical (85 percent).”⁴³ Outsiders are not seeing the church as an institution of loving people and they do not feel the church cares about them or that the church is willing to accept them as they are. The perception is they would have to behave a certain way, therefore being disingenuous, in order to belong.

³⁹Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus but not the Church: Insights from Emerging Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), loc. 1043, Kindle.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, loc. 1043.

⁴¹David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity . . . and Why It Matters* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), loc. 246, Kindle.

⁴²Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 791.

⁴³Kinnaman and Lyons, *unChristian*, loc. 246.

Culture has changed in its relation to Christianity. Church is not as much of an American practice as in previous years. George Hunter sheds light on this shift when he writes,

The United States, for instance, has at least 180 million functionally secular people who have never been substantially influenced by any serious version of the Christian faith. That makes the United States the largest mission field in the Western Hemisphere and the third largest on Earth.⁴⁴

Christianity must come to grips that, with this emerging generation, the culture is becoming less Christian. We are in a “post-Christian culture.”⁴⁵ This shift now requires a look at the culture through the lens of a missionary. Christians are foreigners in a different land. Churches that have been so effective in the past at reaching the culture are now seen with indifference and even hostility.

Christian Smith and Patricia Snell observe that young adults do not only have a lack of trust toward churches, but also other social institutions:

Emerging adults are not only less religiously committed and involved than older adults but also tend to be less involved in and committed toward a wide variety of other, nonreligious social and institutional connections, associations, and activities.⁴⁶

Young adults are more skeptical and critical of religious and non-religious institutions.

Young Adults’ View of Evangelism

Surprisingly, as oft put as this generation is with the church and Christianity, they are very open to personal evangelism. Stetzer explains,

In a context where churches exist, they have rejected them. However, we were surprised at just how open the younger unchurched actually are to hearing about Christianity. In overwhelming percentages, the younger unchurched expressed an openness in regard to hearing their friends talk about Christ.⁴⁷

⁴⁴George G. Hunter, *The Apostolic Congregation: Church Growth Reconceived for a New Generation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), loc. 375, Kindle.

⁴⁵Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, loc. 405

⁴⁶Smith and Snell, *Souls in Transition*, loc. 2143.

⁴⁷Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 652.

They seem to be more opposed to the institutional church or organized forms of Christianity, but when a friend embraces Christianity it gives it much more credibility. Eighty-eight percent said they would be willing to listen to someone tell them what they believed about Christianity.⁴⁸ Sixty-one percent said that if a friend asked them to study the Bible that they would be willing.⁴⁹ Forty-six percent said that they would view a friend's conversion to Christianity as having a positive impact on their relationship.⁵⁰ Forty-six percent would be open to going to a small group in order to learn more about Jesus and the Bible.⁵¹ The majority of the young unchurched are willing to listen and even study the Bible. Almost half would say that a friend's conversion would improve their relationship. This may seem like a lower percentage, but this represents the number of people who noted a positive impact over no impact or a negative impact. The same number of respondents say they would feel comfortable discussing deep spiritual things in a small group.

Necessity of Personal Evangelism

The openness to discussion and personal learning lines up with the description of this generation being spiritual, but institutionally skeptical, which goes against the modern church's models of attractional evangelism. Attractional evangelism is when a church works to make an environment or creates a program that draws the unchurched to their campus. Some examples of this type of attraction would be modern stage design, practical preaching, church coffee shops, and needs-based small groups or studies. Kimball responds to this model of evangelism when he writes,

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., loc. 833.

Those things are all good, but people outside the church aren't looking for a church with those things. They aren't looking for a church at all. It is in the context of relationships with missional Christians that they become inspired to come to worship gatherings. But the sad part is so many outside the church don't have a relationship with someone inside the church.⁵²

The market for attractional churches is shrinking because less people are looking for the church that fits them. They are not looking for church. Even if someone in this generation defines themselves as spiritual or even Christian, they do not see the church as a necessary part of their spiritual pursuit. They believe they can follow Jesus without going to church. Currently, the church is trying to market a product (its ministries) that the consumer is not aware he has a need for. The culture has shifted from asking “what church should we go to?” or “should we go to church?” to “what do you want to do on Sunday?” Most of the young unchurched feel no need to attend church, even for spiritual matters.

Jeff Iorg argues, “Once again, attraction and engagement strategies should not be abandoned. But they will, by themselves, be more and more inadequate in an increasingly secularized culture giving less and less credence to church activities and programs.”⁵³

Iorg is saying that the church can no longer rely on the idea that “if we build it, they will come.” The church is no longer seen as an asset to the surrounding society. It has become more of a meeting place secluded from society. Societal needs are now met more by social service agencies than by the church, as they have been in the past. Weddings can now be performed in parks with internet-certified officials. Funeral homes and mortuaries have taken memorial ceremonies outside of the church. Guidance and counseling is mostly sought from secular professionals. Even spiritual needs can be met by listening to figures like Oprah or watching a worship service on TV or online. With all of these needs met, it is no surprise to see why the church seems unnecessary to the culture.

⁵²Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, loc. 3427.

⁵³Jeff Iorg, “North America as Mission Field: The Great Commission on Our Continent,” in *The Great Commission Resurgence: Fulfilling God's Mandate in Our Time*, ed. Charles E. Lawless and Adam Wade Greenway (Nashville: B & H, 2010), loc. 5314, Kindle.

Iorg believes the solution to culture's indifference toward the church is to adopt a different strategy of evangelism. This new strategy is focused more on infiltrating the culture than attracting or engaging it. Attracting strategies focus on getting people to church. Engaging strategies bring church groups to the culture. An example of this is a Bible study at work. Iorg describes this new strategy: "An infiltration strategy is the deployment of believers throughout the culture to introduce unbelievers to Jesus Christ in their context."⁵⁴ This strategy requires leaders to equip people to share the gospel on their own. These equipped members would share the gospel in the context of a setting they or the church does not control, like a school, workplace, park, home, and other existing systems.

This infiltration strategy is the best way to reach the unchurched in this generation. Rainer studied the formerly unchurched and asked them questions to see what brought them into church membership. He found that

the formerly unchurched in our study left little doubt as to the importance of personal evangelism in reaching the unchurched. Over one half indicated that someone from the church they joined shared Christ with them. Another 12 percent told us that someone other than a member at the church they joined personally evangelized them. Only one-third of the formerly unchurched said that no one made an attempt to share Christ one-on-one.⁵⁵

According to Rainer's research, two thirds of the formerly unchurched cited a personal gospel conversation as the reason they became a member, which is an overwhelming statistic for personal evangelism. Rainer's study was not specifically focused on young adults, but did include them.

It would be understandable if these statistics were higher for young adults, due to the openness to personal spiritual discussions and their apprehension to the institution of church. Rainer goes on to explain in another book that personal evangelism needs to

⁵⁴Ibid., loc. 5270.

⁵⁵Thom S. Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), loc. 539, Kindle.

look different for this generation. The old style of knocking on doors and visiting first-time attenders is no longer as effective as it was in the past. In evangelism training Rainer believes that “the trainees should be taught that their training will be most effective among persons with whom they have developed a relationship. In other words, evangelism training is ‘in’ but cold-call evangelism is ‘out.’”⁵⁶ Cold-call evangelism is seen as forceful and intrusive and often times leaves the young unchurched feeling less cared for and more like an objective goal of proselytizing.

David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons came to a similar conclusion in their research on this young generation:

One of the clear implications of our research is that the negative image of Christians can be overcome, and this almost always happens in the context of meaningful, trusting relationships. The goal of overcoming their negative baggage is not just to make outsiders think pleasant things about us, but to point them to life in Christ.⁵⁷

They concluded that the depth of relationship that one has with a young unchurched adult is proportionate to the effectiveness of reaching them for Christ. They are not comfortable enough to come into the churches and they do not feel cared for with an impromptu evangelism visit from a stranger. The deeper the relational connection, the more apt they are to listen to the gospel message.

Necessity of New Ministry Model

This relational connection points to one of the largest sociological barriers for young adults today. This barrier is caused by what Stetzer identifies as the current and popular ministry model of “behave/believe/belong.”⁵⁸ Stetzer explains this model when he writes,

⁵⁶Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: B & H, 1998), loc. 3752, Kindle.

⁵⁷Kinnaman and Lyons, *unChristian*, loc. 3370.

⁵⁸Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes, *Lost and Found*, loc. 1563.

This approach toward the unchurched has been one that began by connecting with those that behaved in a certain way. Sadly our openness to the unchurched is often based more on the outward ‘acceptable’ behaviors rather than our call to reach them.⁵⁹

This “behave” first model leads to an attempt to moralize the unchurched rather than convert them first to Christ. In this model, once the individual’s behavior is appropriate and their beliefs are correct, then they are embraced as belonging to the church. Until the third phase the individual is a bit of a relational foreigner or outsider. The relational connection is what current young adults are looking for, yet not receiving when they enter a church, which explains the overwhelming statistics that show young adults do not feel welcome in church. They do not feel as if they belong with their conflicting behaviors and opposing beliefs.

To overcome this relational barrier, Stetzer recommends a new model. He entitles this new model “belong/believe/become.”⁶⁰ He explains that in this model an unchurched person is

immediately welcomed into the community with other Christians. As previously stated, this doesn’t mean incorporating someone as a new member of your church. Rather, it means creating an environment of acceptance for the unchurched despite their flaws and their unfamiliarity with the things of God and His church.⁶¹

In this model, the unchurched individual immediately makes a relational connection. They feel as though they are welcome and their doubts and misdeeds do not disqualify them from finding some sort of community at church. Just as the unchurched are more prone to listen to a friend’s explanation of their faith, they are also more likely to listen to sermons in a friendly environment. Friends accept the differences that arise between each other. They acknowledge and overlook these differences, because they care for one another. An atmosphere of personal acceptance, yet without behavioral excuse, is essential to reaching

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., loc. 1571.

⁶¹Ibid.

this young generation. The church cannot condone immoral behavior, but the church can love the immoral. If this relational connection is made, then the unchurched are more likely to slowly walk on a path toward faith.

Hunter identified “belong/believe/become,” as the key to the evangelization of Ireland in the Middle Ages. He argues that America is very close to the post-Christian and barbaric culture of Ireland in the Middle Ages. Hunter points out how effective the Celtic Christians were at creating a welcoming community for the unconverted. He concludes, “Belonging comes before believing.”⁶² Based on this conclusion, he exhorts modern churches in America to see evangelism more as “helping people to belong so that they can believe.”⁶³ Biblically speaking, a sense of belonging is not absolutely necessary before one believes, but an overwhelming amount of sociological evidence supports that a sense of belonging makes it incredibly easier to believe.

The importance of a personal relational connection with the unchurched has not penetrated the mind of the majority of average churchgoers. Alan Hirsch writes, “Research indicates that the majority of Christians have no significant relationships with people beyond their church community. To move out (get missional), and to move in (get incarnational), this must change.”⁶⁴ The greatest thing the young unchurched are looking for is the very thing Christians are least likely to give them, a personal relationship. As the attractional (“come see my church”) approach to evangelism diminishes in its effectiveness, the church will have to rely more heavily on its members’ personal expressions of their faith to the unchurched. If these personal expressions have no relationships to stand on, then the church will be destined to decline. Evangelism has to

⁶²George G. Hunter, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West . . . Again*, 10th rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2010), loc. 807, Kindle.

⁶³Ibid., loc. 807.

⁶⁴Alan Hirsch and Lance Ford, *Right Here, Right Now: Everyday Mission for Everyday People* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), loc. 463, Kindle.

become more of a lifestyle for Christians than a ministry inside the confines of church programming. John Mark Terry explains this type of evangelism when he writes, “Lifestyle evangelism is based on the premise that a person must trust the witness before believing the message. Aldrich reminds his readers that 80 percent of all new converts come to Christ because of a Christian friend or relative.”⁶⁵ The majority of the conversion growth of churches is based on members’ effectiveness at reaching their unsaved friends and neighbors. The churches that equip their people for personal evangelism will thrive more in a post-Christian culture than those that do not.

The church is one of the primary culprits in diminishing the likelihood of relationships developing between the church and the unchurched. Gabe Lyons explains, “But when the faithful saturate their schedules with Christian events at Christian venues with Christian people, the world has a hard time believing we hold the rest of the world in high esteem.”⁶⁶ Christians are too busy at church to reach the unchurched. This younger unchurched generation is very unlikely to step foot into a church out of curiosity. Events and services designed with the idea of the unchurched attending will increasingly become more ineffective. The young unchurched are less likely to come to church, so Christians must go to them; but they cannot go to them if they are too busy hanging out with each other. Christians cannot let their fellowship trump their evangelism.

Conclusion

The millennial or young adult culture in America is largely unchurched. This group is also very skeptical of the institution of church. Despite these two characteristics, this group considers itself very spiritual and open to personal religious discussions. Therefore, personal evangelism is crucial in reaching this next generation for Christ.

⁶⁵Terry, *Evangelism*, loc. 3481.

⁶⁶Gabe Lyons, *The Next Christians: Seven Ways You Can Live the Gospel and Restore the World* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2012), 488.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

This project took place over a fifteen-week period. Week 1 began when the young adult participants initially completed the evangelism survey (see appendix 1). Over the next thirteen weeks, the participants were involved in the evangelism training class. In the last week of the project the students retook the initial survey and their results were compared with those of their initial survey. The background for the project, preparation prior to the first week, and a week-by-week description of the project process are detailed in this chapter.

