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BEST PRACTICES IN LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL
CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:
A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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I dedicate this humble work to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his continuing provision and mercies toward me, to my wife, Michelle, my best friend and support system, and to our girls, Ana, Daniela, and Gabriela, the Lord's most precious testimony of his sweet and endless love toward us.

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PREFACE

As I reflect on the work and sacrifice that has gone into completing this project, I am immediately reminded of the Word of God. Paul writes the following to the church at Corinth: “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth” (1 Cor 1:26). I cannot avoid feeling kindred to Paul’s audience due to the sense of awe and gladness I have in knowing that the Lord of the universe loved me and died for me. In addition, I feel undeserving and inadequate among my peers. The Lord called me to attend seminary, though my abilities and talents are limited.

Nonetheless, my wife, Michelle, and I wanted to be obedient to God’s calling, and we went to Southern Seminary with much hope not knowing what to expect. What we found was the Lord’s grace once again made evident through the hearts, attitudes, humility, and kindness of the professors who granted me an opportunity to attend such a wonderful place of academic reputation and prestige. In this life, I will probably never fully comprehend the depths and intent behind God’s grace upon someone of my humble stature and heritage. I am overwhelmed by his love and faithfulness toward me.

Over the last three years, I have experienced the highs and lows of academic learning in the theological arena. I have discovered new ways of studying God, his Word, his church, and of facing the challenges of leadership. I have studied and have become more deeply acquainted with Baptist denominational history and the marvelous work that the Southern Baptist Convention continues to do to further the kingdom of Christ. For these reasons, I am proud to be associated with Southern Baptists and to have had the privilege of studying at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The experience of countless hours of studying and writing, still feeling inadequate at the end, have been just as valuable as the times when I felt somewhat competent. Through it all, I always found unconditional love and support from my best friend and wonderful helper, my loving wife, Michelle. Sweetheart, you have supported and cared for me without reservations throughout this entire experience. I love you. Please know that I am aware that this degree is as much yours as it is mine. You have certainly earned it! I also want to acknowledge the cheerful and sweet encouragement from our daughters, Ana, Daniela, and Gabriela. I love you, my girls, with all my heart. You make me very happy and proud to be your father!

This challenging but rewarding journey could not have been completed without the prayers and encouragement from my mother, Ana. I love you very much. To my sister, Francis, I am grateful for your love and kindness to me. To my little brother, Luis Enrique, and big brothers, Erick and Francisco, I love you all. I am eternally grateful to every person in my congregation and at the Irving Independent School District for their prayers on my behalf, continuous help, encouragement, and support. Thank you too, Aplus Edits, for your assistance, ethics, and professionalism concerning this project.

Lastly, I am also indebted to God for the friends and brothers in the faith that I met through this doctoral cohort. I will always remember you and cherish our friendships. I want to say a special thanks to all my professors at SBTS for their patience, flexibility, and ministry while teaching me. I will always treasure this wonderful, gratifying, and life-changing experience. Praise to The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. Amen.

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December 2015

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the church is made clear in Scripture. Christians are commanded to proclaim the gospel to everyone. They are to start this mission at home and then proceed to make disciples of all people who would receive the message of salvation around the world (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-48). Since its inception, the church has had to endure the challenges of cultural trends and moods as well as adapt its methodology and approach in order to fulfill its commission.¹

The endurance of the church is a well-established historical fact. The church is an institution that has been able to withstand the despotic treatment and persecution of a ferocious world power, the relentless attacks from those who abhorred its steadfastness and uncompromising tenets, and even deplorable betrayals of false converts who have sought to destroy it from within.² Nonetheless, in accordance to the promise from the Lord, “the gates of Hades, will not overpower it” (Matt 16:18).³

As the church enters the twenty-first century, it finds itself facing a crucial battle for survival and relevance in the midst of a generation that has become disenchanted and estranged from the religious traditions of their predecessors.⁴ Since

¹Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church: From the 1st to the 20th Century* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910). This work by Schaff is considered one of the finest to date.

²Eusebius, *Eusebius: The Church History*, trans. Paul L. Maier (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007). From book 3 to book 10, Eusebius chronicles the perils and triumphs of the early church while it faced consistent and terrible persecution under the Roman Empire until the reign of Constantine around AD 324.

³All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible.

⁴John S. Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession: 6 Factors That Will Crash the American Church and How to Prepare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 1409-65.

Jesus has affirmed the continuity of the church until his return, informed Christians everywhere know that the institution will not become extinct. However, every responsible and mature believer in a position of leadership should recognize the current state of affairs and be ready to act by demonstrating good stewardship.⁵

Meanwhile, the indifference toward the church demonstrated by the current generation has led many to render faith in God and involvement with his church as non-essential elements in their lives.⁶ In the midst of a postmodern world that embraces relativism and holds no absolutes, the church has found a formidable challenge.⁷

Consequently, this critical situation brings up three essential concerns. First, should the church separate itself totally from the world in order to seek self-preservation? Obviously the answer is no. The church is called to be salt and light to the world (Matt 5:13-16). In this regard, John Stott writes that being salt and light is indeed part of the mission for which the church exists: “Christ sends His people into the earth to be its salt, and sends His people into the world to be its light.”⁸ Yet, in order to accomplish this task, the leadership of the church must be diligent. The leadership must engage wisely in organizational change in order to make the necessary adjustments so that this precious institution can adapt to remain culturally relevant and, with the Lord’s guidance, continue to fulfill its mission successfully.

Second, should the church, as an operational body, rethink its present approach and organize itself with uncompromising determination to reach out to those who are

⁵John Stott, *The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011), 12.

⁶Jim Hinch, “Here Is the Church, Here Is the Steeple, Open the Doors, and Where Are the People?” *American Scholar* 83, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 21–26.

⁷David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 392.

⁸John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 349.

perishing without Christ? The answer is yes. Thom Rainer points out that the United States is becoming less Christian, less evangelized and less churched.⁹ Malphurs confirms Rainer's assertion and adds that churches are not only struggling with low attendance and almost certain extinction, but they are equally stressed with the problem of decline.¹⁰

The third concern is whether the church can accomplish its mission without compromising its doctrinal orthodoxy? Once again, the answer is a resounding yes. This answer, however, is not supposed to sound simplistic or unrealistic to the challenges that changes in the culture bring to the established church. The church can choose to respond to culture change in three different ways: isolation, assimilation, or contextualization. Malphurs explains that isolation completely refutes culture change and seeks to withdraw the church away from any interaction with the culture in which it exists. He claims that assimilation goes to the other extreme by completely embracing cultural norms without distinction or careful analysis to the point of accepting proposals and views that are incompatible with Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy.¹¹

Malphurs proposes a contextualized approach to culture change and relevance. Contextualization "views culture as a means or vehicle that God, man and Satan can use for their own purposes, whether good or evil." He further argues that cultural relevance does not mean an embracing of unchristian methods and practices; rather, it means "understanding the culture well enough to articulate and communicate to the people of that culture in way they hear and, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, understand the

⁹Thom S. Rainer, "Shattering Myths about the Unchurched," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 47.

¹⁰Aubrey Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church: Understanding Models of Ministry for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 25.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 102–4.

gospel.”¹² Consequently, church leaders must be diligent in adopting the necessary changes that the church needs to consider in order to remain relevant and fulfill its mission successfully.

Research Problem

The subject of change in an organization can be one of the most daunting challenges it faces and an organization such as the church is not immune.¹³ The matter of change can be a sensitive issue in an organization such as the church, particularly if the congregation believes that staying the course is acceptable, and the need for change is neither present nor urgent.¹⁴ Given the desire for churches to hold tightly to established traditions, it is not surprising that the prospect of change will create a sense of anxiety.¹⁵

However, the task of the church’s leadership is to help the congregation reassess the approach and methodology with which it carries out its ministry.¹⁶ The leadership must do this in order to respond appropriately to the challenges brought by radical culture changes and a postmodern worldview. Of course, at the heart of such change should be a fervent desire and stewardship on the part of God’s people to fulfill the Great Commission.¹⁷

Rendle argues that taking a posture of non-change is “a formula for disconnecting the congregation from the very culture or community [the church] has been

¹²Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church*, 105.

¹³W. Warner Burke, Dale G. Lake, and Jill Waymire Paine, *Organization Change: A Comprehensive Reader* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 738.

¹⁴W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, Foundations for Organizational Science Series, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 11.

¹⁵Aubrey Malphurs, *The Dynamics of Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 98.

¹⁶Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 357.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 429.

called to address.”¹⁸ Tension is expected to rise between those within the church who find comfort in the status quo and those who desire to bring about organizational change in order to further the effectiveness of the mission. For the regular church member, for example, the conflict is not found in the realization that time and circumstances bring forth the necessity to change, but rather the quantity of change that should occur.¹⁹ The uncertainty of change affects some people’s level of comfort and exacerbates their fears of the unknown. Consequently, the leader must first understand that the fundamental difficulty in dealing with change is emotional and psychological rather than logistical. Churches, like any organization, have a unique internal culture. Consequently, understanding such a culture is essential to leading a congregation through change.²⁰

Many Christians bring to the concept of change an assortment of emotions and experiences that can make the change process extremely difficult.²¹ This situation tends to happen in part because people fear, due perhaps to previous failures, too much change or “being out of control.”²² In the church, countless initiatives in the name of change have produced a number of regrettable mishaps that have deeply hurt the community of believers rather than lead them to trust in its leadership.²³

The pitfalls of the abandonment of biblical orthodoxy and an embrace of doctrinal compromise in a futile attempt to reach the unsaved world have hindered the

¹⁸Gilbert R. Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1998), 276.

¹⁹Ibid., 183-261.

²⁰Alan E. Nelson and Gene Appel, *How to Change Your Church without Killing It* (Nashville: W Publishing, 2000), 71-72.

²¹Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2010), 431.

²²Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation*, 200.