Background

Knott Avenue Christian Church has had a healthy young adults ministry for several years. This ministry was allowed its own service on Sunday night designed to reach its specified demographic of eighteen to twenty-nine year olds. The young adult ministry has followed the same evangelistic strategy as the church. As a whole, the church and its ministries put an incredible amount of emphasis on event-based evangelism. Guest speakers are brought in right after Easter in hopes of retaining the large visitor crowd from the previous Sunday. Christian plays with professional actors are brought in at times to substitute for the normal weekend services with hopes of drawing a larger crowd. Comedians are scheduled on Friday and Saturday nights in order to attract people who would not normally go to church. This event-based evangelism happens in large-scale as well as small-scale environments. Each ministry is required to host these types of events throughout the year. All ministries of the church have been designed to include events that attract the unchurched.

At all of these events it is expected that the gospel be presented and people are given the opportunity to make a public declaration of their decision to follow Christ. Before any such event, a considerable amount of time, money, and manpower is used to advertise. Several weeks before an event flyers are handed out in the service and the congregants are exhorted to pass them on to their friends as invitations. The congregation is also encouraged to gather at church on specific days to hand out flyers in the surrounding parking lots, neighborhoods, parks, and business centers.

A follow-up program at the church equips individuals to personally share the gospel when visiting those who have attended these events. Even though this follow-up program has been meeting weekly for years, it is not well attended. In this program participants share the gospel with someone whom they have not had a prior relationship with or possibly never met.

On one hand, the young adult ministry has mimicked the church in its event-based strategies, but on the other hand has found little success in mimicking the follow-up program. Most of the young adults feel uncomfortable knocking on the door of someone they have never met. With the decreasing effectiveness of event-based evangelism amongst millennials¹ and the growing apprehension of having a spiritual conversation with a complete stranger,² there was a need to create a program to equip millennials to share the gospel with other millennials. At Knott Avenue Christian Church, the young adults were very relationally connected with the surrounding unbelieving community, but had no real training on how to engage such a community. This project was the first step in that direction.

¹Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them* (Nashville: B & H, 2009), loc. 656, Kindle.

²Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: B & H, 1998), loc. 3752, Kindle.

Preparation

Prior to week 1 of the project, the young adults of Knott Avenue Christian Church were invited to participate in an evangelism training class. Advertisement for the class occurred three weeks prior to its launch. Most of the advertisement came at the young adult service on Sunday night. Anyone interested in knowing how to share the gospel with a greater skill and sense of confidence was encouraged to take the class. It was made very clear, that the class was a long commitment and would challenge them to think deeper about their faith and take more courageous steps to intentionally share that faith.

As the class was being advertised, a team of pastors were recruited to evaluate each week's curriculum. It was explained to the pastors that the goal of their evaluation was to assess the strength of the curriculum's content, clarity, and relevance to young adults. Each pastor was given the Curriculum Evaluation Form and was given an explanation on how to fill it out (see appendix 2). They were told that the first eight questions directly related to the curriculum's content, clarity, and relevance. Questions 1 through 8 were graded on a scale of "1" to "5," with "5" being the best and "1" being the lowest. After reviewing these questions, the evaluating pastors were shown that they had the opportunity to explain their grades for questions 1 through 8 by completing the "strengths and weakness" portion of the form. Lastly, the pastors were instructed to make the determination as to if the curriculum was acceptable to be taught, and to indicate that by checking the appropriate statement at the end of the form. After the form was clarified, it was explained that the curriculum would be given to them on Tuesday morning and they were to complete the evaluation by Thursday in order for the appropriate changes to be made to the curriculum before it was taught to class.

Weekly Descriptions

Week 1

On the first day of the class the student participants were given the evangelism survey. They were informed that the survey would measure four key areas in relation to

their personal evangelism (see appendix 1). First, it measured their understanding of the key doctrines of the gospel. Second, it measured the frequency of their attempts to share their faith. Third, it measured their confidence in sharing the gospel. Fourth, it determined the common problems that hindered them from sharing the gospel.

The participants were instructed to answer all of the survey's questions honestly, being assured that there was no wrong answer. They were told that the survey's goal was to truthfully assess their position on each of the four key areas. They were instructed to pick only one response per question for questions 1 through 41, with the options of "strongly disagree," "disagree," "disagree somewhat," "agree somewhat," "agree," and "strongly agree." On questions 42 through 49, they were told to choose the numerical value that best answered the question. They were instructed to pick any of the responses that applied to question 50.

The surveys were collected at the end of the first class. Data from the surveys was compiled into two spreadsheets. One spreadsheet was used to compare the participants' pre-class and post-class results. The second spreadsheet compared their doctrinal answers with the correct biblical response. How often the young adult participants attempted to share their faith was also indicated on the first spreadsheet. As a whole, the spreadsheets showed the doctrinal strengths and weaknesses of the participants and revealed the health of their practice of evangelism. Nineteen participants completed the first initial survey.

The second spreadsheet was frequently consulted as the curriculum was made each week. Many doctrinal weaknesses became apparent when the survey results were evaluated. Seven out of the 19 participants (37 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, "Not all sin should be punished by death." Twelve out of the 19 (63 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, "Some people are innocent before God, like babies and small children." Five out of the 19 (26 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, "We are only condemned for our sins, not Adam's."

Table 1. Response to survey questions on sin

Question	Wrong Responses	Percentage
5	7 out of 19	37
6	12 out of 19	63
9	5 out of 19	26

These results made it very apparent that the participants needed to be educated on the just punishment for sin and on the federal headship of Adam. Passages like Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord,” and Romans 5:18-19, “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous,” needed to be covered in the curriculum in order to overcome this confusion.

Seven out of 19 (37 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “Jesus was 50% God and 50% Man.” Twelve out of 19 (63 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “Jesus died to buy us back from Satan.”

Table 2. Response to survey questions on Jesus Christ

Question	Wrong Responses	Percentage
11	7 out of 19	37
16	12 out of 19	63

These results made it clear that the participants needed to be properly informed about the nature of the incarnation and Jesus’ work on the cross. Passages like John 1:1, 14, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory,” and Romans 3:25-26, “Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,” needed to be covered in the curriculum in order to correct their wrong views of Christ and his work on the cross.

Thirteen out of 19 (68 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “faith = salvation.” Four out of 19 (21 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “Jesus can be our savior, without being our Lord.” Fourteen out of 19 (74 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “Accepting Jesus in your heart is how the bible describes you are saved.” Six out of 19 (32 percent) incorrectly disagreed with the statement, “Baptism is not necessary for salvation.”

Table 3. Response to survey questions on faith and repentance

Question	Wrong Responses	Percentage
25	13 out of 19	68
33	4 out of 19	21
34	14 out of 19	74
36	6 out of 19	32

These results showed that these young adults needed to gain a better understanding of what the Bible states as the proper response to the gospel, namely faith and repentance. Passages like Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast,” and Luke 13:3, “No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish,” needed to be explained further in the curriculum so they could have a biblical view of true conversion.

Four out of 19 (21 percent) incorrectly disagreed with the statement, “Only Christians will go to Heaven and all non-Christians will go to Hell.” Eighteen out of 19 (95 percent) incorrectly agreed with the statement, “We can affect the number of people that go to heaven by sharing the gospel.” Six out of 19 (32 percent) incorrectly disagreed with the statement, “God does not need us to help save people.”

Table 4. Response to survey questions on exclusivity and sovereignty

Question	Wrong Responses	Percentage
38	4 out of 19	21
39	18 out of 19	95
40	6 out of 19	32

It became clear from these responses that the doctrine of exclusivity and the sovereignty of God needed to be taught. Passages like John 14:6, “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,’” and John 6:44, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day,” needed to be covered in the curriculum in order to insure they understood the exclusiveness of Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation and God’s sovereign work in salvation.

How often the participants practiced evangelism was also indicated on the survey (see appendix 1). A majority of participants indicated that they had anywhere from two to three spiritual conversations with non-Christians in the past two months. It was indicated that they had tried to invite a non-Christian friend to church twice in the last two months. They also tried once in the last two months to share their testimony. Finally, a majority of participants tried once or twice to share the gospel with a non-Christian in the last two months. Taken as a whole, these results showed that the participating young adults already had a healthy and consistent practice of evangelism. Even their subjective opinions about their confidence and preparedness in sharing the

gospel were healthy. Concerning these areas, the average response was a “4” out of “6,” with “6” being the highest. They indicated they felt prepared to share their faith, confident that they could answer any questions, and they would not leave any important details out in their presentation. Many also stated that they were not nervous to share the gospel.

In order to determine the most common worldview conflicts encountered by the participants when sharing their faith, the last question of the survey was designed with multiple responses. Out of the ten options, two worldviews separated themselves from the others as most frequently encountered: Naturalism and Catholicism. Because of this response the last two lessons of the curriculum covered how to interact with these two positions.

The curriculum was designed to be both theoretical and practical (see appendix 3). This approach was seen in the class’s title and description. The title of the class was “Impact,” which was further defined by the descriptive statement, “An impactful faith is one we both know and share.” The goal of the class was to not only teach the doctrines that affected evangelism, but also show how to share these doctrinal ideas when evangelizing to unbelievers.

The class sessions and curriculum were divided into two sections, “know” and “share.” In the “know” portion the doctrinal content was explained. In the “share” portion the practical execution of sharing the covered doctrines was explained. The “share” portion always followed a simple pattern: “ask, listen, tell.” This method was adopted due to the overwhelming statistics that speak of young adults’ openness to spiritual conversations from friends. The participants were equipped with thought-provoking questions that would start conversations concerning the doctrines covered in the “know” section. They were then instructed to actively listen to their friend’s responses so the friend felt they were showing genuine interest in them and their ideas. After the participants had listened to their friend, they were to share their position on the topic. The “share” portion of the

class varied in its presentation. Sometimes it was explaining a list of questions, other times it was walking through a scripted dialogue, and even other times it was viewing a video discussion.

Week 2

The second and third week of the class were designed to teach the doctrine of God. During this week, the material covered the basic arguments for the existence of God and his incommunicable attributes. Students were taught how to ask questions of their unbelieving friends using Pascal's Wager. They were also instructed on how to ask questions that would lead to the discussion of the cosmological and axiological argument for God's existence.

Before the class was taught, the chosen group of pastors evaluated the curriculum. The curriculum for this week received high marks of "4" or higher on all the questions concerning clarity (questions 3, 4, 7, and 8), giving it a combined clarity score of 4.2. The curriculum was rated with a 4.8 out of 5, with "5" being the highest rating, in its use of Scripture. It received a lower rating of 3.5 concerning its content, when evaluators responded to the statement, "The curriculum explained all essential doctrines and topics for understanding the gospel." Taken together, these ratings still showed the evaluators approved of the content, giving it a combined content score of 4.1. When the evaluators considered the relevance of the curriculum to young adults, they gave it a low rating. The curriculum received an average rating of 2.5 concerning its presentation of actual conversations that young adults have and a rating of 1.3 concerning its presentation of a clear plan and strategy for young adults to share the gospel. Combining these scores gave the curriculum a relevance score of 1.9. All the evaluators approved of the curriculum being used. The lower ratings were considered in revising the curriculum and how it would be taught. When the curriculum was taught in class several illustrations and sample discussions were used when the class seemed confused on a specific topic. Seventeen students attended the class this week.

Table 5. Evaluators' scores for week 2

Week 2 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.1
Clarity	4.2
Relevance	1.9

Week 3

The third week of the class covered the communicable attributes of God. Students learned about the characteristics and qualities of God that humans manifest in much smaller ways (ex: mental and moral attributes). Students were also taught how to ask questions relating to the morality of God and the axiological proof of God's existence. Before the class was taught, the curriculum was evaluated. Similar grades were given concerning the content of the curriculum as compared to the second week. The curriculum received a 4.8 on its usage of Scripture and a 3.25 on its explanation of essential topics, giving it a combined content score of 4. In the area of clarity, the curriculum received a combined score of 3.9, with its lowest rating of 3.5 in the area of using confusing language. The combined relevance score jumped from the previous week to 2.5. The curriculum received one vote of disapproval from the group of evaluating pastors. The rest of the evaluators approved the material. Revisions were made with the evaluators' comments and scores in mind. Special attention was given to defining the spirituality and invisibility of God, because the one disapproving evaluator asked for more clarity on this topic. Twenty-two students attended the class this week.

Table 6. Evaluators' scores for week 3

Week 3 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4
Clarity	3.9
Relevance	2.5

Weeks 4 and 5

The fourth and fifth weeks of the class covered the doctrine of sin. These weeks are combined in description because one piece of curriculum was created and evaluated for both weeks. Questions 5, 6, and 9 of the survey were taken into consideration in writing this week's curriculum. A majority of respondents believed that some people are classified as innocent and not guilty before God. A minority of respondents believed not all sin should be punished by death and all humanity is not condemned because of Adam's sin in the Garden. Therefore, the curriculum emphasized the sinfulness of all mankind as well as its inherited guilt and corruption because of Adam's sin. Students were taught how to use the law in presenting the gospel. They were walked through a scripted dialogue and saw the conversation acted out.

The evaluating pastors gave their highest score to this curriculum. The curriculum received a combined score of 4.1 for content, 4.4 for clarity, and 4 for relevance. One evaluator, the senior pastor, disapproved of the curriculum due to its perceived Calvinistic bias concerning the doctrine of sin and depravity. The senior pastor had setup certain parameters that forbade other pastors from teaching a theological system like Calvinism. He did approve of Calvinistic pastors and even agreed with some Calvinistic interpretations of Scripture. The main parameter was to let Scripture stand on its own and not mention any theological systems when teaching congregants. A discussion with the evaluator reassured him that no bias was intended to be taught and his previous parameters were not being violated. After this discussion, the evaluators' concerns were alleviated. Twenty-one students attended the class on week 4 and 14 attended the class on week 5.

Table 7. Evaluators' scores for weeks 4 and 5

Week 4 and 5 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.1
Clarity	4.4
Relevance	4

Week 6

The sixth week the class covered the person of Jesus Christ. Question 11 of the survey was considered in writing this week's curriculum. This question showed that a minority believed that Jesus was 50% God and 50% man. Therefore, the focus of this class was on the full humanity and deity of Christ. On the practical side, the students were taught how to ask thought provoking questions about Jesus and His claims of being God.

The curriculum received a combined content score of 4.8 and a combined clarity score of 4.4. The combined relevance score was 3.5. One of the two statements given concerning the curriculum's relevance received a low score of 3. This scoring occurred when the evaluators were asked to respond to the statement, "The curriculum described actual conversations of young adults." All the evaluators approved the curriculum and the proper revisions were made to the curriculum. When the material was taught special attention was given to the "share" portion of the curriculum, where a hypothetical conversation was illustrated. More time was given to this portion of the class. Further explanation and illustration were given than was shown in the curriculum. The attendance for this week of class was 18.

Table 8. Evaluators' scores for week 6

Week 6 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.8
Clarity	4.4
Relevance	3.5

Week 7

In the seventh week the class was taught the doctrine of Christ's work on the cross. Question 16 of the survey was considered in creating this week's curriculum. This question revealed that a majority believed that Jesus died in order to buy us back from Satan. Therefore, emphasis was made on the necessity and nature of God's work on the

cross. Specific attention was given to refuting the ransom theory of the atonement and affirming God’s redemption of sinners through the propitiation of His wrath on Christ. Students revisited the scripted dialogue from weeks 4 and 5, where the law was used in presenting the gospel. Students were given a script to add to the end of that dialogue, which focused on the necessity of Christ’s work on the cross in order for God’s justice to be satisfied and redemption to be accomplished.

The combined content score and clarity score were both 4.5. The curriculum also received its highest combined relevance score with a 4.3. All the evaluators approved the curriculum to be taught. Revisions were only grammatical. Four students attended the class this week, by far the lowest.

Table 9. Evaluators’ scores for week 7

Week 7 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.5
Clarity	4.5
Relevance	4.3

Weeks 8 and 9

The eighth and ninth week are combined because one piece of curriculum was created and evaluated for both weeks. Over these two weeks the doctrines of faith and repentance were taught. Questions 25, 33, 34, and 36 were considered when creating this week’s curriculum. A majority believed faith alone is what saves an individual and this faith is described as accepting Jesus into one’s heart. A minority believed that Jesus can be someone’s Savior without being their Lord, and that baptism was necessary for salvation. The focus of these two classes was to show the biblical definition of the terms “faith” and “repentance,” which often have secular definitions of their own. Students were then taught to ask unbelieving friends what these terms meant to them. They were also taught to ask questions related to earning God’s love.

The curriculum received a combined score of 4.5 for content, 4.4 for clarity, and 3.8 for relevance. All the evaluators approved the curriculum for use. Grammatical revisions were made and focus was given to make the scripted dialogue in the curriculum more contemporary. Attendance for week 8 was 10 and week 9 was 7.

Table 10. Evaluators' scores for weeks 8 and 9

Week 8 and 9 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.5
Clarity	4.4
Relevance	4

Week 10

In the tenth week of the class the doctrine of sanctification was taught. The teaching focused both on God's and the Christian's active roles in the process of sanctification, which is fully completed at the Christian's death or resurrection. Students were shown how to disarm one of the largest arguments against Christianity, namely the hypocrisy of Christians, with a proper explanation of sanctification.

The curriculum received a combined score of 4 for content, 4.3 for clarity and 3.5 for relevance. All the evaluators approved the curriculum for use. Revisions to the curriculum were mostly grammatical. Attendance for this week was 7.

Table 11. Evaluators' scores for week 10

Week 10 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4
Clarity	4.3
Relevance	3.5

Week 11

In the eleventh week of the class the students learned about the sovereignty of God in relation to evangelism. Questions 39 and 40 of the survey were considered in writing this week's curriculum. A majority of the students believed their efforts in evangelism could change the number of God's elect, and a significant minority believed that God needed their help in saving people. Students were shown how the sovereignty of God does not take away from a person's evangelistic efforts, but adds to them. It was explained that God did not need them to evangelize, but wanted them to evangelize and share in the joy of His work of salvation. Students were then instructed on how to use the doctrine of God's inward calling through the gospel to start a spiritual conversation with their unbelieving friends.

The evaluators gave high scores to this week's curriculum. It received a combined 4.5 for content, 4.6 for clarity and 4 for relevance. All the evaluators approved the curriculum. Small changes were made to the curriculum during its revision. Attendance for this week was 8.

Table 12. Evaluators' scores for week 11

Week 11 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.5
Clarity	4.6
Relevance	4

Week 12

In the twelfth week of the class the students were taught some of the most popular evangelistic strategies for gospel presentations. Students were asked to critique the five presented strategies based on the knowledge they had gained from the previous weeks. They were then challenged to come up with their own gospel presentation based on the strengths they saw in the five presented strategies. At the end of the class the

students were challenged to share the gospel with an unbelieving friend. All the students that attended the class this week accepted that challenge. Attendance for this week’s class was 10.

The evaluators gave this week’s curriculum its highest scores yet; a combined score of 4.8 for content, 4.5 for clarity and 5 for relevance. All the evaluators approved the curriculum for use. A major revision was made with reference to the evangelistic strategy called “Evangelism Explosion.” One of the evaluators believed that this strategy was not properly presented.

Table 13. Evaluators’ Scores for Week 12

Week 12 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.8
Clarity	4.5
Relevance	5

Weeks 13 and 14

The thirteenth and fourteenth week are combined because one piece of curriculum was created and evaluated for both weeks. In these weeks the class covered naturalism and Catholicism. The curriculum was created with the responses to question 50 of the survey in mind: “What problems do you face when trying to share your faith?” Students were given the options of circling all the answers that applied to the question. Of the ten options, the majority highlighted naturalism and Catholicism. For each of these weeks the curriculum was divided into three parts. Part 1 sought to define the core beliefs of naturalism and Catholicism. Part 2 showed the biblical doctrines that related to and contradicted these core beliefs. Part 3 described how to dialogue with a naturalist and Catholic concerning these core beliefs.

More moderate scores were given to the curriculum as compared to the last two evaluations. The curriculum received a combined score of 4.2 for content, 4.1 for clarity

and 3 for relevance. One of the evaluators disapproved of the curriculum being used. The evaluator who disapproved of the curriculum did so on the basis of lack of clarity concerning the Big Bang. Attention was given to this issue. It was clarified that science has given overwhelming evidence for a finite universe with an instantaneous creation. Students were taught that the most logical explanation for this evidence is the existence of an infinitely powerful God. Eleven students attended both of the final weeks of the class.

Table 14. Evaluators' scores for weeks 13 and 14

Weeks 13 and 14 Curriculum	Combined Scores
Content	4.2
Clarity	4.1
Relevance	3

Week 15

In the fifteenth week of the project the students were asked to complete the initial survey again. These results were then compiled and inputted into a spreadsheet. This spreadsheet was used to compare the results of the pre-class and post-class survey. The goal was to see significant improvement in the participants' objective knowledge of the gospel, their subjective opinion of their skills in sharing the gospel, and the frequency at which they tried to share the gospel. To determine if any improvement occurred in these three areas, a t-test model was utilized. Based on this model, three questions from the survey showed statistically significant improvement from the pre-class survey to the post class survey.

There was a dramatic decrease in attendance from week 7 through week 14, approximately 50 percent, as compared to the first six weeks, therefore not all of the post-class surveys were evaluated. When determining if the class affected the participants in the frequency they attempted to share the gospel and their confidence in sharing the gospel, only the post-class surveys of participants that attended at least 6 classes were analyzed.

Thirteen out of 19 surveys were considered. Improvement occurred on questions 44 and 49. Participation in the class of the select group of young adults made a statistically significant difference resulting in the increase of their frequency of evangelism ($t = 2.521, p < .027$) and their confidence in their evangelism efforts ($t = 2.551, p < .025$).

Question 44 asked how many times a participant had shared their testimony with a non-Christian in the last two months. This timeframe covered from the end of week 5 of the class till this last week. Five out of the 13 surveys analyzed showed an increased frequency in participants sharing their testimony. The largest increase was from 1 occurrence to 3 occurrences. On average, the participants increased their frequency of sharing their testimony a combined .46 occurrences, which is a 54 percent increase.

Table 15. Comparison for question 44

Before Class	After Class	Improvement Percentage
.85	1.31	+54

Question 49 asked the participants, on a scale of 1-6, how confident they felt that if they shared their faith they would not leave out any important details. Six out of the 13 surveys analyzed showed an increase level of participants' confidence in sharing their faith. The largest increase was from a score of 3 to 6. On average, the participants increased their confidence a combined .62, which is a 16 percent increase.

Table 16. Comparison for question 49

Before Class	After Class	Improvement Percentage
3.92	4.54	+16

It was difficult to calculate the improvement of the participants' objective knowledge of the gospel due to the lack of consistent attendance. Only 6 students attended 10 or more classes. Seven out of the 13 post-class surveys considered were from

participants that attended 9 or less classes, which means they missed 30 percent of the curriculum material. With this attendance issue in mind, analysis of improvement was based on the week’s attendance and topic. In the pre-class survey, over 35 percent of the participants responded incorrectly to seven questions out of the forty-one on the survey. This number decreased to six questions when the participants who attended at least six classes were considered. Concerning these questions, the pre-class and post-class results were compared only if the participants attended the week the related topic was covered. For example, week 7 covered Christ’s work on the cross, which was related to questions 16 through 19. Question 16 was one of the six questions where over 35 percent of participants gave an incorrect response. The results of the pre-class and post-class survey on question 16 were analyzed from those that attended the week 7 class. Based on this strategy of analysis, there was a small statistically significant improvement in the participants’ objective knowledge of the gospel.

Improvement was evidenced on question 11 of the survey ($t = 2.306, p < .036$). On this question, the participants were asked to respond to the statement, “Jesus was 50% God and 50% Man.” Six students who attended the class in week 6 responded incorrectly to this statement by agreeing with it. After the class, only 2 students still incorrectly agreed with this statement, as indicated on their post-class survey. Two participants moved from the extremes of “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Two other participants moved from “agree” to “disagree.” Two participants affirmed their position after the class, by moving from “disagree” to “strongly disagree.” With the statistically significant improvement on 1 question out of 6 that needed improvement, it was concluded that a 17 percent increase in the participants’ objective knowledge of the gospel was achieved.

Table 17. Comparison of responses that needed most improvement

# of doctrinally weak responses before class	# of doctrinally weak responses after class	Improvement Percentage
6	5	+17

Overall, the analysis of the post-class surveys showed improvement in each of the three major areas the survey was intended to measure: knowledge, confidence, and frequency. One question from each area showed improvement. The degree of improvement varied in each area, but all of the areas showed some statistically significant improvement.

CHAPTER 5
EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

At Knott Avenue Christian Church, the young adults have been overwhelmed with a passive approach to evangelism. They have seen this approach from the larger church body on a continual basis. They have seen this approach from all the outreach events the church puts on. The approach included the guest speaker evangelizing and the congregants simply inviting their friends to the event. Furthermore, this same pattern occurs every Sunday. Pastors preach a sermon and the ending application of every message is for people to say the sinner's prayer and walk down the aisle. This process trains the congregants that the pastors are the primary evangelist and not themselves. Therefore, the congregants are only utilized to invite the crowds that will be professionally evangelized.

Under-utilized congregants become stunted in their spiritual growth because they are not obeying the command to make more disciples. If these congregants only invite their friends hoping that someone else will convert them, then they will be just as likely to outsource their newly converted friend's discipleship, which leaves their friend to fend for themselves in order to grow spiritually. This problem is compounded when the main meeting time, the Sunday service, is primarily focused on creating new converts. This friend is now forced to look beyond the main service to find help in their spiritual growth. This cycle may very well explain why the church has baptized 376 people between 2012 and 2013, yet declined by 205 people. The converts are not staying at the church. This phenomenon may be happening because when a professional evangelist is used there is no personal relationship between the convert and the evangelist to ensure natural follow up and discipleship occur. Another reason for this phenomenon may be that the new convert

does not find their next step in the maturing process by sitting in on an evangelistic service. Consequently, they either leave to find this next step somewhere else or do not make this step at all. In either case, it is clear that the young adult ministry and the entire church need to rethink their evangelistic strategies.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The project was intended to equip the young adults at Knott Avenue Christian Church in Anaheim, California, with the knowledge and skills necessary to share the gospel effectively. The previous and primary model of evangelism, where people are invited to an event that evangelizes them, needed to be improved upon. This passive form of evangelism is not only unbiblical, but it is becoming increasingly ineffective amongst Millennials. The young adults needed to be trained to obey the Great Commission themselves, by actively sharing the gospel. To not equip them to obey Christ's commission is to underutilize them and violate the pastor's mandate to equip the saints for ministry. Millennials are more unlikely to visit a church for an event than previous generations. Therefore, relying on events to evangelize this age demographic is like investing in a company that is going out of business. Much more of the churches efforts and resources should be invested in equipping Millennials to evangelize Millennials before they ever visit the church. Millennials need to be specifically equipped to reach their generation more so than previous generations where "come, see" or passive evangelism was more effective. For these reasons it seemed necessary to train the young adults to actively and intentionally share the gospel. In order to achieve this purpose, a theoretical and practical curriculum was created (see appendix 3).

The purpose of this project was biblically-sound and sociologically necessary. This purpose was accomplished by creating a biblically-sound curriculum that was also sociologically sensitive to young adults. A portion of the curriculum was devoted to teaching the key doctrines that affected someone's evangelism. The curriculum also focused on giving practical guidance to reach young adults.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

Goal 1

The first goal of the project was to evaluate the young adults' knowledge of the gospel and their skills at sharing the gospel. To accomplish this goal a survey was developed that measured their understanding of the key doctrines of the gospel, the frequency of how often they shared the gospel, their confidence in sharing the gospel, and the common problems that hindered them from sharing the gospel (see appendix 1). The survey was handed out on the first day of class. The target for this goal was to have 85 percent of the attendees fill out this survey. This goal was accomplished.