²³Bob Whitesel, *Preparing for Change Reaction: How to Introduce Change to Your Church* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2007), 171.

development of organizational change and adaptation among Christian congregations severely.²⁴ However, the need to adapt successfully to change in order to reach the unsaved world is a relevant issue that cannot be ignored. Clark and Feinberg accurately state, “Those who engage the culture correctly show that the priority of Scripture must be lived in connection with the culture outside the church.”²⁵

Essential to connecting with the culture is the understanding that although church methodologies are in need of change, churches must change them without embracing the values of the secular-postmodern world it is attempting to reach. Therefore, along with implementing organizational change from within, the church must resolve not to abandon biblical and theological orthodoxy; rather, it must allow scriptural and theological thinking to influence the decision-making process in the midst of change.

Current Status of the Research Problem

The need for the right type of organizational change process continues to be an extremely important element of consideration among the leadership of the church. New and credible voices have begun to speak up for a church that is more equipped to respond to the needs, concerns, and current dilemmas facing believers and non-believers alike. Yet, the church’s need for new and innovative ways of adapting to change in the midst of the current societal climate has precipitated at times the adoption of exclusively secular methodologies and strategies without the proper doctrinal examination.

The church is cognizant of the fact that these new approaches, although effective in the secular marketplace, can at times be out of place or inappropriate for the ministry arena. Meanwhile, the church must also acknowledge that though secular

²⁴John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 188.

²⁵David K. Clark and John S. Feinberg, *To Know and Love God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003). In chap. 3, “Theology in the Cultural Context,” the authors make a compelling case for the Christian church to participate in cultural engagement.

strategies should not be too quickly embraced, neither should they be rejected outright without the proper analysis. It is not only essential but also wise to strike the right balance between the acceptance and rejection of secular methodologies and strategies. Some secular proposals are neutral in nature and can be brought into compliance within the context and principles promoted by the church.

Still, the reluctance among some sectors within the church to embrace change to engage the culture is largely predicated on the fear of losing traditions, old relics and artifacts, and orthodoxy. This fear causes many in the church to take an isolationist approach, which is counterproductive to its primary function of spreading the gospel and reaching the lost. Accordingly, the need for organizational change that actively engages and impacts the culture while maintaining biblical and theological orthodoxy is both necessary and long overdue.

The literature base from Christian publishers and leaders is only now beginning to gain strength after sporadic works and a few success stories. The success stories found in the literature belong to individuals who have led their congregations effectively through successful organizational change while pursuing cultural engagement. Only one work addresses specifically the process of leading change in the ministry arena.²⁶ Another work combines some aspects of change theory with leadership strategy.²⁷ Other works have flirted with the idea of change in the title of their works

²⁶Jim Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000). This work by Herrington, Bonem, and Furr is one of the leading works produced by Christian authors that deals with the change management process in systematic and complete fashion. *Leading Congregational Change* is also an essential part of this research work. The authors do an outstanding job studying, analyzing, and vetting both secular and Christian research related to methodologies and strategies surrounding organizational change. The final product is a strong, practical proposal for leading change in the ministry arena that combines scriptural principals and inoculated secular processes and strategies.

²⁷Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation*. The author provides a respectful context for understanding change, especially the experiences and resistance that people feel. Rendle pulls together theory, research, and his work with churches facing change to provide leaders with practical diagnostic models and tools. Yet, the books deals primarily with change management from a spiritual perspective and

while focusing heavily on leadership traits and approaches to strategic planning rather than the dynamics of change leadership and process.

A significant bulk of secular organizational change models have been created in the last twenty years to deal with the societal and cultural changes that have taken place in American society. As mentioned previously, the goal of these change theories and methodologies is to make the necessary adaptations that secular organizations need in order not to lose market share or cease to exist. Selection of the appropriate change model by a particular secular organization can signify continued success and growth while failure to pick the right model can bring extinction. Though the church is not facing extinction, it does face the challenge of irrelevancy unless it succeeds in leading organizational change effectively within its ranks to fulfill its ministry.

As pointed out by the argument, there is a void in the literature. This void encompasses the proper evaluation, process, and methodology of identifying a sound body of best practices for leading organizational change from a biblical and theological perspective as exemplified by the model ministries. This research study endeavors to contribute to the body of literature that focuses on the literature void.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to create a body of work that presents, describes, and advances best practices and methods for leading organizational change in the ministry arena without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. Additionally, this research study seeks to advance the development of an enhanced base knowledge and understanding of how the process of organizational change works, particularly in how it applies to the ministry arena and the local church.

does not provide a full step-by-step sequence for leading an organization in a systematic change process.

Research Question

The current study focuses primarily on the following research question: What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?

Delimitations

This study is delimited to the review and analysis of best practices and methods as exemplified by three model ministry organizations that have engaged in leading organizational change in the ministry arena. These model ministries are evangelical Christian in nature and located in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. They are also members of the Southern Baptist Convention and have been in existence for the last twenty years (1994-2014).

I will also conduct an in-depth study of two additional aspects of leading organizational change in the ministry arena. The first aspect seeks to identify clear markers that demonstrate how these model ministries have engaged the culture around them to fulfill their mission. The second aspect will look for evidence that these model ministries have not forsaken biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Methodology

The methodology for this text-based qualitative study will consist of a qualitative content analysis research approach. I will read and analyze all materials, images, and symbolic matter produced by the three model ministries. I will also interview the leaders of the model ministries on the subject of leading change in the local church. The aim is to examine these model ministries closely to identify markers and strategies that can be adapted for implementation in the church.

Additionally, I will interact with Herrington et. al transformational model as outlined in the book *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the*

Transformational Journey.²⁸ This work treats the topic of leading organizational change from a Christian perspective. In contrast, Kotter’s 8-step model will also be considered.²⁹ Since Kotter’s work is written from a secular perspective, care will be taken to make sure that his methods align with Scripture before they are given approval for the church. All reviewed literature will be consistent with the time frame stipulated for researching the model ministries (1994 to 2014).

At the conclusion of the research study, I will present a summary of viable, successful strategies and best practices for implementing change. All best practices will be scrutinized and evaluated under the lens of Scripture for the purpose of providing the ministry arena with sound and reliable data for leading the church in organizational change. It will also serve as a basis to inform the findings of the research and make the appropriate recommendations for practice.

Definitions

To provide clarity to the research study, the following words and their definitions will be utilized throughout this work:

Church. Allison defines the church as “the people of God, who have been saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and have been incorporated into the body through baptism and sealing by the Holy Spirit.”³⁰ Grudem defines the church as an

²⁸Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*.

²⁹John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012).

³⁰Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), loc. 607, Kindle.

assembly of “those who are truly saved.”³¹ He further explains that this term applies to all those for whom Christ died and redeemed through his death from the beginning of time.³²

Frame agrees with Grudem’s assessment by stating that the church is the “people of God in all ages.” He also adds that the church is both visible and invisible. He describes the church as visible in the sense that society can observe it and invisible in the sense that only God can assess the hearts of those within it and who actually belong to him.³³

The church is an organizational unit with a unique blend of cultures, which plays a significant role in the way the church functions. Consequently, this study will focus on the biblical aspects of change as it pertains to the church as a God-ordained institution, but it will also focus on the organizational unit known as the local church and its leadership. The reason for such an approach is to engage all dynamics of organizational change fully within the church as a spiritual institution as well as an organization.

Christian. In this study, the term “Christian” represents a person who has made a public confession and commitment to Jesus Christ. In other words, he or she “believes and follows the teachings of Jesus Christ.”³⁴ The term “Christian” has been used and applied to different groups, including some who do not believe in Christ as the one and only source of salvation. The aim of this study will be to apply the term to those who

³¹Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 854.

³²Ibid.

³³John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 1019-20.

³⁴Daniel G. Reid et al., eds., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), s.v. “Christian,” by H. F. Vos.

proclaim “Christ as their one and only Savior and belong to a recognized mainstream evangelical denomination.”³⁵

Biblical orthodoxy. Although it could be assumed that this term speaks for itself, the radical shift away from biblical orthodoxy in some sectors of evangelicalism requires clarification. The *Holman Bible Handbook* defines “biblical orthodoxy” as taking “the historical position that the Bible is an authentic disclosure of the nature and will of God. In context, those who hold to a high view biblical orthodoxy, seek to make the unchanged content of the biblical gospel meaningful to people in their various cultures and existential situations.”³⁶

The proper level of engagement with the culture while preserving biblical orthodoxy is precisely part of what this research will determine. It will also seek to establish whether the church can make the necessary adjustments to present accurately and uncompromisingly the gospel of salvation to the unsaved in this current culture.

Culture. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines culture as “a refined understanding or appreciation of the arts and other manifestation of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively; as well as the customs, ideas, and social behaviors of a particular people or group.”³⁷

Geertz defines culture as that which “denotes a historical transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conception expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about attitudes toward life.”³⁸ Finally, Shein’s definition of culture as it pertains to an

³⁵Reid et al., *Dictionary of Christianity*, “Christian.”

³⁶David S. Dockery, ed., *Holman Bible Handbook* (Nashville: Holman, 1992), 890.

³⁷*Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2004), s.v. “culture.”

³⁸Cited in D. A Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 2.

organization is that of a “collective or shared learning of that unit as it develops its capacity to survive in its external environments and to manage its own internal affairs.”³⁹

Postmodernism. Although the definition of this philosophical worldview is problematic due in part to the many connotations that have been attached to it, its primary goal is to react against modernism and reason. Modernism is often characterized by a general repudiation of tradition and authority while seeking absolute truth.⁴⁰ While modernism, moreover, sought to find ultimate truth in reason alone, postmodernism gives equal standing to all arguments. Postmodernism stands out for its rejection of established norms. Postmodernism does not represent a unified worldview. Instead, it advocates the continuous promotion of old and new philosophies to the market of ideas without holding firm to an absolute.⁴¹

The refusal of postmodernism to hold to any absolutes causes its proposals to contradict each other at times.⁴² In addition, Elwell notes that postmodernism is a philosophical movement that “places great emphasis on the individual, assuming that human beings both are and ought to be free to define themselves.”⁴³ Consequently, it is the postmodernist who determines the concept of truth and rationality, not God.⁴⁴

³⁹Christiane Demers, *Organizational Change Theories: A Synthesis* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2007), 1140-41.