All 19 students that attended the first week of class filled out the survey. Seven other participants attended classes during the fifteen weeks of the course who did not fill out a survey. Six out of the 7 attended a class once or twice throughout the whole term. These were considered visitors and not full participants of the course. Many of these visitors actually stated they were just sitting in on the class for the day. With these visitors in mind, the project had 20 full participants. The target goal of 85 percent completion was met, because 19 out of 20 (95 percent) of the participants filled out the pre-class and post-class survey.

Goal 2

The second goal of the project was to develop a curriculum that equipped the participants with the proper knowledge and skills to share the gospel. To accomplish this goal a curriculum was made that took into account the results of the pre-class survey. These results were considered in order to meet the knowledge and skill needs identified by the survey. The curriculum was then evaluated by a selected group of pastors. This group of pastors evaluated each lesson before it was taught to the class. The group of pastors either approved or disapproved of the curriculum for training young adults. The target for this goal was to receive an 80 percent approval rating. This goal was accomplished.

The curriculum only received three votes of disapproval. Each of the three

votes came from the same evaluator. The disapproving votes were made against the curriculum for weeks 3, 4 and 5, and 13 and 14. The curriculum disapproval for week 3 was based on its presentation of God's spirituality and invisibility. This concern was addressed with the evaluator and the proper corrections were made when the material was taught. The curriculum disapproval for weeks 4 and 5 was based on the evaluator's apprehension that Calvinism was being taught. If that were the case, the curriculum would have violated a previous parameter set up by the senior pastor of the church, who happened to be the one disapproving evaluator. A discussion with the senior pastor clarified that the curriculum was not intended to violate those parameters and was within the boundaries that had been previously approved. The disapproval of weeks 13 and 14 was based on the perception that the atheistic view of the "Big Bang" theory was being taught. Again, a discussion with the evaluator clarified that a theistic view of the "Big Bang" theory was being taught. These three disapproving votes were not considered as final, because the initial concerns of each vote were addressed and the curriculum was revised. Therefore, the curriculum received a 100 percent approval rating for each week.

Goal 3

The third goal of the project was to train the young adults with a curriculum that would equip them with the proper knowledge and skills to share the gospel. To accomplish this goal a thirteen-week curriculum was created, which was both theoretical and practical in nature. This curriculum was created with young adults in mind and sought to represent actual conversations that they may have with unbelieving friends. To test if this goal was accomplished, the initial survey was given again to the participants after the class. These results were then compared to the initial survey results in order to measure if their understanding of the gospel, the frequency of how often they shared the gospel, and their confidence in sharing the gospel had shown improvement. The targets of this goal was to observe a 30 percent increase in the participants' objective knowledge of the gospel, a 20 percent increase in their subjective opinion of their skills in sharing the

gospel, and a 10 percent increase in the frequency of their attempts to share the gospel. Not all of these goals were accomplished.

Questions 42 through 45 were used to indicate the frequency of how often the participants tried to evangelize. The goal of these questions were to determine how many times the participant invited someone to church, started a spiritual conversation, shared their testimony, and shared the gospel. The question that showed statistically significant improvement ($t = 2.521, p < .027$) was in reference to the participants sharing their testimony. Five out of the 13 surveys analyzed at the end of the class indicated an increase in the frequency of participants sharing their testimony. One participant tripled their frequency as compared to the two months prior to the class. The combined average occurrences of participants sharing their testimony over a two-month period before the class was .85 and after the class was 1.31, which was a 54 percent increase. This percentage greatly surpassed the target goal of seeing a 10 percent increase in the frequency of the participants' evangelistic efforts.

Table 18. Comparison for question 44

Before Class	After Class	Improvement Percentage
.85	1.31	+54

Questions 46 through 49 were used to determine the participants' confidence in their ability to share the gospel. The intention of these questions was to determine if the participants felt nervous, prepared, and confident when they were attempting to evangelize. The confidence aspect was broken up into two questions. They were asked how confident they felt that they could answer any questions that came up and would not leave any important details out of the gospel when evangelizing. Question 49 showed statistically significant improvement ($t = 2.551, p < .025$). On this question, the participants gave a response, on a scale of 1-6, as to how confident they felt that they would not leave out

any important details when sharing their faith. Six out of the 13 participants showed an increase level of confidence. One participant doubled their score, from a 3 to a 6. The combined average rating for confidence in this area was a 3.92 before the class and after the class was a 4.54, which is a 16 percent increase. This result did not meet the target goal of a 20 percent increase in participants’ confidence levels.

Table 19. Comparison for question 49

Before Class	After Class	Improvement Percentage
3.92	4.54	+16

Questions 1 through 41 were created to determine the biblical strength of the participants understanding of the key doctrines that affected their evangelism. Six out of the 41 questions in the pre-class survey had biblically incorrect responses given by 35 percent of the participants. These were considered the areas of greatest doctrinal weakness. Each of these questions was addressed in the curriculum in hopes of seeing improvement when the class was over. After evaluating the post-class surveys only 1 of the 6 questions showed statistically significant improvement. This improvement was demonstrated on question 11 of the survey ($t = 2.306, p < .036$). This question asked the participants to respond to the statement, “Jesus was 50% God and 50% Man.” In the pre-class survey 6 students responded incorrectly to this statement by agreeing with it. After the class, only 2 students still agreed with this statement. Two participants moved from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” It was concluded, since only 1 question out of 6 questions showed improvement, that a 17 percent increase in the participants’ biblical understanding of the gospel was achieved. This result did not meet the target goal of a 30 percent increase in the participants’ objective knowledge of the gospel.

Table 20. Comparison of responses that needed most improvement

# of doctrinally weak responses before class	# of doctrinally weak responses after class	Improvement Percentage
6	5	+17

Goal 4

The fourth goal of the project was to challenge the participants to make a commitment to share the gospel with one friend in the three months that followed the class. To accomplish this goal the participants were challenged on weeks 12, 13, and 14 to take on this commitment. The challenge was given on these three weeks because more participants would be given an opportunity to participate, due to the lack of consistent attendance. Everyone who attended these weeks of class committed to take this challenge. Fourteen out of 14 people, 100 percent, took on this challenge. Everyone that took this challenge received a small New Testament Bible and a Wordless Bible bracelet. This result greatly exceeded the target goal of 50 percent participation.

The overall goals of this project were met, but two of the target levels under goal 3 were not. The participants were adequately assessed (goal 1), a curriculum was created (goal 2) that affected the knowledge, confidence and evangelistic efforts of participants (goal 3), and the participants committed to evangelize (goal 4). The two target goals that were not met under goal 3, concerning the participants' increase in confidence and knowledge, were very close to being met. The target goal for increase in confidence was 20 percent, and the actual increase was 16 percent. This target goal would have been achieved if just 2 of the 13 participants would have rated their confidence just one point higher, making the average post-class score .14 higher, on question 49. The target goal for increase in knowledge was 30 percent and the actual increase was 17 percent. This target goal would have been achieved if just 1 more of the 6 doctrinal questions would have shown statistically significant improvement. One of the 6 questions would have shown enough statistical improvement if just one respondent had moved their position

from “strongly agree” to “agree,” which was the case on question 16 ($t = 5, p < .015$). Upon further reflection, some of the target goals should have been adjusted slightly in order to be more realistic.

Strengths of the Project

One of the strengths of the project was having a small group of pastors evaluate the curriculum. Even when the curriculum was approved, the scoring on content, clarity, and relevance aided me in revising the curriculum and teaching the curriculum. The evaluators’ comments were also extremely helpful in understanding the curriculum strengths and weaknesses before it was ever taught. Having these evaluations take place on a weekly basis also helped me to improve on the areas that received lower scores in the prior weeks. This was especially true in the curriculum’s scoring on relevance. In the first half of the course the curriculum received an average rating of 3.23 for relevance and in the second half of the course the curriculum received an average rating of 3.85, which was a 20 percent improvement.

Another strength of the project was the curriculum’s balance between doctrine and practice. Students received deep theological training and were shown how to take these larger ideas and insert them into everyday conversations. The strategy that made the curriculum so practical was the “Ask, Listen, Tell” strategy. Having students begin spiritual conversations with their friends using open-ended questions allowed them to honestly engage with their friends in a genuine way and still guide the conversation to the gospel. This model speaks to the spiritual climate of the Millennial culture. Stetzer writes,

In a context where churches exist, they have rejected them. However, we were surprised at just how open the younger unchurched actually are to hearing about Christianity. In overwhelming percentages, the younger unchurched expressed an openness in regard to hearing their friends talk about Christ.¹

¹Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them* (Nashville: B & H, 2009), loc. 652, Kindle.

The unchurched friends of young adults are open to spiritual conversations and this curriculum gave them tools necessary to start and navigate those conversations.

Weaknesses of the Project

The easiest weakness to identify in this project was that the class was too long. The average attendance for the first six weeks of the class was approximately 19 students, but after that it was 9 students. The attendance dropped more than 50 percent in the second half of the course. During the second half of the course, many students commented on how long the class was. These students were not just flaky and irresponsible. Some of the most interested and active students in the class did not have great attendance in the second half.

Another weakness in this project was underestimating the church's background in Arminian theology. They would not call themselves "Arminian," but they do hold to some of the concepts taught in that system. I was only on staff for a few months before I began the evangelism training class. This project was originally designed to be implemented at a different church, which had a background in Calvinistic theology. During the interview process, the topic of my Calvinistic theology was discussed and it was determined that I could teach my theological viewpoint on different non-essential issues as long as I stated their non-essential nature and did not mention the term Calvinism. I felt very comfortable, as did the rest of the pastoral staff, with our diversity in theological positions.

The gap between my theological positions and the church's became more apparent to me as I taught the class. Two out of the 6 theological statements on the survey that needed to see significant improvement in their responses were related to issues of Calvinism. Not only had the participants in the class been taught some Arminian doctrines, they were also used to seeing Arminian practices. They saw altar calls every Sunday where people were asked if they wanted to accept Jesus in their heart by reciting the sinner's prayer. I was unaware of some of these practices, prior to my employment. I was fighting

an uphill battle in trying to teach according to my conscience without completely rejecting these ideas and practices. Many of these ideas were firmly rooted in the participants' minds. For example, 74 percent agreed that accepting "Jesus in your heart" is how the Bible describes one is saved. After the class, 63 percent still believed that statement was true. Also, 95 percent agreed with the statement, "We can affect the number of people that go to heaven by sharing the gospel." After the class, 89 percent still agreed with that statement. Only 1 respondent changed their mind on the issue. This showed that the doctrine of unconditional election was not something they had been taught. Getting participants to change their views on doctrines they have held for several years was a daunting task for a thirteen-week course to accomplish.

A final weakness of the project was the lack of follow-up on the end of the class challenge. The fourth goal of the project was to see the participants step up to the challenge of sharing the gospel with a friend. Everyone accepted this challenge and the goal was met. Even though this goal was successfully met, it was not the most effective way to observe if the course really made an impact. A more telling goal would have included some sort of measurement as to if the challenge was actually completed. This could have been solved without even having to have another class session. Having all of the participants contact information, one could have simply made a phone call to follow up. Social media could also have been utilized so that the participants could have indicated they completed the challenge. Without having an accountability mechanism in place for this challenge, the initial commitments could have been made out of sheer flattery or peer pressure. Having an accountability mechanism would have strengthened the observed integrity of the commitments.

What I Would Do Differently

The first change that comes to mind relates to the greatest weakness of the project, which was the length of the course. I was very excited to see how many students participated in the first half of the course. I did not expect that 20 people out of a ministry

of about 80 people would come for the class. I was disappointed that more than half of the original participants did not make it to the second half of the course. I still believe that this curriculum is essential to equipping Millennials to evangelize Millennials. With that said, a thirteen-week course is not conducive to a majority of Millennials' calendars. If the course was divided up into two halves, with several weeks of break in between, I believe the second half of the course would have been better attended.

Due to the participants' prior background in some Arminian theology, I believe it would have been helpful to reword or replace some of the survey questions so that they would be more ecumenical and inclusive. The survey did show a Calvinistic bias on some questions. A survey that was more open to a wider range of evangelical positions on theology would not have compromised the integrity of the project. Only four questions on the current survey need to be replaced in order to be more inclusive. These alterations would have most likely happened if I had been at the church longer and made the correct theological assessment of those in the young adult ministry.

Also, if I would have waited longer to implement the project in my new ministry context in order to gain a better assessment of the participants' theological positions and their ability to take on large time commitments. As was stated before, the class was advertised only after I had been at the church for a few months. Delaying the start of the class by several months would have been the wiser choice. This could have also benefited the overall attendance of the class because more people would be familiar with me and therefore trust me more.

Theological Reflections

Upon reflecting on the project, I was convinced more and more that equipping believers to share the gospel is not just a more effective strategy, but a more biblically sound strategy. I do not believe that a passive approach to evangelism, which entails an invitation from a church member and a professional evangelist, is completely unbiblical. On the other hand, I do see that this approach can unintentionally violate some scriptural

principles. First, this approach is in danger of diminishing the role of the pastor. It can change him from an equipper of the saints to an evangelist of the lost. Pastors are called to be evangelists in the Scriptures: “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (2 Tim 4:5). On the other hand, this obligation to be an evangelist should not undermine the pastor’s role of equipping the saints: “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:11-12). There is a balance that any pastor must maintain as both an evangelist and an equipper.

I am convicted that the passive/event-based form of evangelism makes the pastor too much of an evangelist and too less of an equipper. I come to this conclusion because in the event-based model of evangelism the pastor is merely exhorting the saints to invite their friends. This is not in itself a bad thing, but it should not be seen as fully completing the pastor’s equipping responsibility. He is biblically responsible to equip the saints to fulfill the great commission by making disciples.² In this passive model, the congregants can easily see their evangelistic obligation to their unbelieving friend as being fulfilled by a simple invitation to an event. Every pastor is obligated to equip the saints for evangelistic work and not do all of it himself.

Second, this passive approach to evangelism diminishes the role of the believer. They are called to do more than just be promoters of evangelistic events. Believers can and should follow the example of Philip and ask those that do not yet believe in Christ to “come and see” (John 1:46). Inviting someone to a service or event where the gospel is preached is not unbiblical. On the other hand, one must not see this type of invitation as the full New Testament picture of a believer’s evangelism. In Acts

²Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 277.

more than just the apostles, “professionals,” preach the gospel: “And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. . . . Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word” (Acts 8:1, 4). The apostles were not included in the group that was scattered by Saul’s persecution. When this scattered group went out into different regions to find safety they preached the gospel. Clearly here is a group of followers, who were not apostles, evangelizing. New Testament believers did not see themselves exempt from the responsibility of evangelizing simply because they were not apostles. The leaders of the early church evangelized as well as the members. Creating and teaching a curriculum like this allowed me to fulfill my full obligation as a pastor to equip and those I pastor to fulfill their obligation as believers to evangelize.

Personal Reflections

During this project I was very encouraged by the amount of discussion and longing for theological reflection I saw in the participants. After reading that “only 6 percent of Millennials could be described as Evangelicals,”³ I was pleasantly surprised to find that those who attended the class showed themselves to be very engaged and eager to learn. I told the class that if they had any questions during the lecture they should feel free to just raise their hand and ask. Many students took me up on that opportunity. I often stopped the class to answer a student’s question as long as it did not derail from covering the required material and lead to a deeper understanding of the topic. The inquisitive spirit of the class left me with a hopeful outlook on this generation and the impact they will have in the church’s future.

Another observation that impressed me and left me hopeful for the future was the participants’ evangelistic efforts. On average the participants had at least two spiritual

³Thom S. Rainer and Jess W Rainer, *The Millennials: Connecting to America’s Largest Generation* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 112.

conversations with an unbeliever and invited two friends to church in the last two months. The participants also shared the gospel and their testimony at least once in the last two months. As noted early in this chapter, statistically significant improvement was seen in the participants sharing their testimony more after taking the class. In the other areas (spiritual conversations, invitations, and sharing the gospel) the numbers were very similar. I was surprised to see how often these young adults sought to evangelize. I was surprised at the beginning of the class by the initial frequency of evangelistic efforts made by the participants. I thought that many of them would be less active in this area.

Conclusion

Evangelism is a practice that must be put back into the everyday lives of believers. Letting the vast majority of evangelism rest on the shoulders of the pastors of the church diminishes their role of equipping the saints. It also underutilizes the saints in fulfilling their biblical mandate of personally making disciples. Churches that wish to reach the current young adult generation of America need to utilize the strategy of equipping their congregants to personally evangelize. This generation is less likely to visit a church and is at the same time open to having spiritual conversations with their peers. This project was completed to assist Knott Avenue Christian Church in Anaheim, California, in equipping young adults to evangelize. These equipping efforts will not end with this project. This project has made the church aware of the need of such equipping and has acted as a catalyst for further training in the future. It was a personal pleasure of mine to plan and execute this project. I truly believe that the church has benefited from this project.

APPENDIX 1
STUDENT SURVEY

Disclaimer

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your understanding of the key doctrines of the Gospel, the frequency of how often you share the Gospel, your confidence in sharing the Gospel, and the common problems that hinder you from sharing the Gospel. This research is being conducted by Paul Crandell for purpose of a Doctor of Ministry project. In this research, you will be asked to answer questions at the beginning and conclusion of this project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Instructions: Please choose one answer that best describes how you feel about the statement. Some questions ask you to give your opinion using the following scale: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree Somewhat, AS = Agree Somewhat, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

1. Everyone has sinned.
SD D DS AS A SA
2. All sin should be punished by God.
SD D DS AS A SA
3. We are by nature sinners.
SD D DS AS A SA
4. We are naturally born good people.
SD D DS AS A SA
5. Not all sin should be punished by death.
SD D DS AS A SA
6. 6. Some people are innocent before God, like babies and small children.
SD D DS AS A SA
7. Sin is only the acts that we do, not the thoughts that we think.
SD D DS AS A SA
8. Adam's choice to sin in the garden, made us guilty as well.
SD D DS AS A SA

9. We are only condemned for our sin, not Adam's.
SD D DS AS A SA
10. Our sins can be cancelled out by doing good things.
SD D DS AS A SA
11. Jesus was 50% God and 50% Man.
SD D DS AS A SA
12. Jesus was only a good human teacher.
SD D DS AS A SA
13. Jesus is equal to God the Father.
SD D DS AS A SA
14. Jesus never said or taught that He was God.
SD D DS AS A SA
15. Jesus taught that He was the only way to have a right relationship with God.
SD D DS AS A SA
16. Jesus died to buy us back from Satan
SD D DS AS A SA
17. Jesus died as a substitute for sinners.
SD D DS AS A SA
18. Jesus literally rose from the dead.
SD D DS AS A SA
19. Jesus' death is the only hope for sinners to find salvation.
SD D DS AS A SA
20. Jesus is only one of many ways to God.
SD D DS AS A SA
21. Faith is just knowing God is real and that Jesus died.
SD D DS AS A SA
22. Faith in any religion is seen as acceptable by God.
SD D DS AS A SA
23. Faith is best described as trusting that through Christ's death God can and will forgive us.
SD D DS AS A SA
24. Faith + Works = Salvation
SD D DS AS A SA
25. Faith = Salvation
SD D DS AS A SA

26. Faith + Repentance (turning from sin) = Salvation

SD D DS AS A SA

27. Good works come before salvation

SD D DS AS A SA

28. Salvation changes someone so that good works naturally come about.

SD D DS AS A SA

29. God counts our faith as what makes us righteous.

SD D DS AS A SA

30. God counts our good works as what makes us right before Him.

SD D DS AS A SA

31. Jesus Christ never sinned.

SD D DS AS A SA

32. Jesus Christ is 100% God and 100% man.

SD D DS AS A SA

33. Jesus can be our savior, without being our Lord.

SD D DS AS A SA

34. Accepting Jesus in your heart is how the bible describes you are saved.

SD D DS AS A SA

35. Jesus must be seen as savior and lord in order for someone to be saved.

SD D DS AS A SA

36. Baptism is not necessary for salvation.

SD D DS AS A SA

37. If we die without being baptized we will go to Hell.

SD D DS AS A SA

38. Only Christians will go to Heaven and all non-Christians will go to Hell.

SD D DS AS A SA

39. We can affect the number of people that go to heaven by sharing the Gospel (the good news about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection).

SD D DS AS A SA

40. God does not need us to help save people.

SD D DS AS A SA

41. It is every Christian's responsibility to share the Gospel.

SD D DS AS A SA

42. How many times have you had a spiritual conversation with a non-Christian in the last two months?

0 1 2 3 4 5 or more

43. How many times have you invited a non-Christian to church in the last two months?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more
44. How many times have you shared your testimony with a non-Christian in the last two months?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more
45. How many times have you shared the Gospel with a non-Christian in the last two months?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more
46. On a scale of 1-6, how nervous do you feel in trying to share your faith? 1 = Extremely nervous and 6 = Extremely confident.
 1 2 3 4 5 6
47. On a scale of 1-6, how confident do you feel that you can answer most of the questions that a non-Christian could ask about Christianity? 1 = Not confident at all and 6 = Extremely confident.
 1 2 3 4 5 6
48. On a scale of 1-6, how prepared do you feel that you are to share your faith with others? 1 = Not prepared at all and 6 = Very prepared
 1 2 3 4 5 6
49. On a scale of 1-6, how confident do you feel that if you were sharing your faith you would not leave out any important details? 1 = Not confident at all and 6 = Extremely confident.
 1 2 3 4 5 6
50. What problems do you face when trying to share your faith? Circle all that apply
- | | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|
| Evolution | Relativism (No Absolute Truth) | Islam |
| Mormonism | Moralist (We Are All Good) | Atheism (No God) |
| Catholicism | Agnosticism (Can't Know God) | |
| Jehovah Witnesses | Naturalism (Everything Explained by Science) | |

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM EVALUATION FORM

Disclaimer

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to evaluate the curriculum that has been developed to train young adults to know and share the Gospel. This research is being conducted by Paul Crandell for purpose of a Doctor of Ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Instructions: Please grade the curriculum on how it meets each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score.

1. The curriculum used scripture correctly.
1 2 3 4 5
2. The curriculum explained all the essential doctrines and topics for understanding the gospel.
1 2 3 4 5
3. The curriculum did not use confusing language.
1 2 3 4 5
4. The curriculum used plain language to explain complicated topics.
1 2 3 4 5
5. The curriculum described actual conversations of young adults.
1 2 3 4 5
6. The curriculum gives a clear plan and strategy for young adults to share the gospel.
1 2 3 4 5
7. The topics were organized in a thoughtful way and built on each other.
1 2 3 4 5
8. Each chapter contained enough information to be clear and not overwhelming.
1 2 3 4 5

Strengths of the curriculum

Weakness of the curriculum

After the curriculum has been reviewed please check only one.

I approve this curriculum for training young adults

I do not approve this curriculum for training young adults

APPENDIX 3
IMPACT CLASS CURRICULUM

“An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 1: God

1. Know
 - a. What we know from Nature, Romans 1:19-20
 - i. God is eternal (kalam argument)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CulBuMCLg0>)
 1. Everything that has a beginning needs a cause.
 2. The universe had a beginning.
 3. The universe needs a cause.
 - a. Infinite task cannot be completed. The present would not exist if the past was infinitely behind it.
 - b. 2nd law of thermodynamics states that useable energy is running down. If the past is infinite, than a finite amount of energy would have already been used up.
 - c. Universe is expanding
 - i. Red shift
 - ii. Radiation “Echo”
 4. There cannot be an infinite regress of caused causes.
 5. There must be a cause for all else, which has no beginning and needs no cause for its own existence.¹
 - ii. God is intelligent
 1. Human artifacts are products of intelligent design.
 2. The universe resembles human artifacts.
 - a. Irreducible complexity: eye,
 - b. Astrophysicist Hugh Ross calculated the probability that 122 constants would exist today for any planet in the universe by chance as 1 chance in 10^{138} . You have better odds of having two people pick the same atom out of the entire universe, which is between 1 in 10^{78} to 10^{82} .

¹Brad Huston, “The Cosmological Argument,” Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, accessed June 1, 2014, <http://carm.org/the-cosmological-argument>.

3. Therefore the universe is a product of intelligent design.
 4. But, the universe is complex and gigantic in comparison to human artifacts.
 5. Therefore, there probably is a powerful and vastly intelligent designer who created the universe.²
- iii. God is moral
1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
 2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
 3. Therefore, God exists³
- iv. God is personal (ex. Eternal man choosing to stand)
1. Kalam argument requires an eternal cause for the infinite universe
 2. Impersonal causes have immediate effects
 3. Impersonal causes are as old as their effects
 4. Therefore an eternal impersonal cause is illogical for a finite universe
 5. Personal causes don't have immediate effects
 6. Personal causes are not as old as their effects
 7. Therefore the universe has an eternal personal cause
- b. What we know from Scripture
- i. Incommunicable (not like us) and Communicable (like us)
 1. Incommunicable
 - a. Independence: "God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything, yet we and the rest of creation can glorify him and bring him joy."⁴
 - i. God has no needs, Acts 17:24-25
 - ii. God created everything, Rev. 4:11
 - iii. God has always existed, Ps. 90:2
 - iv. God had love and glory before creation, John 17:5, 24
 - v. God created all things for His glory, Eph. 1:11-12, Isa. 43:7, Rom. 11:36
 - vi. God delights in us, Isa. 62:3-5, Zeph. 3:17-18.
 - b. Unchangeableness: "God is unchanging in his being, perfections, purposes, and promises, yet

²Matt Slick, "The Teleological Argument," Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, accessed June 1, 2014, <http://carm.org/teleological-argument>.

³William Lane Craig, "Moral Argument," Reasonable Faith, accessed June 1, 2014, <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/moral-argument>.

⁴Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, new ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 160.

God does act and feel emotions, and he acts and feels differently in response to different situations.”⁵

- i. God does not change, Ps. 102:25-27, Mal. 3:6, James 1:17
 - ii. God’s purposes do not change, Isa. 46:9-11, Ps. 33:11
 - iii. God’s promises do not change, Num. 23:19, 1 Sam. 15:29
 - iv. God does respond to situations in time, he changes actions when situations change, Ex. 32:9-14, Isa. 38:1-6, Jer. 18:1-10
- c. Eternity: “God has no beginning, end, or succession of moments in his own being, and he sees all time equally vividly, yet God sees events in time and acts in time.”⁶
- i. God is timeless, Ps. 90:2, Rev. 1:8, 4:8, John 1:1-3
 - ii. God sees all time, Ps. 90:4, 2 Peter 3:8
 - iii. God knows the present and acts in it, Gal. 4:4-5, Acts 17:30-31
- d. Omnipresence: “God does not have size or spatial dimensions and is present at every point of space with his whole being, yet God acts differently in different places.”⁷
- i. God is everywhere, Jer. 23:23-24, Ps. 139:7-10
 - ii. God present to punish, Amos 9:1-4
 - iii. God present to sustain, Col. 1:17
 - iv. God present to bless, Ps. 16:11, 1 Sam. 4:4, Ex. 25:22, Rev. 21:3
- e. Unity: “God is not divided into parts, yet we see different attributes of God emphasized at different times.”⁸
- i. 1 John 1:5, 4:8, Ex. 34:6-7, Rom. 3:26, 5:8

⁵Ibid. 163.

⁶Ibid., 168.