⁴⁰Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), s.v. "Postmodernism," by B. E. Benson.

⁴¹George R Knight, *Philosophy & Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006), 89-91.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Benson, "Postmodernism."

⁴⁴Ibid.

Success. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines success as “the accomplishment of an aim or purpose; the attainment of fame, wealth, or social status.”⁴⁵ Although the first part of the definition does not create a concern, the association of the term with fame, wealth, and social status does create a problem. In this study, success will be measured by the level of accomplishment on the part of the church to adapt to change while also engaging the present culture. Both success and engagement will be determined by how closely one aligns with Scripture while leading the local church through the process of change.

In order to reach the culture, any successful organizational change within the ministry arena will need to engage the culture rather than merely tolerate it. Since the Bible clearly stipulates that believers must love God and their neighbors, the option not to engage the culture is non-existent.⁴⁶ The New Testament explicitly and implicitly commands in Matthew 28, Mark 16, and Luke 24, that the preaching of gospel and the making of new disciples will in fact require believers to go beyond their communities and borders to engage the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Leading change. This term is used interchangeably with the concepts of change management and leadership management in the secular environment. One of the best descriptions of leading change is provided by Moran and Brightman: “The process of continually renewing an organization’s direction, structure and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers.”⁴⁷ Although the church is not a business, it does contain business-like attributes. These attributes provide a conduit for

⁴⁵*Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2004), s.v. "success."

⁴⁶R. Albert Mohler, *Culture Shift: The Battle for the Moral Heart of America* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2011), 2.

⁴⁷John W. Moran and Baird K. Brightman, “Leading Organizational Change,” *Journal of Workplace Learning: Employee Counseling Today* 12, no. 2 (2000): 66-74.

adapting organizational change strategies that can help improve and enhance its primary objective of evangelizing the world and making disciples.⁴⁸

Burke argues that organizations should be treated and considered as living organisms in the process of leading change.⁴⁹ The church as an organizational unit is not exempt. MacArthur makes the same correlation of the church as a living organism when he cites Colossians 1:18. This passage denotes the church as a living body, and “Christ as the head of the body.”⁵⁰ O’Brien also notes that when Paul refers to the body, he is indeed addressing the individual living members of the congregation “who have mutual duties and common interests which must not be neglected.”⁵¹ In this light, it is reasonable to think of the church as a living organism in reference to organizational change. The term “leading change” will thus be used to identify and ascribe the efforts of church leadership in guiding the church to adapt its approach and methodology in order to engage the society around it.

While the postmodern worldview presents truth as relative, the church holds that truth is absolute as proclaimed by the Word of God. The church also believes that it is precisely through the Word of God that believers are supposed to judge, evaluate, approve, or disapprove any and all epistemological models and proposals.⁵²

⁴⁸Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 26.

⁴⁹Burke, *Organization Change*, 161-62.

⁵⁰John MacArthur, *Colossians and Philemon, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 48.

⁵¹Peter Thomas O’Brien, *Colossians and Philemon, Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 44 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 49.

⁵²David Powlison, “The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies,” in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology & Theology*, ed. Mark R. McMinn (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 32-36.

Consequently, all models for leading organizational change in the church, whether religious or secular, must be properly evaluated.

Christian psychologist David Powlison proposes that all models and arguments must first be compared and evaluated against the Word of God. He adds, moreover, that it is the obligation of believers to expose, debunk, and reinterpret alternative models whether secular or religious. Believers must reject faulty models while also learning anything valuable from them. In Powlison's words, Christians must be "stimulated and informed by those with whom [they] disagree and whom [they] aim to convert."⁵³

Procedural Overview

The methodology of research for this study is text-based in nature, though some aspects of it will also rely on a qualitative content analysis that will yield essential principles and best practices for leading churches through organizational change. The scope of the study requires a comprehensive acquaintance with the precedent literature, particularly Kotter's secular model and Herrington et. al's religious model for leading organizational change across the continuum of an organization.

Change affects organizations irrespective of their nature. Therefore, I expect to develop a high level of expertise on the phenomenon of change and how it affects individuals and organizations alike. I will also develop an in-depth understanding of leadership, management techniques, culture, organizational behavior, and strategic planning. Knowledge in these areas will facilitate the identification, analysis, and evaluation of markers related to leading successful organizational change, which will culminate with a final product of best practices for leading change in the ministry arena.

⁵³Powlison, "The Care of Souls," 34. Secular models that stand the test of Scripture should not be discarded merely because they have originated from a non-Christian mind. If indeed, as Christians believe, all truth is God's truth and, as man has been created in the image of God, it is possible for non-Christians to arrive at truth due to God's providence and common grace.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF PRECEDENT LITERATURE

The uniqueness of the church as an organization is indisputable. Although the church as an institution shares many characteristics with other organizations, the church's unique philosophy, history, and body of values sets it completely apart. Consequently, leading organizational change in the church can be a challenging process. Nonetheless, if implemented effectively, change within the church can be a tremendous instrument for the effective spread of the gospel.

The church faces the serious challenge in the present cultural climate. The culture has become entangled with postmodern disdain toward any absolute truth and has adopted an "anything goes" mentality. Stackhouse confirms such a trend, stating, "Postmodernity concurs. No human being knows anything for certain."¹ Postmodernism's denial of absolute truth stands in clear opposition to the principles taught in Scripture.

The Word of God steadfastly affirms that it contains perfect and absolute principles and that its truth and counsel are applicable for all that mankind needs in regard to life and godliness (Ps 119; John 17:17; 2 Pet 1:3). Consequently, the successful implementation of cultural engagement driven by internal organizational change in the church can assist greatly in helping it accomplish Christ's command to reach the unsaved with the message of salvation, baptism, and instruction (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:44-48).

¹John Stackhouse, *Humble Apologetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 111.

Literature Review

The task of leading organizational change can be one of the most daunting challenges a leader faces.² Furthermore, in order for systematic and meaningful change to occur, there must be sound and cohesive leadership. Leading change in an organization such as the church can be an overwhelming task. Unlike business organizations and comparable institutions, the church is a unique entity in what is known as the social sector of society.

The Church as an Organizational System

Mark Dever asserts that Christians proclaiming the gospel is what makes the message audible to people, but he also argues that it is “Christians living together in local congregations [that] make the gospel visible.”³ The members of the church are part of an organizational system. Systems theory argues that “what takes place outside the system is likely to affect what takes place inside it.”⁴ The church cannot be passive about the challenges and realities that currently affect the society around it. Rather than embracing the culture, the church has always been counter-cultural, impacting the culture by shaping it through the gospel.

A proper understanding of the concept of systems is relevant for conceptualizing the church as a network of interrelated components. These components interact within the church’s internal apparatus as well as with the environment around it.⁵ Graves argues that a proper understanding of organizational system theory can help

²W. Warner Burke, Dale G. Lake, and Jill Waymire Paine, *Organization Change: A Comprehensive Reader* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 738.

³Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 96, Kindle.

⁴Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Application* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 719.

⁵Allen Graves, “Mr. Church Administration: Criteria for Church Administration in the Future,” *Review and Expositor* 75, no. 3 (1978): 393.

church leadership strike the right balance between maintenance goals and adaptation goals that will contribute to the fulfillment of its mission.⁶ The church's failure to achieve the right balance between maintaining and adapting strategies can potentially precipitate distress within its organizational system.

System theorists use the term "homeostasis" to define the tendency among people in an organization to keep doing things the same way.⁷ Cook argues that it was once assumed that once a system had reached maturity and could continue to exist perpetually, the only necessary aim of the leadership was to stabilize and maintain the system.⁸ Cook refutes the assumption that homeostasis should be the ultimate goal of an organization, and his research is an example of how dramatically this particular understanding of systems has changed.⁹ Still, awareness of homeostasis can be helpful in assisting an organization to establish norms and behaviors in relationships among its members.¹⁰

However, the level of comfort that homeostasis brings can also present a false sense of security by allowing complacency to set in. Rainer found in his research that lifeless churches lived for a substantial period with the past as their hero.¹¹ Being able to recognize and embrace the end of things as well as adapt to change is imperative for

⁶Graves, "Mr. Church Administration," 393.

⁷George Parsons and Speed Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation As a System: The Manual* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1993), 154, Kindle.

⁸William J. Cook, *Strategics: The Art and Science of Holistic Strategy* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 2000), 80.

⁹Ibid., 81.

¹⁰Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation As a System*, 182.

¹¹Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2014), 161-62, Kindle.

people as well as for organizations.¹² Parson and Leas attest to a similar principle regarding congregations' past achievements. They claim that "the seeds of decline are found in our successes . . . [and that] many congregations are stuck in their success."¹³

The irony that accompanies an organization's success is that the peak of its achievement is also an appropriate time to begin to show concern and to plan for significant upcoming change.¹⁴ Parson and Leas also argue that in a constantly changing environment the church will be able to accomplish much by developing the ability to adapt and renew itself. The church, like any organization, can do this by connecting its resources and unique capabilities to the present needs of those it seeks to reach.¹⁵ If the modern church hopes to remain relevant within the present culture, it must refuse to make a hero of its past and learn how to engage those beyond its walls successfully. The church does not have to compromise because it has the most precious and unique commodity: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The first task of the church as an organization should be to define itself and its reason for being. Dever defines the church as "the body of people called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify Him together by serving Him in His world."¹⁶ DeYoung and Gilbert argue that the unique task and central calling of the church is to go "into the world to witness about Jesus by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples of all

¹²Henry Cloud, *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2010), 7. Cloud argues that without the ability to end things, people remain stuck, never accomplishing their full potential. He further explains that endings in organizations are absolute necessities for a turnaround or for growth to occur.

¹³Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation As a System*, 86.

¹⁴Burke, Lake, and Paine, *Organization Change*, 11.

¹⁵Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System*, 86.