⁷Ibid. 173.

⁸Ibid. 177.

2. Share (ALT Method)
 - a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 - b. Doesn't exploring the idea of God's existence seem to you as being one of the most important questions in life?
 - i. Pascal's Wager
 1. If God exists, and you believe in Him you have everything to gain.
 2. If God does not exist, and you believe in Him you have nothing to lose.
 3. If God does not exist, and you don't believe in Him you have gained nothing.
 4. If God exists and you don't believe in Him you have everything to lose.
 5. Belief is the only way to gain.
 - c. Why is there something instead of nothing?
 - i. If something can't come from nothing, then what do you think explains the universe's existence?
 - d. Where does our standard of right and wrong come from?
 - i. If it's all subjective, then how can we say the Nazis were wrong, since they were subjectively right in their minds?

Impact Class
“An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 2: God

1. Know
 - a. Communicable (like us) Attributes
 - i. Being Attributes
 1. Spirituality: “God’s spirituality means that God exists as a being that is not made of any matter, has no parts or dimensions, is unable to be perceived by our bodily senses, and is more excellent than any other kind of existence.”⁹
 - a. God is spirit, John 4:24
 - b. God is different than physical creation, Ex. 20:4-6
 - c. God is not confined to physical dimensions, Ps. 139:7-10
 2. Invisibility: “God’s invisibility means that God’s total essence, all of his spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by us, yet God still shows himself to us through visible, created things.”¹⁰
 - a. God is invisible, 1 Tim. 1:17, John 6:46
 - b. God shows himself, Gen. 18:1-33, Gen. 32:28-30, Ex. 13:21-22, Isa. 6:1
 - c. God cannot be fully seen, Ex. 33:20, 1 Tim. 6:16
 - ii. Mental Attributes
 1. Knowledge (Omniscience): “God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act.”¹¹
 - a. God knows everything, 1 John 3:20
 - b. God knows all things actual, Heb. 4:13
 - c. God knows the future, Isa. 46:9-10
 - d. God knows all things possible, 1 Sam. 13:13-14, 1 Sam. 23:11-13
 2. Wisdom: “God’s wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals.”¹²

⁹Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 187.

¹⁰Ibid, 188.

¹¹Ibid, 190.

¹²Ibid, 193.

- a. God is infinitely wise, Rom. 11:33
 - b. God shows his wisdom in salvation through Christ, 1 Cor. 1:21-29
 - c. God shows his wisdom in our lives, Rom. 8:28
- iii. Moral Attributes
1. Goodness: “The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval.”¹³
 - a. God is good and does good, Ps. 34:8, Ps. 119:68
 2. Love: “God’s love means that God eternally gives of himself to others.”¹⁴
 - a. God is love, 1 John 4:8
 - b. God’s love is shown to us in sacrifice, Rom. 5:8, 1 John 4:10
 - c. This love is reciprocal, John 3:35, John 14:31, 1 John 4:10, 1 John 5:3
 3. Mercy, Grace, and Patience:
 - a. Mercy: “God’s goodness toward those in misery and distress.”¹⁵
 - b. Grace: “God’s goodness toward those who deserve only punishment.”¹⁶
 - c. Patience: “God’s goodness in withholding of punishment toward those who sin over a period of time.”¹⁷
 4. Holiness: “God’s holiness means that he is separated from sin and devoted to seeking his own honor.”¹⁸
 - a. God is the Most Holy One, Isa. 6:3
 5. Righteousness and Justice: “God’s righteousness means that God always acts in accordance with what is right and is himself the final standard of what is right.”¹⁹
 - a. God is just and right, Deut. 32:4, Rom. 3:25-26
 - b. God speaks and commands what is right, Ps. 19:8, Isa. 45:19

¹³Ibid., 197.

¹⁴Ibid. 198.

¹⁵Ibid. 200.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid. 201.

¹⁹Ibid. 203.

6. Jealousy: “God’ jealousy means that God continually seeks to protect his own honor.”²⁰
 - a. God will not share glory, Isa. 48:11
 - b. God desires all worship, Ex. 34:14
7. Wrath: “God’s wrath means that he intensely hates all sin.”²¹
 - a. God wrath is against all sin, Rom. 1:18
 - b. God wrath is on all that don’t believe in the Son, John 3:36, Eph. 2:3

iv. Attributes of Purpose

1. Will: “God’s will is that attribute of God whereby he approves and determines to bring about every action necessary for the existence and activity of himself and all creation.”²²
 - a. God has a secret will, Deut. 29:29, James 4:15, Gen. 50:20, Matt. 11:25-26
 - b. God has a revealed will, Matt. 6:10, Matt. 7:21
2. Freedom: “God’s freedom is that attribute to God whereby he does whatever he please.”²³
 - a. God does what he wants, Ps. 115:3, Dan. 4:35
3. Omnipotence: “God’s omnipotence means that God is able to do all his holy will.”²⁴
 - a. Nothing is to hard for God, Jer. 32:17
 - b. God is call “almighty,” 2 Cor. 6:18, Rev. 1:8
 - c. God can’t do somethings, Titus 1:2, 2 Tim. 2:13, James 1:13, Heb. 6:18

v. Summary Attributes

1. Perfection, Beauty: “God’s perfection means that God completely possess all excellent qualities and lacks no part of any qualities that would be desirable of him.”²⁵
 - a. God is beautiful and desirable, Ps. 27:4, Ps. 73:25
 - b. God is perfect and his ways are perfect, Matt. 5:48, Ps. 18:30, Deut. 32:4

2. Share (ALT Method)

²⁰Ibid. 205.

²¹Ibid. 206.

²²Ibid., 211.

²³Ibid. 216.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid. 218.

- a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 1. If there is no God, will there ever be complete justice? Who will punish those that never get caught or convicted by human authorities?
 2. You say that you can't believe in a God that would send you to hell; but would you believe in a God that went through hell for you?
 3. Have you ever felt the love of God or felt like some supernatural force was looking out for your well-being?
 4. If you believe in God, what do you see are his most important characteristics?

Impact Class
“An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 3 and 4: Sin

1. Know

- a. Definition: “Sin is a failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature.”²⁶
 - i. Lawlessness, 1 John 3:4
 1. Acts, Ex. 20:1-17 (ten commandments)
 2. Attitude, Matt. 5:22, 28
 3. Nature, Rom. 5:8, Eph. 2:3
 - b. Where did Sin come from?
 - i. Not God, Deut. 32:4, James 1:13
 - ii. Man’s lawlessness, Gen. 2:17
 - iii. Man’s attempt to be like God, Gen. 3:5
 - c. Inherited
 - i. Inherited Guilt: Adam’s choice makes us guilty
 1. All sinned in Adam, Rom. 5:12
 2. All received death as a consequence for Adam’s choice, Rom. 5:13-14
 3. All received condemnation as a consequence for Adam’s choice, Rom. 5:18-19
 4. We are also condemned by our works, Rom. 2:6, Col. 3:25
 - ii. Inherited Corruption (sin nature) Rom. 5:18-19 “made sinners”
 1. We are not good, Rom. 3:9-18, 3:23, 7:18, Titus 1:15, Eph. 2:1-3, 1 John 5:19.
 2. We don’t do good,
 - a. We don’t see or seek God, John 3:3, 5, John 6:44, 65,
 - b. We don’t obey God, Rom. 8:7-8
 - c. We don’t understand the things of God, 1 Cor. 2:14
 - d. We don’t acknowledge Christ as Lord, 1 Cor. 12:3
 - d. Actual Sins in Our lives
 - i. Everyone is counted a sinner before God, Ps. 14:3, Ps. 143:2, Rom. 3:9-10, 1 John 1:8-10
 - ii. There are degrees of sin
 1. All sin has legal guilt, Gal. 3:10, James 2:10-11
 2. Different sins have different consequence, John 19:11, Matt. 11:20-24, Matt. 23:23
 - iii. Christian sin
 1. Our legal standing before God does not change, Rom. 8:11
 2. Our fellowship with God is upset and our Christian life is impaired,

²⁶Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 490.

- a. Christians sin, Matt. 6:12, 1 John 1:5-10,
 - b. God reproves Christians, Rev. 3:19
 - c. We lose rewards when we sin, 1 Cor. 3:12-15, 2 Cor. 5:10
 - 3. The Danger of unconverted “believers,” Matt. 7:23, 1 John 2:4
 - e. The punishment of sin
 - i. God shows His righteousness in punishing sin, Rom. 3:25-26, Rev. 16:1-7, Ex. 34:7
2. Share (ALT Method)
- a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 - ii. Using the law in a Gospel presentation
 - 1. Would you consider yourself a good person? (**Most people will say yes**)
 - 2. Do you know the ten commandments?
 - 3. Do you think you have kept the ten commandments? (**Every time you bring up a command show that you have broken it also, that way they don't feel like you are attacking them.**)
 - a. Have you ever told a lie before? (**small story of when you told a lie**)
 - b. So, what would that make you? What do you call someone who lies? (**you are trying to get them to say liar**)
 - c. Have you ever stole anything before, even something small? (**small story of when you stole something**)
 - d. So what does that make you? (**you are trying to get them to say, “a thief”**)
 - e. Have you ever murdered someone before? Jesus says that if we have been angry with someone that we have committed murder in our heart. (**small story of when you we're angry**)
 - f. Have you ever looked with lust before?
 - 4. So, by our own words, both you and I are liars, thieves, murders and adulterers at heart.
 - 5. So, if God were to judge you and me based off the ten commandments would we be innocent or guilty?
 - 6. So, would that mean Heaven or Hell for you after you die?
 - 7. Does that concern you?
 - 8. Gospel: It concerns God.
 - a. We all need God's forgiveness because we sinned, broken the ten commandments.

- b. God provides that forgiveness in Christ. We broke God's law, but Jesus pays the fine by dying on the cross and rising from the dead.
- c. We accept God's forgiveness by trusting in Christ and turning from our sin.
- d. Do you want God's forgiveness and believe the Christ death is the only way to get it?

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Lesson 5: Christ

1. Know

a. Person (one person with two natures: 100% man and 100% God)

i. Humanity of Christ

1. Virgin Birth, Matt. 1:20-25

- a. Promise came true, Gen. 3:15
- b. God and man at the same time, Gal. 4:4-5
- c. Human, but without sin, Luke 1:35

2. Limitations in His humanity

- a. Human body,
 - i. Grew Luke 2:52
 - ii. Got tired, John 4:16
 - iii. Was thirsty, John 19:38
 - iv. Was hungry, Matt. 4:2
 - v. Had flesh and bones, Luke 24:39
- b. Human mind,
 - i. Learned, Luke 2:52
 - ii. Doesn't know everything, Mark 13:32
- c. Human emotions
 - i. Negative emotions, John 12:27, John 13:21, Matt. 26:38
 - ii. Positive emotions, Matt. 8:10

3. Sinless

- a. New Testament writers call Him sinless, 2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 4:15, 1 Peter 2:22
- b. Jesus said He was sinless, John 8:29, John 15:10
- c. Jesus overcame Satan's temptation, Luke 4:1-13
- d. Jesus empathizes with us, even without sinning, Heb. 2:18

4. Reason for humanity

- a. To be our new representative as Adam was our old representative, Rom. 5:18-19
- b. To be a sacrificial substitute, Heb. 2:16-17
- c. To be our mediator to God, 1 Tim. 2:5
- d. To give us an example, 1 Peter 2:21, 1 John 2:6

ii. Deity

- 1. Jesus is called God, John 1:1, 20:28-29, Romans 9:5, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8 (quote of Ps. 45:6), 2 Peter 1:1
- 2. Jesus is called Lord, Luke 2:11, Matt. 3:3 (quote of Isa. 40:3), 1 Cor. 8:6
- 3. Jesus calls Himself “I am,” meaning Yahweh, Ex. 3:14, John 8:57-59
- 4. Jesus shows divine attributes
 - a. Omnipotence, Matt. 8:26-27, 14:9, John 2:1-11

- b. Eternity, John 8:58, Rev. 22:13
 - c. Omniscience, Mark 2:8, John 1:48, John 6:64
 - d. Omnipresence, Matt. 18:20, Matt. 28:20
 - e. Sovereignty, Mark 2:5-7, Matt. 28:18
 - f. Immortality, John 2:19-22, 10: 17-18, Heb. 7:16
 - g. Worthy of worship, Phil. 2:9-11, Heb. 1:6, Rev. 5:12-13
5. Summary statements of Christ Deity, Col. 1:19, 2:9, Matt. 1:23
2. Share (ALT Method)
- a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 - ii. “What are your thoughts on Jesus?”
 - 1. “Do you see Him as a moral teacher, God, or a liar?”
 - a. Show them some passages about Jesus’ deity
 - b. Ex: John 8:57-59 and 20:28-29
 - c. “In these passages, Jesus calls Himself God and receives worship from another as God. Would that be a moral thing to claim and do if He wasn’t God? If He is not God, then He would have to be a liar at best and a lunatic at worst.”
 - d. “The other option is that Jesus is actually who He says He is, God.”
 - e. “If Jesus is God would you follow Him and obey Him?”
 - f. “Jesus tells us to ‘repent and believe in the gospel,’ are you willing to turn from your sins and believe that Jesus died and rose again for the forgiveness of your sins?”

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Lesson 6: Christ

1. Know
 - a. The work of the cross
 - i. The cause
 1. God’s Love, John 3:16, Rom. 5:8
 2. God’s Justice, Rom. 3:25-26
 - ii. The necessity
 1. Our need for salvation does not require God to give it to us. He did not provide salvation for the angels that sinned. 2 Peter 2:4
 2. Christ had to suffer if our sins were to be forgiven, Heb. 2:17, 10:4, 9:24-26
 - iii. Our substitution
 1. Christ obeyed for us (imputed righteousness/ active obedience)
 - a. We have a righteousness not our own, but from Christ through faith, Phil. 3:9, 1 Cor. 1:30, Rom. 5:19, 2 Cor. 5:21
 2. Christ suffered for us (passive obedience)
 - a. Pain of the cross
 - i. Physical
 - ii. Bearing sin, Isa. 53:6, 12, Gal. 3:13, 1 Peter 2:24, 2 Cor. 5:21
 - iii. Being abandoned, Mark 14:34, Matt. 26:56, Matt. 27:46, Ps. 22:1-2
 - iv. Bearing the wrath of God, Rom. 3:25, Heb. 2:17, 1 John 2:2, 4:10
 - iv. God the Father punished Christ, Isa. 53:6-10, 2 Cor. 5:21
 - v. Christ’ sacrifice is complete, Heb. 9:25-28, John 19:30
 - vi. New Testament words for the cross
 1. Sacrifice, Heb. 9:26
 2. Propitiation, 1 John 4:10
 3. Reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5:18-19
 4. Redemption
 - a. The cross was a ransom (Mark 10:45), which was paid to free us from the bondage of sin and Satan (Heb. 2:15, Col. 1:13).
 - b. Sin and Satan have control of us (1 John 5:19), but the ransom is not paid to them. God’s justice demands the ransom (Rom. 3:25-26).
2. Share (ALT Method)
 - a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.

- ii. Explaining the need for Christ work on the cross by using the previous gospel presentation we covered two weeks ago.
- (Two weeks ago)
1. Would you consider yourself a good person? **(Most people will say yes)**
 2. Do you know the ten commandments?
 3. Do you think you have kept the ten commandments? **(Every time you bring up a command show that you have broken it also, that way they don't feel like you are attacking them.)**
 - a. Have you ever told a lie before? **(small story of when you told a lie)**
 - b. So, what would that make you? What do you call someone who lies? **(you are trying to get them to say liar)**
 - c. Have you ever stole anything before, even something small? **(small story of when you stole something)**
 - d. So what does that make you? **(you are trying to get them to say, "a thief")**
 - e. Have you ever murdered someone before? Jesus says that if we have been angry with someone that we have committed murder in our heart. **(small story of when you we're angry)**
 - f. Have you ever looked with lust before?
 4. So, by our own words, both you and I are liars, thieves, murders and adulterers at heart.
- (This week)
5. Your friend: "Hey, but if God loves me, He'll just forgive me."
 6. You: "Think about that in a court room today. What would you say about a judge that let a criminal go free and never pay for his crimes? Would that not be a corrupt judge? According to God's law, we are murderers at heart. Should a judge let a murderer go free?"
 7. Your friend: "I guess not. But, why can't God just forgive and let it go. I do that with people."
 8. You: "Even in forgiveness, a price is paid. If I broke your window with a baseball and you decided to forgive me and not make me pay for the damages, then you are taking the price on yourself. You are going to pay to fix the window. God offer's to forgive us and take the price for our sins on Himself. That's why Christ died on the cross."

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Lesson 7 and 8: Faith and Repentance

1. Know
 - a. Faith
 - i. Knowledge
 1. We must know about Christ and what He has done. Rom. 10:14, 1 Cor. 15:1-11
 2. But more than just knowledge
 - a. Just as knowing God’s law is not the same as obeying it. Rom. 1:32
 - b. Knowing God does not save the demons. James 2:19
 - ii. Faith is more than just agreement with the facts.
 1. Nicodemus agreed, but still needed to believe in Jesus. John 3:2, 3:15
 2. King Agrippa knew and agreed with the Old Testament, but did not have saving faith. Acts 26:27-28
 - iii. Faith is trusting in Jesus Christ to save us.
 1. Faith is described as being “in” Christ. Faith is personal and relational trust. John 3:15-16, 18, 36
 2. Faith is receiving Christ. John 1:12
 3. Faith is coming to Christ. John 6:37, 7:37, Matt. 11:28-30
 4. Faith is trust that Christ can and will save us. John 3:14-15
 - iv. Faith increases with knowledge
 1. Faith and knowledge are not opposing things. Faith doesn’t believe against the evidence or without evidence.
 2. Faith starts with knowledge. Rom 10:17
 3. Paul prays that his churches would grow in knowledge. Eph. 1:15-23
 4. God strengthens our spiritual life through knowledge. 2 Peter 1:2-4.
 - b. Repentance
 - i. Repentance is godly grief that leads to action. 2 Cor. 7:9-10
 - ii. Repentance is turning from a sin ruled life to one ruled by Christ. Isa. 55:6-7, Matt. 11:28-29
 1. We subject ourselves to Christ rule (yoke). Christ is savior and lord at the same time. We can’t avoid His yoke and receive His rest (salvation).
 - iii. Faith and Repentance are mentioned together as being the proper response to the gospel. Acts 20:21, Heb. 6:1
 - iv. Faith is mentioned by itself as being the proper response to the gospel. John 3:16, Acts 16:31, Rom. 10:9, Eph. 2:8-9
 - v. Repentance is mentioned by itself as being the proper response to the gospel. Luke 24:46-47, Acts 2:37-38, Acts 3:19, Acts 5:31, Acts 17:30, Rom. 2:4, 2 Cor. 7:10

- vi. Therefore, faith and repentance are inseparable responses to the Gospel. When we turn to trust Christ we inevitably turn from sin. There is a spatial and relational element expressed in scripture for our conversion. We move from one place to another and enter into a new relationship. Consequently, we are not where we used to be and no longer maintain the same relationships (ex: to sin and Satan).
- vii. Accepting Christ into our hearts is not a biblical description of conversion.
 - 1. We believe in our hearts. Rom. 10:9
- c. Faith and Repentance are continual
 - i. Faith continues. Gal. 2:20
 - ii. Repentance continues. Matt. 6:12, Rev. 3:19, 2 Cor. 7:10
- d. God's work in Faith and Repentance
 - i. God calls us. Rom. 8:30, 1 Peter 2:9
 - 1. Into fellowship with His son. 1 Cor. 1:9, Acts 2:39
 - 2. Into His Kingdom. 1 Thess. 2:12, 1 Peter 5:10, 2 Peter 1:3
 - 3. Into peace. 1 Cor. 7:15, Col. 3:15
 - 4. Into freedom. Gal. 5:13
 - 5. Into hope. Eph. 1:18, 4:4
 - 6. Into holiness. 1 Thess. 4:7
 - 7. Into endurance. 1 Peter 2:20-21, 3:9
 - 8. Into eternal life. 1 Tim. 6:12
 - 9. To belong to Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:6
 - 10. To be saints Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:2
 - ii. God works on our heart. Acts 16:14-15
 - iii. God work on us before Faith is necessary. John 6:44
 - iv. This calling of God is through the Gospel. 2 Thess. 2:14
- 2. Share (ALT Method)
 - a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 - ii. What do you think it means to have "faith"?
 - 1. Friend: "Faith is believing. Believing in God, even though you can't see Him."
 - 2. You: "Faith in the bible is more than just belief, its trust as well. Like when you trust in a doctor to give you the right treatment or you trust in a bank to protect your money. Trust means you make a personal investment in the person. You not only believe they can perform what they claim, but you trust that they will do so on your behalf. Trusting in a parachute to save your life is more than just believing it is capable of doing so. Trust makes you jump from the plane and pull the chord."
 - 3. Friend: "So what do I need to trust God for?"
 - 4. You: "You need to trust God to save you."
 - 5. Friend: "Save me from what?"

6. You: "From the punishment for your sin. You simply trust that He will save you through the sacrifice of His son."
- iii. Do you think someone can earn or work to gain God's love?
 1. Friend: "Sure"
 2. You: "Do you think you have done enough to earn God's love?"
 3. Friend: "I don't know."
 4. You: "The bible says that we don't earn God's love, but that He first loved us in sending His son to die on the cross and raise from the dead. He did this to remove the hurdle that was in the way of us having a loving relationship with Him. All we do is receive that forgiveness by trusting in Him."

Impact Class
 “An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 9: Sanctification

1. Know

- a. “Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.”²⁷
- b. Differences between Justification and Sanctification

Justification	Sanctification
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life
Entirely God’s work	We cooperate
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than in others

- c. Sanctification has a beginning
 - i. After we are born again we can’t continue in sin. 1 John 3:9
 - ii. There is an initial act of sanctification. 1 Cor. 6:11, Acts 20:32
 - iii. This initial act is a break from the bondage of sin. Rom. 6:11,14, 17-18
- d. Sanctification is progressive throughout life
 - i. We progress in our fight against sin. Rom. 6:11-13, 19, Heb. 12:1,14
 - ii. We progress in glorifying God. 2 Cor. 3:18
 - iii. We progress in fulfilling God’s plan for us. Phil. 3:13-14
- e. Sanctification ends at death.
 - i. Sin remains in believers. 1 John 1:8
 - ii. We will be pure and like him at the second coming. 1 John 3:2-3, Phil. 1:6
- f. God and Man work together in Sanctification
 - i. Cooperation Phil. 2:12-13
 - ii. God’s work
 - 1. God works in Sanctification. 1 Thess. 5:23
 - 2. God disciplines us. Heb. 12:5-11
 - 3. God empowers us. Heb. 13:20-21
 - 4. Jesus earned our sanctification and is our example. 1 Cor. 1:30, Heb. 12:2, 1 Peter 2:21
 - 5. The Holy Spirit works in us. 1 Peter 1:2, 2 Thess. 2:13, Gal. 5:22-23, 5:16-18, Rom. 8:14
 - iii. Our work
 - 1. Passive (We depend on God). Rom. 6:13, 19, 12:1, 8:13
 - 2. Active (We do ourselves)
 - a. We strive. Heb. 12:14

²⁷Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 746.

- b. We abstain. 1 Thess. 4:3
- c. We shun. 1 Cor. 6:18
- d. We cleanse. 2 Cor. 7:1
- e. We make effort. 2 Peter 1:5
- f. We encourage one another. Heb. 10:24-25

2. Share (ALT Method)

a. Ask, Listen, Tell

i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.

1. “Do you think Christians are hypocrites?”

- a. Friend: “Totally!”
- b. You: “Do you think that affects the message they teach?”
- c. Friend: “Absolutely.”
- d. You: “I think Christian hypocrites are inevitable and unavoidable.”
- e. Friend: “What do you mean?”
- f. You: “Well, Christians should live to obey God, but part of the Christian message is that all of us have failed to keep God’s rules and are not perfect. The bible says that Christians will still sin and fall short, even if they love God and trust in Christ for forgiveness. So, when Christians act hypocritically they are actually confirming the message they believe in. Christians don’t strive to be hypocritical, but they will fall at times.”
- g. Friend: “So why believe in a message that doesn’t work?”
- h. You: “The message does work. ‘Working’ isn’t perfection. ‘Working’ means that our sins are forgiven by trusting in Christ’s death and resurrection. The message works because we receive forgiveness despite our failures.”

Impact Class
“An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 10: Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God

1. Know
 - a. God works in salvation
 - i. God works on our heart. Acts 16:14-15
 - ii. God’s work on us before Faith is necessary. John 6:44
 - iii. God provides spiritual growth to the hearer of the preaching of the Gospel. 1 Cor. 3:5-9
 - iv. God’s work in salvation is from beginning to end. Rom. 8:30
 - b. God’s work in salvation does not take away from our work of evangelism.
 - i. It doesn’t affect the need for evangelism. We must preach. Rom. 10:12
 - ii. It doesn’t affect the urgency of evangelism. Luke 13:3-5
 - iii. It doesn’t affect the genuineness of the gospel invitation. Rom. 10:13, Matt. 11:28, John 3:16, John 6:37-38
 - iv. It doesn’t affect the responsibility of people to repent. Eze. 18:31-32, John 3:19, John 5:39-40
 - v. It doesn’t affect our responsibility to evangelize. Matt. 28:18-20, 1 Cor. 9:16
 - c. God’s work in salvation adds to our work of evangelism.
 - i. It gives us hope of success in evangelism.
 1. We are fighting against their sinful nature and Satan’s control. 1 Cor. 2:14, Rom. 8:7, Eph. 2:1-2, 2 Cor. 4:4
 2. God is working through us. 2 Cor. 5:19-21
 - ii. It makes us pray for help in evangelism. 2 Thess. 3:1, Col. 4:3
2. Share (ALT Method)
 - a. Ask, Listen, Tell
 - i. Use these questions to help start spiritual conversations with your friends.
 1. “Do you ever feel like God is trying to get your attention?”
 - a. Friend: “What do you mean, like signs.”
 - b. You: “kind of, not like God is trying to show you who your true love is. But, like God trying to get your attention, so that you will believe in Him.”
 - c. Friend: “Honestly, I don’t see where you are going with this.”
 - d. You: “The bible says that God ‘calls’ when we hear someone speak about Christ and what He did on the cross for us. So, I guess what I’m asking you is would you be willing to hear about Christ and see if God speaks to you.”

- e. Friend: “It seems kind of mystical and weird.”
- f. You: “God says that when you hear His voice you follow Him. Jesus said, ‘My sheep hear my voice and they follow me.’ It’s like you’re hearing your parents voice from several houses away calling you for dinner. You recognize their voice and you immediately run back home. I’m just asking if you would be open to listening to God’s message and see if it speaks to you.”

Impact Class
“An impactful faith is one we both know and share.”

Lesson 11: Evangelism Strategies

1. Know And Share

- a. Here are some well-known evangelism strategies or gospel presentations. Below are summaries of these presentations, not all the material is covered.

i. Evangelism Explosion

1. Starter Questions

- a. Do you know for sure that you are going to be with God in heaven?
- b. If god were to ask, “Why should I let you into My heaven?” what would you say?