¹⁶Mark Dever, "The Church," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, rev. ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014), 2370–97.

nations.”¹⁷ John Stott affirms DeYoung and Gilbert’s position, writing that the term “Mission concerns [God’s] redeemed people and what he sends them into the world to do.”¹⁸ This mission is the proclamation of the gospel to self, the home, our neighbors, and, ultimately, those in the larger community and world. Barna argues that the need for organizational change in the church is beyond debate. He insists that Christians must recapture the truths of Scripture in order to determine a course for the church as “God’s kingdom on earth.”¹⁹

Organizational Structure

Allison states that the church’s organizational structure has Jesus Christ as its supreme head. He further adds that Christ is also the foundation of the church (Eph 1:19-23; Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:11).²⁰ Dever agrees with Allison’s assertion by calling Christ both universally and locally “the head and chief shepherd of the church.”²¹ Colossians 1:18 describes Christ as “the head of the body, the church” and there is no dispute regarding his position among those in the universal church. Lincoln agrees that God subjected all things under Christ’s authority. Such an appointment also includes the church (Eph 1:22).²²

¹⁷Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 27.

¹⁸John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 198, Kindle.

¹⁹George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church: A Blueprint of Survival* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 73, Kindle.

²⁰Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of The Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), loc. 6765, Kindle.

²¹Dever, "The Church," loc. 1260, Kindle.

²²Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 68.

Historically, however, differences have existed among the three major traditions under which the church has been governed. These traditions are the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist models of church government.²³ The following review of the literature will not entertain the details or particulars surrounding these types of church government; rather, it will focus on the general aspects of the organizational structure of the universal church.

Organizational Culture

The culture of an organization refers to “the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories and definitions that characterize a [particular] organization and its members.”²⁴ Geertz’s definition of culture seems rather appropriate in the context of discussing the church: “The culture concept denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, as systems of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.”²⁵

As alluded to by Cameron and Quinn, the people inside a church organization are also part of its culture.²⁶ Robinson defines church members as “a gathering of those who are in the process of being changed, of those who are being saved and made new, and who invite others to join them in this adventure called life.”²⁷ The way church

²³Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, loc. 6801, Kindle.

²⁴Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), loc. 492, Kindle.

²⁵Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic, 1973), 89.

²⁶Cameron and Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, 492. Although the authors’ work is secular, their argument about people within organizations being part of the culture of the organization does not change because of the nature of the church. It has been established that the church is indeed an organization of “believers” that shares several similar characteristics to secular organizations.

²⁷Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

members interact with one another and how they live out their Christian lives is also part of the culture of the individual organization.

Organizational Performance

The successful organizational performance of the church is determined by its ability to fulfill the Great Commission. A high performing church is one that fully embraces its mission to make disciples and engages the unsaved world around it. This mission is what DeYoung and Gilbert called the church's "unique and central calling."²⁸ The church's optimal functionality is portrayed consistently in the Scriptures as a metaphor of a full functioning body. Garland writes that the church's body metaphor emphasizes the interconnectedness, diversity, and relationships of its members. It also calls attention to the church's inability to perform optimally if its members refuse to live up to their unique and God-given capacities and roles.²⁹

Managing Organizational Change in the Church

Because of its nature and mission, the management of an organization such as the church requires a unique kind of administrative leadership.³⁰ The leadership of the church comes to men through a God-given calling, which is also later confirmed by the church assembly.³¹ Prime and Begg describe such a calling as "the unmistakable

2003), loc. 526, Kindle.

²⁸DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?* 26.

²⁹David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 589.

³⁰Allen Graves, "Factors in Church Staff Effectiveness in Today's Churches," *Review and Expositor* 78, no. 1 (Winter 1981): 26–43.

³¹Roy A. Andrews, "10 Commandments of Pastoral Leadership: A Theological Study of Pastoral Leadership in the Brethren Church," *Ashland Theological Journal* 37 (2005): 75–87.

conviction an individual possesses that God wants him to do a specific task.”³² It is God who calls those he chooses to live a life of service in the leadership of his church. It is also Christ who grants leadership authority to those called into service.³³ Consequently, the procedures and methods used in managing the matters of the church must always be led by Christian theological principles.³⁴

In accordance with 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, a list of prerequisites are given, detailing what that the Lord expects from those who aspire to leadership offices in his church. Some of these scriptural requirements are being “the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, noncontentious, free from the love of money as well as able to manage his own household” (1 Tim 3:2b-4a). Nonetheless, MacArthur argues that management of the Lord’s church goes beyond moral characteristics; he explains that the church’s leaders must also be skilled both as teachers and managers.³⁵ Finzel supports MacArthur’s argument: “Leaders of Christian enterprises tend to be spiritual qualified but often organizational illiterate. The problem is leadership requires both the head and the heart.”³⁶

Estep also clearly reinforces MacArthur’s and Finzel’s arguments by adding that effective management of the ministry is necessary in order to serve God’s people.³⁷

³²Derek J. Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody, 2013), 18.

³³Paul Benware, “Leadership Authority in the Church,” *Conservative Theological Journal* 3, no. 8 (April 1999): 5-24.

³⁴Graves, “Factors in Church Staff Effectiveness in Today’s Churches.”

³⁵John MacArthur, *The Master’s Plan for the Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 188.

³⁶Hans Finzel, *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2007), loc. 129, Kindle.

³⁷Michael J. Anthony and James Riley Estep, *Management Essentials for Christian Ministries* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 10.

In affirming his point, Estep further argues that most church leaders are “removed from office over matters of mismanagement rather than doctrine.”³⁸ He adds that the environment for effective management is already present because the body of Christ is a corporate entity and, in order to accomplish its mission, it necessitates a coordinated and effective management effort.³⁹

Biblical and Theological Principles

It is always critical to examine the biblical and theological principles related to leadership and change before conducting a review of the academic literature on these subjects. Any theological proposal for change in the church must proceed from a solid scriptural framework. This particular section will emphasize the main concepts of scriptural support for leadership and the theological premise for change.

The review of scriptural principles for leadership will provide a foundation for understanding the role of leadership as an agency of change in the church for the purpose of evangelistically engaging the culture. The review of the theological premise for change will support the framework for understanding the phenomenon of change and the role it plays in the lives of people inside and outside the church. Furthermore, the proper understanding of the terms “change” and “leadership” will provide clarity for the exercising of a full evangelistic engagement with the current culture without risking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Piper asserts that prior to sending his disciples out to make other disciples, Jesus proclaimed that all authority in heaven and the earth had been given to him (Matt 28:18).⁴⁰ Consequently, Piper argues that in today’s setting, Jesus’ authority and gospel

³⁸Anthony and Estep, *Management Essentials*, 10.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰John Piper, *What Jesus Demands from the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), loc. 5656, Kindle.

are the essentials for asking people to forsake their current master and follow him.⁴¹ The message of Christ must be the leading biblical and theological proposal in promoting change for a person and, subsequently, the church. Stott asserts clearly that Christians are aware, because of the Scriptures and their own testimony, that human fulfillment is impossible to achieve outside God's authority. They are also aware that the mind is only truly free under the authority of righteousness that only God can provide.⁴²

According to Piper, internal change is at the heart of the gospel message, and repentance represents a change in mindset from rebellion to acceptance and obedience to God.⁴³ Therefore, the church's struggle with relevance and making new disciples amid profound cultural challenges should not neglect the importance of maintaining biblical and theological orthodoxy in the attempt to engage the culture.

Schaeffer contends that the Christian life must be connected to three concentric circles that must be always kept in balance.⁴⁴ He asserts that the outer circle must contain "the correct theological position, true biblical orthodoxy and hold to the purity of the visible church. The second circle should contain intellectual training and comprehension of the current generation, and the last circle must contain a humble heart along with love and devotion to God."⁴⁵ Mohler states that leaders in the Christian church must be passionately driven by the right beliefs in order to provide the right type of leadership.⁴⁶

⁴¹Piper, *What Jesus Demands*, loc. 565, Kindle.

⁴²John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 56.

⁴³Piper, *What Jesus Demands from the World*, loc. 562, Kindle.

⁴⁴Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1985), 3:51.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶R. Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), loc. 224, Kindle.

In his book *Humble Orthodoxy*, Harris writes, “Orthodox truths are the plumb line that shows us how to think straight in a crooked world.”⁴⁷

People Management of Change

The certainty of change is a given in the life of every person. Becoming a Christian brings a fundamental change that transforms people from enemies of God into his children (Rom 5:10; John 1:12). Lane and Tripp affirm that “change is the norm for everyone, and God is always at work to complete this process in us.”⁴⁸ Likewise, physiologically, human beings go through stages in life that are part of the growing and aging process. Estep and Kim claim that these stages are part of the human development process and also part of God’s creation.⁴⁹

Nonetheless, change goes beyond the occurrences expressed previously. Change is a fearful prospect for most people. The reluctance to change usually occurs because a person’s culture as well as organizations are filled with traditions, feelings, and emotions that are very powerful artifacts. Artifacts also include the language of the people and organizations as well as anything that can be observed, heard, and felt within them.⁵⁰

However, unlike business organizations that stand to lose market share and profits, the church stands to lose souls and new disciples for Christ. The dark undertone of church members holding on to their old artifacts is that this could indicate that they

⁴⁷Joshua Harris, *Humble Orthodoxy: Holding the Truth High without Putting People Down* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2013), 2.

⁴⁸Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp, *How People Change* (Greensboro, SC: New Growth, 2008), 7.

⁴⁹James Riley Estep and Jonathan H. Kim, *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 10.

⁵⁰Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23.

love their traditions more than the lost.⁵¹ Kotter claims that the tradition within a culture “dies a hard death” when dealing with change.⁵²

The Church’s Management of Change

The mission of the church is “to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches, that they may worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father.”⁵³ The objective is to accomplish this goal by eliminating or limiting system encumbrance in the organizational structure of the church. In order to be effective in achieving the desired goal, the leadership must become ingrained with the objective of the church’s mission.