2. Content

- a. Did you know that the Bible tells how you can know for sure that you have eternal life and will go to be with God in heaven?
- b. 1 John 5:13
- c. Here’s How: The Bible says there are 5 Things you need to know about eternal life:

i. Heaven:

1. Eternal life is a free gift!
 - a. Rom. 6:23
2. It is not earned or deserved
 - a. Eph. 2:8-9
3. Transition: Why is it that no one can earn his way to heaven? Because...

ii. Man:

1. Man is a sinner
 - a. Rom. 3:23
2. Man cannot save Himself
 - a. Matt. 5:48
3. Transition: With such a high standard, no one can save himself. However, in spite of our sin...

iii. God:

1. God is merciful and therefore doesn’t want to punish us.
 - a. 1 John 4:8
 - b. Jer. 31:3
2. God is just and therefore must punish sin
 - a. Ex. 34:7
 - b. Eze. 18:4
3. Transition: We have a problem. God loves us and doesn’t want to punish us, but He is just and must punish sin.

God solved this problem for us in the person of...

- iv. Jesus Christ:
 - 1. Who is He?
 - a. God-Man
 - i. John 1:1, 14
 - 2. What did He do?
 - a. Isaiah 53:6
 - 3. Transition:
 - a. Jesus Christ bore our sin in His body on the cross and now offers you eternal life (heaven) as a free gift. This gift is received by...
- v. Faith:
 - 1. Saving Faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life. It means resting upon Christ alone and what He has done rather than in what you or I have done to get us into heaven.
 - a. Acts 16:31
 - 2. It means that you need to:
 - a. Transfer your trust
 - b. Accept Christ as Savior
 - c. Receive Jesus Christ as Lord
 - d. Repent
 - e. You can do this through a prayer.
 - i. Rev. 3:20

ii. Four Spiritual Laws

- 1. Starter Question
 - a. Have you ever heard of the four spiritual laws?
 - i. Law One: God loves you, and offers a wonderful plan for your life.
 - 1. God's Love
 - a. John 3:16
 - 2. God's Plan
 - a. John 10:10
 - 3. Transition: Why is it that most people are not experiencing the abundant life? Because...
 - ii. Law Two: Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for His life.
 - 1. Man is sinful
 - a. Rom. 3:23
 - 2. Man is separated
 - a. Rom. 6:23

- 3. Transition: The third law explains the only way to bridge this gulf...
- iii. Law Three: Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.
 - 1. He died in our place
 - a. Rom. 5:8
 - 2. He rose from the dead
 - a. 1 Cor. 15:3-6
 - 3. He is the only way to God
 - a. John 14:6
 - 4. Transition: It is not enough just to know these three laws...
- iv. Law Four: We must individually receive Jesus Christ as savior and lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.
 - 1. We must receive Christ
 - a. John 1:12
 - 2. We receive Christ through faith
 - a. Eph. 2:8-9
 - 3. When we receive Christ, we experience a new birth.
 - a. John 3:1-8
 - 4. We receive Christ by personal invitation
 - a. Rev. 3:20

iii. Way of the Master

- 1. Starter Question
 - a. Would you consider yourself a good person?
- 2. Content
 - a. Do you know the ten commandments?
 - b. Do you think you have kept the ten commandments?
 - c. Have you ever told a lie before?
 - d. So, what would that make you? What do you call someone who lies?
 - e. Have you ever stolen anything before, even something small?
 - f. So what does that make you?
 - g. Have you ever murdered someone before? Jesus says that if we have been angry with someone that we have committed murder in our heart.
 - h. Jesus said, 'whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.' Have you ever looked at another person with lust?
- 3. So, by your own words, you are liar, thief, murder and adulterer at heart.

4. So, if God were to judge you based off the ten commandments would you be innocent or guilty?
5. So, would that mean Heaven or Hell for you after you die? Does that concern you?
6. Did you know that even though we broke God's Law (that is the Ten commandments), God became a Man to pay our fine? Jesus suffered and died on the cross (taking our punishment upon Himself), then He rose from the dead and defeated death. The Bible says, "John 3:16." That means (because your fine was paid 2,000 years ago), God can legally dismiss your case. You can walk out of His courtroom – He can let you live forever, because He's rich in mercy.
7. In order to be saved you must repent (that is, turn from your sin) and trust in Jesus (like you'd trust a parachute). If you've never repented and trusted alone in Jesus for your eternal salvation, please do it today, you may not have tomorrow.

iv. Faith

1. Starter Question
 - a. In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to go to heaven?
2. Transition Statement
 - a. I'd like to share with you how the Bible answers this question, if it is all right. There is a word that can be used to answer this question: FAITH.
3. Content
 - a. F is for forgiveness
 - i. We cannot have eternal life and heaven without God's forgiveness.
 1. Eph. 1:7
 - b. A is for available
 - i. Forgiveness is available. It is available for all-
 1. John 3:16
 - ii. But not automatic
 1. Matt. 7:21
 - c. I is for impossible
 - i. It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven.
 1. God is...
 - a. love
 - i. John 3:16
 - b. just
 - i. James 2:13
 2. Man is sinful
 - a. Rom. 3:23

- ii. Transition: But how can a sinful person enter heaven, where God allows no sin?
 - d. T is for turn
 - i. If you were driving down the road and someone asked you to turn, what would he or she be asking you to do? (change direction)
 - ii. Turn means repent
 - 1. Turn from something- sin and self
 - a. Luke 13:3
 - 2. Turn to someone; trust Christ only
 - a. 1 Cor. 15:3-4
 - b. Romans 10:9
 - e. H is for Heaven
 - i. Heaven is eternal life
 - 1. Here
 - a. John 10:10
 - 2. Here after
 - a. John 14:3
 - 3. How
 - a. How can a person have God's forgiveness, heaven and eternal life, and Jesus as personal Savior and Lord?
 - b. F.A.I.T.H (Forsaking All I Trust Him)
 - i. Rom. 10:9
- v. Wordless Bible Bracelet (time to revive)**
- 1. Starter
 - a. Let me show you something neat. Look at these Multi-colored wristbands...
 - 2. Content
 - a. Yellow represents sin.
 - i. Rom. 3:23
 - ii. Even if you try, even if you're sincere you'll still miss the target.
 - b. Black stands for death
 - i. Rom. 6:23
 - c. Red represents love
 - i. Rom. 5:8
 - d. Blue stands for Faith
 - i. Eph. 2:8-9
 - e. Green stands for Life
 - i. Rom. 10:9-10

Lesson 12 and 13: Other Religions and Worldviews

1. Know: Naturalism
 - a. Naturalism was the number one worldview that you said you encounter when you're trying to share your faith, according to the survey taken at the beginning of the class.
 - b. What is Naturalism
 - i. Only Nature Exists: Nothing exists that cannot be observed, researched and studied.
 - ii. Nature is a materialistic system: everything is explainable in terms of physical/material things.
 - iii. Nature is a self-explanatory system: anything in nature is explainable by something else in nature.
 - iv. Nature is characterized by total uniformity: Nature obeys certain rules.
 - v. Nature is a deterministic system: Determinism is the belief that every event is made physically necessary by one or more antecedent causes.²⁸
 - c. What does the Bible say about Naturalism
 - i. Time had a beginning
 1. 1 Corinthians 2:6-7; “We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.”
 2. 2 Timothy 1:9; “...who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time...”
 - ii. Space and matter had a beginning
 1. Genesis 1:1; “In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth.”
 - iii. God is eternal
 1. Isaiah 26:4; “Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.”
 2. Jeremiah 10:10; “But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King.”
 3. 1 Timothy 1:17; “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen”

²⁸Ronald H. Nash, *Life's Ultimate Questions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 40-41.

- d. The Weaknesses of Naturalism
 - i. Naturalism cannot explain
 - 1. Logic
 - a. The laws of logic cannot be explained by material mechanics. That would be like using a magic eight ball to take a math test or make sense of an argument. Shaking the magic eight ball will reveal an answer, but there is no certainty that its answer will correspond to the question or even be the right answer to the question.
 - 2. Our ability to reason
 - a. “If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motion of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true... and hence I have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms.”²⁹
 - b. Naturalism destroys itself here. Naturalism leads us to not trust our minds; therefore we cannot trust our mind to think correctly concerning naturalism.
 - 3. Freedom
 - a. “Everything involved in what many of us regard as a free choice is nothing but movements of atoms, movements that in turn were caused by earlier jostlings of other sets of atoms, and so on to infinity. If one had the power to trace the movements of the relevant atoms back in finite space and time, one would learn that the movement and placement of atoms at the time of your choice were made necessary by all of the atomic motions that preceded them. Free choice is... an illusion.”³⁰
 - b. Naturalism is forced to determinism, which robs us of any sense for choice. Our choices are just a result of chemical arrangements in our heads.
 - 4. Morality
 - a. If my choices are chemically determined, then how can I be held morally responsible for them?
 - b. Moral laws can’t be deduced from natural laws. Gravity in no way implies that torturing children is wrong.
 - 5. Meaning

²⁹C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (San Francisco: Harper, 2000), 22.

³⁰Nash, *Life's Ultimate Questions*, 51.

- a. Without freedom of choice either for a creator or the creature life, man, and the world are left without inherent or self-determined meaning.
- 6. The Beginning of the universe
 - a. “Modern science has pointed to its own miracle—the origin of the material universe out of nothing. The evidence for the big bang origin of the universe is strong. This evidence includes the second law of thermodynamics, the expanding universe, the radiation echo, and the discovery of the large mass of energy predicted by the big bang theory. If so, then matter is neither eternal nor all there is. And if there is a Creator of the whole universe from nothing, the greatest miracle of all has occurred.”³¹
- 2. Share
 - a. Look at how J. Warner Wallace explains the limits of naturalism in this helpful video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vi-FsaEb3Q>

³¹Norman L. Geisler, *Bakers Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 522.

Lesson 13 and 14: Other Religions and Worldviews

1. Know: Roman Catholicism

a. Justification according to Roman Catholic teaching, “Meritorious Justification” **Grace, faith, and works.**

i. First Actual Grace

1. “This grace is ‘first’ in the sense that it is God who initially reaches out to a person and gives the grace that will enable the individual to seek God, to have faith (acceptance of the major doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church), and to prepare his or her soul for baptism and justification.”³²
2. “It is ‘actual’ in the sense that good acts are the goal. This grace does not have an automatic influence, but rather the person must decide for or against it.”³³
3. “If someone cooperates with this grace, that person will end up performing ‘salutary acts.’ This performing of good works is believed to prepare a person’s soul for baptism and justification.”³⁴
4. “As a person lives from day to day by grace, seeking to do good and avoid evil, this kind of grace becomes depleted and hence must be replenished through regular participation in the sacraments.”³⁵

- a. Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance and Extreme Unction.

ii. Baptism

1. When a person is baptized original sin is removed and sanctifying grace is infused.
2. Upon baptism an individual experiences “initial justification.”

iii. Second justification

1. “Throughout life as the person continues to cooperate with God’s grace and progresses in good works, thereby

³²Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Catholics* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000), 122.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid. 172.

meriting further grace that is necessary for him or her to enter eternal life.”³⁶

iv. Conditional Justification

1. “Catholics believe that committing a mortal sin virtually erases sanctifying/justifying grace from the soul. For a person who commits such a sin, the only remedy is to become ‘rejustified’ through the sacrament of penance.”³⁷

b. Justification according to Christian teaching, “Forensic Justification”

- i. “Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight.”

1. Legal act of God in response to the faith of men. Rom. 4:1-5
2. This justifying faith is in Christ. Gal. 2:16, Rom. 3:24-26,
3. To be justified is to have no condemnation. Rom. 8:1, 33-34, 4:6-8.
4. To be justified is to have imputed righteousness. Rom. 5:19, 2 Cor. 5:21, Phi. 3:9
5. Justification is by grace not merit. Rom. 3:20, Eph. 2:8-9,

2. Share: We share a high view of scripture with Roman Catholics, so this is where our discussion with them should begin.

- a. Here are some sample discussions with Roman Catholics. Each question assumes a response of “yes” or agreement.

- i. “James 2:26 indicates that apart from the spirit, the body is dead, right? By analogy, is it not clear that apart from the evidence of good works, faith is dead? Can you see from this verse that good works are the ‘vital signs’ indicating that faith is alive? So, this verse is talking about the nature of true faith and not the reward of works, right? Would you please read aloud from Romans 3:20 and tell me what you think it means? Can I share one of my favorite passages with you—Ephesians 2:8-9?”³⁸

- ii. “Did you know that Paul in the Book of Romans spoke about the time God justified Abraham once for all, reckoning righteousness to him as a result of his faith in God (Romans 4:3)? (This is when he became ‘saved.’) Did you know that James, by contrast, spoke about something 30 years later—when Abraham was ‘shown to be righteous’ before men by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac (James 2:21)? Put another way, can you see that Paul stressed the *root* of justification (faith in God), while James stressed the *fruit* of justification (works before men)?”³⁹

³⁶Ibid. 124.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid. 147.

³⁹Ibid. 149.

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ABSTRACT

EQUIPPING YOUNG ADULTS AT KNOTT AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015
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The project studies the knowledge and skills necessary for young adults to share the gospel effectively. The project seeks to design a curriculum to equip young adults with the proper knowledge and skills to share the gospel.

Chapter 1 gives the purpose, goals, context, rationale, definitions, and limitations of the project.

Chapter 2 presents the biblical and theological support for equipping of young adults to share the gospel. In this chapter, Ephesians 4:11-13 and Matthew 28:18-20 shown that every Christian has the responsibility to share the gospel and every pastor has the responsibility to equip his church members to do so.

Chapter 3 presents sociological and theoretical support for equipping young adults to share the gospel. In this chapter, both the significance of young adults in past revivals in history and the present importance of young adults in reaching their peers are shown.

Chapter 4 explains how the curriculum was created, taught, and evaluated during the fifteen-week period.

Chapter 5 offers an evaluation of the project's purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. Possible improvements and other reflections on the project are also given in this chapter.

VITA

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