Dupree argues, “Efficiency is doing things right while effectiveness is doing the right thing.”⁵⁴ It is, therefore, imperative that church leaders understand the difference and similarities between efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is to be measured in regard to the level of involvement in consistently evangelizing those outside the church while effectiveness should be measured in the sustainability of making new disciples.

Senge makes the point that would-be change leaders limit themselves when they do not go deep enough into what their organizations represent. He argues that such leaders harm the organization by not enforcing what it stands for and instead try to promote their ideas for what they wish the organization was like.⁵⁵ This statement is not

⁵¹Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can, Too* (Nashville: B&H, 2007), 61.

⁵²John P. Kotter, *Our Iceberg Is Melting* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2005), loc. 678, Kindle.

⁵³DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?* 62.

⁵⁴Max Depree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Crown Business, 2004), 18.

⁵⁵Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 2006), loc. 5131, Kindle. Of course, in the case of the church, its mission is clear—to evangelize the world around it.

intended to mean, as Kotter suggests, that the leadership should not cast “a vision that helps direct, align, and inspires action.”⁵⁶ However, the mission of the church is something that must be clear in the eyes and ears of those who profess Christ as Savior.

The casting of an attainable vision and the celebration of small victories along the way can be an extremely useful tool in uplifting stakeholders’ spirits and hopes for the future. Momentum is attained from having a clear vision and a sound strategy to achieve objectives.⁵⁷ The church has a divine calling and empowerment from the Holy Spirit to make great strides and achieve tremendous evangelistic success in the midst of a challenging and postmodern culture. The church’s leadership must understand that organizations that strive to become the best have to be successful in developing a “less bureaucratic and more entrepreneurial environment.”⁵⁸

Adapting to new challenges and endeavors are key perspectives in leading organizational change. Thus, Demers argues, “Environments can be adapted to organizations, just as organizations adapt to the environment.”⁵⁹ The church’s process of adapting is not one that embraces the philosophy and attitudes of the target culture. The suggested type of adaptation is one that allows the church to take to heart the apostle Paul’s approach found in 1 Corinthians 9:22-23. In this passage, the apostle proclaims, “I become all things to all men so that I may by all means save some. I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.”

Robinson appropriately states, “Adaptive challenges are, at their core, spiritual work. These challenges ask of the individual and group of believers the right learning,

⁵⁶John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2012), 8.

⁵⁷Depree, *Leadership Is an Art*, 18.

⁵⁸John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: Free, 1990), loc. 911, Kindle.

⁵⁹Christiane Demers, *Organizational Change Theories: A Synthesis* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2007), loc. 239, Kindle.

authenticity, risk, and change. Adaptive challenges require the kind of spiritual practices and discipline that our different traditions offer and teach.”⁶⁰ Consequently, the establishment of a solid vision can help develop a picture of the destination that an organization is striving to reach.

Kotter believes that vision plays a key role in leading change by helping “direct, align, and inspire actions on the part of large numbers of people.”⁶¹ Having a missionary vision means that the Christians in the church know and understand their communities and “will minister in contextually appropriate ways to reach [people] with the gospel.”⁶² Most of the failure of current ministries and churches across this nation can be easily attributed to a lack of focus and vision regarding the Great Commission. Rainer and Rainer insist that “churches should be about the business of reaching out to the fallen world.”⁶³ They further argue that Christians inside and outside the church should live up to their calling as an institution and that their organizational vision statements should become their personal reality.⁶⁴

The Role of Leadership in Organizational Change

Hauser and Shawchuck provide a simple and common definition of leadership as “the process of influencing others toward a common purpose.”⁶⁵ Barna agrees with this

⁶⁰Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture*, loc. 278, Kindle.

⁶¹Kotter, *Leading Change*, 8.

⁶²Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 34.

⁶³Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer, *Essential Church: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville: B & H, 2008), 83.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2010), loc. 441, Kindle.

definition but adds that if leaders want to lead effectively they “must be well informed and ready to act on the possibilities that emerge.”⁶⁶ The essential goal of those church leaders promoting change is to rearrange ministry priorities with God’s purposes as mandated by the Scriptures. Such arrangements must be guided by the appropriate measurement tools to evaluate success. Grenny et al. suggests that results surrounding plans, initiatives, and strategies will remain mere ideas if a system for measuring the effectiveness of change is not developed.⁶⁷ Although this sounds simple, the prospect of damaged relationships and hurt feelings among church members affected by change can quickly become evident.⁶⁸

The prospect of resistance and negative attitudes toward change inside a congregation is a certainty. Members who are unaccustomed to innovative ways and mediums to do church and outreach will be tested beyond the scope of their comfort zones. The old theme of “we have always done it this way” will certainly rush to the surface. Robinson proposes that the role of the leader in this type of situation is to “challenge the accustomed roles and expectations and to dislodge people from their well-known roles.”⁶⁹

It is recommended that the church’s leadership develop systems to measure frequently the level of change in the targeted areas.⁷⁰ Most churches possess copious programs and resources. However, programs by themselves do not bring successful change. This disconnect occurs when the leadership and members of the church start

⁶⁶George Barna, *Futurecast: What Today’s Trends Mean for Tomorrow’s World* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2012), 118.

⁶⁷Joseph Grenny et al., *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013), 21.

⁶⁸Heuser and Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation*, 441.

⁶⁹Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture*, 306.

⁷⁰Grenny et al., *Influencer*, 21.

trying to give only the right answer to challenges rather than focusing on coming up with good questions on how to resolve them.⁷¹

Barna proposes that the church of tomorrow has to be a community of faithful believers driven by a fervent desire to facilitate a ministry that is highly personalized for those it is trying to reach.⁷² Collins wisely asserts that many organizations that are enjoying success many times fail to realize that they are already in decline. He vividly expresses this concept by describing such organizations as being “sick on the inside.”⁷³

Senge suggests that maintaining morale and productivity in a mature organization requires a different set of norms.⁷⁴ Still, in order to change the way people see and do things, they must be challenged to define themselves. Members’ discovery of their identity within the church organization will be an essential element to establishing their future within it.⁷⁵ In the church, this is the equivalent of members finding their spiritual gifts and putting them into action for the glory of God and his church. Research indicates that churches that demonstrate growth potential and maturity are those whose members have a higher spiritual quality.⁷⁶

Kotter and Cohen’s research confirms this argument and states that “behavior change happens . . . mostly by speaking to people’s feelings.”⁷⁷ Burke’s work supports

⁷¹Jim Collins, *How the Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), loc. 81, Kindle.

⁷²Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church*, loc. 909, Kindle.

⁷³Collins, *How the Mighty Fall*, loc. 111, Kindle.

⁷⁴Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 100.

⁷⁵Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2002), 27.

⁷⁶Ken L. Davis, “An Evaluation of the House Church Model for North American Church Planting Part 2,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 90-122.

⁷⁷John P. Kotter and Dan Cohen, *The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2012), loc. 140, Kindle. The authors also

Kotter and Cohen’s assertion. He writes that the change effort “starts with behavior that will lead to the desired change in attitudes.”⁷⁸ Another key element in changing perception and morale will be creating short term success in order to show positive movement as well as to demonstrate the interdependence among the ranks.⁷⁹ Leaders should recognize that it may take some time to measure the impact of the message with the rest of the organization, especially at the campus level. But the initial impressions should always be positive.

Philosophy of Leadership

In his book *Great Leader, Great Teacher*, Bredfeldt articulates a remarkable definition of biblical leadership: “At the most basic core of biblical leadership is one indispensable, unchanging function, of the Christian leader—the task of teaching God’s Word with clarity, in its original context, in a way that is relevant to those whose hearts are open to hear.”⁸⁰ Therefore, leadership in the church should not be identified readily with the brand of leadership in secular circles. Still, it is clear that the secular marketplace of ideas on leadership has completely saturated our society. This saturation is evident by the overwhelming number of texts, seminars, and workshops on the latest ideas and methodologies for leading people and organizations.⁸¹ Nonetheless, the key question for the church is whether secular theories, principles, and ideas are able to be implemented in a church ministry setting.

argue that in highly successful change efforts the change agent helps others to see problems or solutions in ways that influence their emotions and not only their thinking.

⁷⁸Burke, Lake, and Paine, *Organization Change*, 24.

⁷⁹Kotter and Cohen, *The Heart of Change*, loc. 2074, Kindle.

⁸⁰Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Great Leader Great Teacher: Recovering the Biblical Vision for Leadership* (Chicago: Moody, 2006), 14.

⁸¹Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*, rev. and exp. ed. (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 9.

Bredfeldt claims that an essential role of a biblical leader is that of a Bible teacher and that God's people are "a distinctive community . . . where the principles of business leadership may not always apply."⁸² Blackaby and Blackaby also claim that the "trend among many Christian leaders has been for an almost indiscriminate and uncritical acceptance of secular [philosophy and] theory without measuring it against the timeless precepts of Scripture."⁸³ The Blackabys also argue that many authors, whether secular or professed Christians, have started to use Christian principles in their work because the appeal is "good for business."⁸⁴

Since all truth is God's, any truths expounded by secular writers are not beyond God's purview.⁸⁵ The appeal to leadership principles founded on biblical values should not surprise those knowledgeable of what God has revealed about the particular traits of leadership and the certainty of change. Still, the theory of leadership presented here, although not exclusively, mainly addresses those aspects of leadership for leading change in the church from a Christian perspective. Nonetheless, the knowledge base will also be informed by proposals and principles of secular writers when the basis of God's

⁸²Bredfeldt, *Great Leader Great Teacher*, 14.

⁸³Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, 10.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 11.

⁸⁵David K. Clark and John S. Feinberg, *To Know and Love God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 283. It is possible to obtain truth from models that are not inherently Christian by using the Word of God as the litmus test. Clark and Feinberg make an excellent and clear presentation of the pros and cons of the premise that "all truth is God's truth." They rightly claim that this principle is usually brought up by those who seek to integrate faith and reason. However, they believe that the statement is, nonetheless, valid and true to some extent. They argue that Christian thinking takes precedence over Christian theology and that everything that is true and good belongs under God's purview. Consequently, they claim that when human thinking is right it produces results that can be in agreement with a Christian worldview. They also claim that there are cases where Christians can benefit from disciplines and good practices that are not necessarily inherently Christian. Yet, Clark and Feinberg also caution against adapting academic proposals and models that go against Christian perspectives and thought just to gain social acceptance at the expense of the authoritative claims of the Word of God.

truth applies. Gaebelein asserts this premise when he writes that educated Christians have “the holy obligation to stand for and honor the truth wherever it is found.”⁸⁶

Effective Change Leadership Practices

Leading change in an organization such as the church can be a dangerous proposal for those in charge. Heuser and Shawchuck clearly indicate that “change-agent leaders, who are willing to take risks, learn how to disturb the system without destroying people in the process.”⁸⁷ Bredfeldt affirms, “Leadership is dynamic and requires openness and flexibility on the part of those who must exercise leadership.”⁸⁸ Thus, unless the church changes its approach to interacting with the current cultural scene, the prospect for its fulfillment of Christ’s mandate in Matthew 28 does not look promising.

Several theories and methodologies for implementing organizational change have been proposed. However, this research will present a blend of two specific approaches that have been thoroughly examined in an attempt to define a set of strategies and best practices for leading organizational change in the church. It is important to note that this research seeks to determine an agreeable course for engaging the culture outside the church albeit without abandoning or compromising biblical and theological orthodoxy.

The first model is the well-known 8-Stage Process approach for leading organizational change as proposed by Harvard Research Professor John Kotter.⁸⁹ Kotter’s

⁸⁶Frank E. Gaebelein, “The Pattern of God’s Truth,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 111, no. 441 (January 1954): 73.

⁸⁷Heuser and Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation*, 412.

⁸⁸Bredfeldt, *Great Leader Great Teacher*, 14.

⁸⁹Kotter is the Emeritus professor of Leadership at the Harvard Business School. He is also a *New York Times* best-selling author and the chairman of Kotter International, a management consulting firm. Kotter’s best-selling book *Leading Change* is considered a classic in the business literature world and one the foundational pieces for this research effort.

8-stage process for leading change has been widely and successfully used by both secular and social sector organizations at the national and international level. It is a proven methodology that is more than efficient for secular organizations, but one that church organizations would need to modify in order to adopt it as a model for change within its unique setting.

Kotter's method emphasizes a sense of urgency for implementing change across organizations. The second stage involves the formation of what he calls a "guiding coalition." The third stage is the development of vision and strategy for change. The fourth stage entails communication of the change vision, and the fifth stage consists of empowering the members of the organization. The sixth stage calls for the celebration of short-term wins; the seventh stage consolidates the gains and steps up the production of more change. The final stage in Kotter's proposal ensures that the system is in place for the establishment of new approaches in the overall culture of the organization.⁹⁰

The second model explored in this research work is represented by Christian authors and church leaders Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr in their work, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for a Transformational Journey*.⁹¹ They have taken a combination of the best strategies and methodologies and synthesized them with the purpose of creating a practical guide for church leaders who see the need for meaningful and profound change in their congregations. According to the authors, their model is designed and applicable for new and veteran congregational

⁹⁰Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37-165.

⁹¹Herrington et al. set out to develop a practical guide for leading change in the church. The title of their work is *Leading Congregational Change*. The authors admit that they were influenced by the work of a variety of Christian and secular writers, but they believe that their model is sound and guided by Scripture as the ultimate source authority (Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, 36-66).

bodies as well as parachurch organizations facing the challenges brought forth by cultural change.⁹²

The framework from Herrington et al. for leading congregational change consists of an initial set of eight stages and four subsequent disciplines.⁹³ The first step in the process is unique to faith-based organizations such as the church. The authors begin by explaining what they believe is the principal foundation for leading change in the church—spiritual and relational vitality.⁹⁴ They define spiritual and relational vitality as two dimensions of a single reality, namely the uncompromising love of God and neighbor.⁹⁵

The first stage lays the groundwork for change by encouraging personal preparation in the life of the leader. The second stage consists of creating a sense of urgency for the need for change while the third stage consists of establishing the vision for the organizational community. The fourth stage deals with the discernment and communication of the vision, and the fifth stage focuses on the achievement and maintaining of widespread impact. Stage 6 consists of discerning the vision and determining the vision path while the seventh stage consists of communicating the vision effectively. The eighth stage deals with the empowerment of members of the congregation to lead and the ninth stage is used to implement the vision. Stage 10 reinforces momentum through alignment of resources and efforts.

⁹²Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 58, Kindle.

⁹³The model by Herrington et al. is also known the Transformational Journey Model and may be referred to interchangeably throughout this research study.

⁹⁴It is important to acknowledge that although this is one significant difference between Herrington et al. and Kotter's models, the authors do not consider spiritual and relational vitality a stage but an essential element for leading change in the local church.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, loc. 281, Kindle.

The final stage in the model from Herrington et al. is labeled the “transformational leadership” stage because it represents the zenith of the change process. It provides the change agent with an additional measure to continue to foster change while providing checks and balances for assessing success. The transformational stage also introduces four additional disciplines—generating and sustaining creative tension, harnessing the power of mental models, enabling team learning, and practicing systems thinking.⁹⁶ The presence of these disciplines in the life of a congregation engaging in successful change is proof of its achieved maturity.

The following review of the literature will explore a combination of seven particular practices found in the models proposed by Herrington et al. and Kotter. These particular practices were evaluated for their unique standing and contribution to the discipline of leading organizational change as well as their practical implementation. The ultimate aim is two-fold. It is to assess for the presence of these practices in the life of the participating churches during the research implementation phase of the study. It is also to ascertain if these practices surface along with any distinctive practices native to the participants’ environment as they implement organizational change in the local church.

Personal Preparation and Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership, in the would-be change agent, is addressed clearly by chapters 2 and 3 of Herrington et al. work. However, spiritual leadership is absent from Kotter’s model. The present research will explore both proposals in depth but will rely ultimately on Scripture for the testing and adaptation of the strategies and best practices offered by the authors.

In the foreword written for Bredfeldt’s *Great Leader, Great Teacher*, R. Albert Mohler states, “In today’s church, leadership has become something of an obsession . . .

⁹⁶Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, locs. 1339–891, Kindle.

as leadership is essential to any organization, including the church. Nevertheless, the obsessive interest in leadership has served to distract the church from the nature of leadership as revealed in the Scripture.”⁹⁷ Brunson and Bryant agree with Mohler’s perspective and write that “[church leaders] have looked to a business model of leadership for kingdom work.” While they admit that church leaders can learn from the business world, the church is not a business.⁹⁸ Spiritual leadership is therefore essential to effective ministry and in leading the local church.⁹⁹ Tozer identifies several traits that complement a flawed spiritual leadership, namely fear, economic pressures, misappropriated ambition, intellectual pride, absence, and inadequate preparation (Prov 29:25; 2 Cor 1:12; Gal 1:10; 2 Thess 2:2-4; 2 Tim 4:1-5).¹⁰⁰ Tozer calls these flaws “the absence of true spiritual experience and a minister’s failure to lead.”¹⁰¹ He further argues that it is not feasible for a man to lead another “further than he himself has gone.”¹⁰² Sanders agrees with Tozer’s assertions: “A true leader influences others spiritually only because the Spirit works in and through him to a greater degree than in those he leads. [Spiritual leaders] can lead others only as far along the road as [they] have traveled.”¹⁰³

⁹⁷Bredfeldt, *Great Leader Great Teacher*, 7. See also Mohler’s foreword in Bredfeldt’s book.

⁹⁸Mac Brunson and James W. Bryant, *The New Guidebook for Pastors* (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 71.

⁹⁹David F. Detwiler, “Paul’s Approach to the Great Commission,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152, no. 605 (January 1995): 32–41.

¹⁰⁰A. W. Tozer and Anita M. Bailey, *God Tells the Man Who Cares* (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread Publishers, 1992), 54.

¹⁰¹A. W. Tozer and Ron Eggert, *Tozer Topical Reader* (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread Publishers, 1998), 2:213.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

¹⁰³J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: A Commitment to Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2007), loc. 517, Kindle.

MacArthur argues, “Effective spiritual leadership is a combination of character and activity.”¹⁰⁴ Stetzer and Dotson claim that leaders who are spiritually distracted struggle with their commitment to sound leadership in their churches.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, as Barna points out, “The American church is dying due to lack of strong spiritual leadership.”¹⁰⁶

Spiritual leaders are not elected by people according to their systems and standards—God chooses them.¹⁰⁷ Sanders writes, “The real spiritual leader is focused on the service he can render to God and other people, not on the residual perks of high office or holy title.”¹⁰⁸ The Bible is replete with examples in which the theme of spiritual leadership is addressed. MacArthur writes that an example of this pattern is found in the relational leadership role instituted by God at the Garden of Eden between husband and wife. He affirms that the same spiritual leadership role is later demonstrated by the “patriarchs, priests, judges, kings and prophets.”¹⁰⁹ Ultimately, the strength of a congregation of believers can be easily traced to the spiritual leadership demonstrated by their leaders.

Consequently, as Herrington et al. point out, it is essential that the leading change agent in the congregation (i.e., the pastor), as God’s representative, possess the essential elements needed. These essential elements are spiritual and relational vitality.

¹⁰⁴John F. MacArthur, *1 & 2 Thessalonians, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2002), 44.

¹⁰⁵Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 12.

¹⁰⁶George Barna, ed., *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s People* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1998), loc. 232, Kindle.

¹⁰⁷J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: A Commitment to Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), loc. 321, Kindle.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, loc. 249, Kindle.

¹⁰⁹MacArthur, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 43-44.

These two elements are summed up in two very simple yet profound truths—the change agent in the church must love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, and mind and his neighbor as himself.¹¹⁰

The leader must seek God and be in alignment with his will and guidance. This takes on the form of having a prayerful, faithful, and obedient life before God to be able to lead others. The leading change agent in the church can only be as effective in teaching and leading others as he is taught and led by his Lord. Likewise, the leading change agent in the church must not only love his brothers and sisters in the faith but also those who do not know Christ as Savior. All of them are his neighbors and deserve the best that he has to offer in terms of spiritual and relational leadership.

All this is only possible when the change leader spends the adequate amount of time in prayer and spiritual preparation prior to engaging his congregation in the organizational change process. The preparation before the process is as important as the process itself. Obviously, Kotter’s model misses this aspect of change process completely due to the nature of his approach and perhaps his general target audience. Nonetheless, since this study involves Christ’s church and leading organizational change within it, this step is not only essential but an imperative first step in the process.

Establishing a Sense of Urgency

The establishment of a sense of urgency is imperative to setting in motion an agenda of change. After the spiritual groundwork has been established and the biblical foundations have been properly assessed, the creation of a widely shared sense of urgency must be communicated.¹¹¹ This shared sense of urgency carries the message that maintaining the status quo is not an acceptable course of action. The leaders must also

¹¹⁰ Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 281, Kindle.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, loc. 717, Kindle.

indicate that “a small and diverse group of members has been formed to help lead the change process.”¹¹² This strategy helps promote ownership and participation in the change process.

Herrington et al. place the ignition of a sense of urgency within their third stage of discerning and communicating the vision. Rainer articulates a sense of reality and urgency for the church this way: “America is clearly becoming less Christian, less evangelized, and less churched. Yet, too many of those in our churches seem oblivious to this reality.”¹¹³ Herrington et. al add that in providing reasons for urgency, leaders can employ information about the current reality. They suggest that it is also appropriate to include statistical information about the local congregation and its community as well as appropriate illustrations and supportive biblical and theological argumentation.¹¹⁴ The establishment of reality and urgency among believers is of the utmost importance for the church in the present age.

Kotter’s model, on the other hand, places the establishment of a sense of urgency as the first step on his 8-stage process.¹¹⁵ He further argues that establishing a sense of urgency is crucial in initiating the change process.¹¹⁶ Urgency is a must in order to gain needed cooperation among members because organizations where high levels of complacency exists fail to see the need for change.¹¹⁷ Kotter asserts that in organizations

¹¹²Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 717

¹¹³Thom S. Rainer, “Shattering Myths about the Unchurched,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 41-57.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 777.

¹¹⁵Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

filled with complacency, any change initiatives will be dead on arrival.”¹¹⁸ He suggests that a good principle to remember is never to “underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency, and that help maintain the status quo.”¹¹⁹ Hence, it can be assumed that the transformation of the organization would be in peril if enough people are not interested in addressing the problem.

Kotter claims that the process of leading change “requires a great deal of cooperation, initiative and willingness to make sacrifices” from those members in the organization.¹²⁰ He contends that in an organization of 100 members at least 24 of them must go far beyond the call of duty to produce significant change.¹²¹ If Kotter’s model holds true, in a congregation of 200 members, there would be a need of at least 48 members willing to work and sacrifice accordingly in order to achieve substantial organizational change.

Casting a Vision

The casting of a vision is present in both change models presented by Herrington et al., and Kotter. Herrington et al. readily admit that terms such as “vision” and “vision-path” are used interchangeably by secular and Christian authors alike. However, they also note that the implications of these terms have “separate and distinct meanings.”¹²² The authors do an effective job in defining the difference between “mission” and “vision,” terms that many times becomes erroneously intertwined. They

¹¹⁸Kotter, *Leading Change*, 39.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 43.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 37.

¹²¹*Ibid.*

¹²²Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 717, Kindle.

define mission as “God’s eternal purpose for the church . . . [and the term] that provides the framework and boundaries for the vision.”¹²³

Herrington et al. define vision as “a clear, shared, and compelling, picture of a preferred future to which God is calling the congregation.”¹²⁴ Peter Senge asserts that vision is the “what” of an organization, it is “the picture of the future [it] seeks to create.”¹²⁵ Kotter’s model agrees with Senge’s definition of vision but adds some descriptors that help enhance its purpose. He defines vision as “a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future.”¹²⁶

Kotter proposes that there are three essential purposes for a vision—a vision “clarifies the direction of change, it serves to facilitate major changes by motivating actions that are not part of the members short-term self-interests, and it helps align individuals and coordinate the actions of motivated members in a more efficient way.”¹²⁷ Additionally, Kotter describes an effective vision as having the following characteristics: imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable.¹²⁸

Effective Communication

Herrington et al. see the communication stage in leading change as the “uninterrupted continuation of vision development.”¹²⁹ The authors encourage the

¹²³Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 717, Kindle.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, loc. 731, Kindle.

¹²⁵Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 207.

¹²⁶Kotter, *Leading Change*, 69.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, 71.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, 73.

¹²⁹Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 782, Kindle.

congregational leadership not to underestimate the importance or the implications of an effective transition from the casting of the vision to the communication of it.¹³⁰

In his popular book *The Purpose Drive Church*, pastor Rick Warren highlights the importance of the continual communication of the organizational vision. He claims that not only the vision but the purpose of the church has to be reaffirmed every twenty-six days to keep the congregation moving in the right direction.¹³¹

In leading change, it is important to ensure that the proper diffusion of communication is implemented to transmit the vision of the organization. Kotter claims that the real power of vision is unleashed when those within the organization have a common understanding of its goal and direction.¹³² The unsuccessful communication of the vision across the organizational spectrum will cause a “stalled transformation.”¹³³ Since the overwhelming majority of secular organizations are made up of people, it is not at all inconceivable that social organizations such as the church would experience the same phenomenon if effective communication fails to occur within its ranks.

Hammond et al. found that “when considering a decision, the mind gives disproportionate weight to the first information it receives. Initial impressions, estimates, or data ignites subsequent thoughts and judgments.”¹³⁴ This finding gives credence to Kotter’s claim that an ill-communicated vision has the potential of change failure.¹³⁵

¹³⁰Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 872, Kindle.

¹³¹Richard Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth without Compromising Your Message & Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), loc. 1517, Kindle.

¹³²Kotter, *Leading Change*, 87.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, and Howard Raiffa, *The Hidden Traps in Decision Making in HBR’s 10 Must Reads on Making Smart Decisions* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2013), loc. 34, Kindle.

¹³⁵Kotter, *Leading Change*, 87-93.

Herrington et al. suggest the following strategies for communicating a vision of change: the development of an explicit communication strategy, the use of creative communications medium, the enlistment of the entire vision community, the development of terms, phrases, and analogies that have special meaning to the congregation, the constant repetition of the vision, and seeking feedback on the vision. Kotter provides a strikingly similar approach. He offers the following as key elements in communicating a vision: simplicity, metaphor (or examples), multiple forums, repetition, leadership by example, explanation of seeming inconsistencies, give and take (two-way communication).¹³⁶

In the midst of similarities between the two models, the communication of vision change is the one stage in which both models agree the most. Kotter's work precedes that of Herrington et al. and, although Christian in their approach, they do not hesitate to cite or quote Kotter and other secular writers that complement their proposal. Unique to Herrington et al., however, is the challenge the authors offer Christian congregations in regard to communicating the vision for change. Their challenge states that essential to success in leading change in the church is to find "creative ways that enable the entire congregation to understand God's vision thoroughly for their future and its implications."¹³⁷

Empowerment of Members in the Organization

The best practice of empowering members of an organization to be change agents is present in both of the models proposed by Herrington et al. and Kotter. The purpose behind this practice is to enable the broad base of an organization to become the leading force behind the efforts to remove any barriers. These barriers are prevalent

¹³⁶Kotter, *Leading Change*, 91.

¹³⁷Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 949, Kindle.

within structural systems, whether mechanical or man-made, and they impede the successful implementation of the change vision.¹³⁸

According to Kotter, there are four different types of barriers that empowered members must overcome. These barriers include the structural make up of an organization, a lack of skills set to implement the necessary tasks, personnel or information systems that create difficulty in getting things done, and supervisors who get in the way or discourage the actions leading to the desired change vision.¹³⁹ Contrary to common belief, without the empowerment of the organizational members on the frontlines, it is virtually impossible for the top leadership to implement the vision change. Kouzes and Posner rightly point out that exceptional leaders have always understood how important it is for their constituents “to feel strong, capable, and efficacious.”¹⁴⁰

Some studies have found that pay, as a motivator, continues to matter but many other important factors such as job satisfaction, workplace culture, and trust between members of an organization and their leaders are equally important motivators.¹⁴¹ Accordingly, organizational members that feel empowered by their leaders to make decisions that affect the productivity of the organization are more likely to feel appreciated as well as help the vision change become a reality.

Some of the same elements related to member empowerment are at work when it comes to the organizational unit known as the local church. Although, some

¹³⁸Kotter, *Leading Change*, 105.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰James M. Kouzes and Barry Posner, *Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th ed. (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 244. Kouzes and Posner further attest that the power of influence actually increases when the leaders give away their power in decision making to their constituents. They also attest that constituents that feel weak, incompetent, and insignificant, will consistently underperform.

¹⁴¹Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz, “Job Satisfaction Jumped in 2014,” *Chicagotribune.com*, April 28, 2015, accessed August 20, 2015, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-job-satisfaction-0428-biz-20150428-story.html>.

empowered individuals in business organizations may work to see their efforts rewarded financially, members of the local church have a different motivation than money but respond in the same fashion when entrusted to lead and make decisions about things that matter to them. Keller argues that there is a distinctive need on the part of human beings to work and to feel productive and it is not dictated by the mere need to make money to survive but rather to “live fully human lives.”¹⁴²

An organization such as the local church needs the engagement and commitment of its members to make successful organizational change a reality. The brutal and honest truth is that the ministerial staff alone is not able to devote all the energy, work, and effort to move the entire church organization forward without the contribution of its members.¹⁴³ Gardner argues that there is “nothing more vital to the renewal of an organization than the arrangements by which able people are nurtured and moved into positions where they can make the greatest contribution.”¹⁴⁴

The ministerial staff does not need to be leading the charge in every effort and initiative but, in their leadership role, they must always be prepared to nurture others as they grow and contribute.¹⁴⁵ Herrington et al. argue that for empowerment of members to occur in the local church there must a paradigm shift that first requires the establishment a new model for leadership in the congregation followed by the removal of the obstacles that would prevent the leaders in the new model from serving effectively.¹⁴⁶ Essential to

¹⁴²Timothy J. Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Penguin Group, 2012), 37. Keller further argues that work is as much a basic human need as food and that meaningful work can be food for the soul.

¹⁴³Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 982, Kindle.

¹⁴⁴John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 127.

¹⁴⁵Jerry C. Wofford, *Transforming Christian Leadership: 10 Exemplary Church Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), loc. 2036, Kindle.

¹⁴⁶Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 962, Kindle.

the authors' model is the ability of the church's leadership, through empowerment, to grant those willing to carry out the mission the capacity to make decisions.¹⁴⁷

Effective Use of Teams

Katzenbach and Smith claim that the imperatives for a team are size, purpose, goals, skills, approach, and accountability.¹⁴⁸ The proper use of teams as part of the strategy for implementing change in an organization cannot be overstated. Katzenbach and Smith found in their research on teams that most organizations struggle making the most out of their use in order to create a higher performing organization. They attribute this failure to the lack of clarity and shared purpose surrounding the existence of teams.¹⁴⁹ Lencioni's study on dysfunctions of teams led him to make the following bold assertion: "If an organization is able to get all of its members pulling in the same direction, it would be possible for such organization to dominate any type of enterprise in any market at any given time."¹⁵⁰

Team performance within an organization was another embedded topic of Katzenbach and Smith's research. They found that although performance is the primary objective of a team, the team represents the means not the end of the entire operation.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, the authors' research demonstrates that what sets apart high-performing teams from less reliable units is the level of commitment that the members of the team

¹⁴⁷Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 982, Kindle.

¹⁴⁸Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 1993), loc. 91, Kindle.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 2.

¹⁵¹Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*, loc. 216, Kindle.

have toward one another.¹⁵² In his work, Cladis argues that the success of a healthy ministry and the development of a strong Christian community are closely associated to “a stable and high-quality relationship among the members of the principal leadership team” in the congregation.¹⁵³ He further argues that the “depiction of God as [triune] is an excellent Biblical and theological model for building meaningful ministry teams in the church of the twenty-first century.”¹⁵⁴

Katzenbach and Smith organized two different sets of principle findings about teams and their use in organizations. They properly named the first set “common sense findings” and the second set “uncommon sense findings.” Common sense principles include the following: a demanding performance challenge tends to create a team, the discipline application of “team basics” is often overlooked by organizations, team performance opportunities exist in all parts of the organization, teams at the top are the most difficult, and most people in organizations intrinsically prefer individual over team accountability.¹⁵⁵

The uncommon sense findings are made up of the following principles: organizations with strong performance standards spawn more “real teams” than organizations that promote teams, high performance teams are extremely rare, hierarchy and teams go together almost as well as teams and performance, teams naturally integrate performance and learning, and teams are the primary unit of performance for increasing numbers [results] within organizations.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵²Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*, loc. 1119, Kindle.

¹⁵³George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders a Leadership Network Publication* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), loc. 130, Kindle.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, loc. 152, Kindle.

¹⁵⁵Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*, 91-117.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, locs. 117-42, Kindle.

The principle of creating teams occurs early in Kotter's model. It appears in the second stage after a sense of urgency has already been established. Kotter calls it "the guiding coalition" and it is made up of the right composition of members, level of trust, and shared objectives. In fact, Kotter considers building this type of team essential to the early efforts of leading change in an organization. Kotter further argues that in a world in which trends and information are moving at a faster rate than ever it is necessary to have a guiding coalition that functions as a highly effective team and can process high levels of information and make decisions.¹⁵⁷

Kotter believes that a guiding coalition team can also help accelerate the implementation of new approaches because they will be truly informed and will have the power to make key decisions.¹⁵⁸ Essential to Kotter's "guiding coalition" team, are the following characteristics: position power, expertise, credibility, and leadership.¹⁵⁹ He gives additional considerations to building a coalition that makes change happen and complements the characteristic of a team. These additional considerations are finding the right people, creating trust, and developing a common goal.¹⁶⁰

In *Leading Congregational Change*, Herrington et al. place the concept of teams as the third discipline for transformational leadership. They agree with and even quote the research by Katzenbach and Smith, arguing that the growing body of research related to teams and organizations suggest that in order to reach the significant demands of the present day, the development of high-performance teams is needed.¹⁶¹ They define

¹⁵⁷Kotter, *Leading Change*, 53.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., 56.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 58.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., 67.

¹⁶¹Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 1698, Kindle.

the concept of team learning as “the process of enabling a team to produce results far beyond its combined capabilities as individuals.”¹⁶²

Herrington et al. make a compelling biblical case for the need of a team-like approach in the congregational setting. They argue that the very nature of the church demands the participation of many talents and gifts in order for the institution to perform as a high functioning unit. First Corinthians 12:1-27 serves as the authors’ scriptural basis for capturing the ideal format of the way teams ought to function based on the metaphor of the human body used by Paul to describe the church. They conclude that passages like 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 3 communicate a clear message about teams. These passages address the importance of individuals within the church and the important role they play with their diversity of backgrounds, skills, talents and spiritual gifts for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.¹⁶³

Herrington et al. conclude by stating that would-be change leaders have to be willing to pay the price to put together high-functioning teams in the church.¹⁶⁴ They argue that the building up of a team takes time and discipline and that the most critical skill to develop among teams is that of dialogue.¹⁶⁵ In addition to dialogue proficiency, the development of team building skills and performance challenges, they argue, can “accelerate the learning process for a team.”¹⁶⁶ They further claim that crucial challenges for change leaders in the church are a commitment to team, providing an opportunity for teams to develop their skills, and monitoring of the teams’ progress.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶²Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 1698, Kindle.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., loc. 1884, Kindle.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

Transformational Leadership and the Establishment of a New Culture

Herrington et al. state that transformational leadership is both a science and an art, and it requires continuous learning and skill development on the part of the would-be change agent.¹⁶⁸ They encourage the leader to hold a mental model of the nature of transformation and to remember that each congregation and individual members will experience journeys of transformation that may not be exactly alike. Nonetheless, they also inform the leader that some aspects of the transformation process are predictable due to the nature of how people and organizations handle change.¹⁶⁹

Herrington et al. provide 6 dynamics within their framework that they believe capture their perspective on the successful transformation of a congregation. The authors claim that spiritual and relational vitality drives transformation and that congregational transformation requires transformed leaders. They also claim that transformation occurs through intentional processes and that each transformation process is unique. They contend that congregational transformation also requires requires specific skills and that healthy change takes time.¹⁷⁰

The Bass Handbook of Leadership defines “transformational leadership” as the type of leadership that seeks higher purposes.¹⁷¹ It further describes transformational leaders as those “who motivate their followers to do more than the followers originally intended and thought possible.”¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change*, loc. 2072, Kindle.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 2072–86. According to the authors, transformational leadership requires the following realities: spiritual and relational vitality, transformed leaders, it must occur through intentional processes, one must realize that each transformation process is unique, it requires specific skills, and healthy change takes time (ibid.).

¹⁷¹Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 618.

¹⁷²Ibid.

Burns provides a more complete and thorough definition of transformational leadership when he writes that it “raises the followers’ level of consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes and ways of reaching them. The transformational leader gets his followers to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of the team or the organization.”¹⁷³ Burns argues that the result of “transformational leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that transforms followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents.”¹⁷⁴

Wallace Erikson adds that the development of potential leaders is a good trait of a quality leader. He both exhorts and warns organizations that “leaders that enable followers to develop their own initiative are creating something that can survive their own departure; while some individuals with dazzling powers of personal leadership not only fail to build institutional strength but create dependency in those who [follow] them.”¹⁷⁵ Bass adds that transformational leaders point to mutual interests with followers as well as engage them closely without using power but moral leadership.¹⁷⁶ He further claims that “transformational leaders are the ones who transform individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.”¹⁷⁷

Kotter, on the other hand, takes an unexpected approach in the last stage of his model for leading organizational change. He does not address the transformational leadership approach as does Herrington et al.; rather, he discusses the establishment of a new organizational culture. He rejects the theory that the biggest impediment to

¹⁷³James M. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010), 4.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵Barna, *Leaders on Leadership*, loc. 5561.

¹⁷⁶Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 619.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

implementing change in an organization is the culture and that the first step in bringing transformation is the changing of norms and values.¹⁷⁸

Kotter further argues that culture is not an artifact that can be manipulated easily. He claims that culture change occurs only after the leader has successfully altered members' actions and after new behavior produces benefits to the organization for a sustainable period of time.¹⁷⁹ It is only then, says Kotter, that the members of the organization can correlate the new actions and the improvement in performance, thus bringing an opportunity for the establishment of a new cultural climate.¹⁸⁰

Summary

In times of change, organizations either rise to the level of the challenge or crumble under it. The church has a tremendous opportunity to rise to the level of its challenges by embracing them and working diligently to thrive amidst those challenges.

In an interview with a leading educational magazine, Jim Collins was asked to compare business organizations against those in the social sector regarding the phenomenon of change. Collins stated that when the common denominator is change, three shared factors set apart organizations that thrive in the midst of change from those that fail—frantic discipline, empirical creativity, and productive paranoia.¹⁸¹ Collins claims that frantic discipline is needed to endure the challenges brought by change by developing a leadership model that is consistent and uncompromising about its values.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸Kotter, *Leading Change*, 163.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁸¹Jim Collins, "Jim Collins on Mediocrity and the Benefits of Paranoia," *School Administrator* 69, no. 6 (June 2012): 40-43.

¹⁸²Jim Collins and Morten T. Hansen, *Great by Choice: Uncertainty, Chaos, and Luck: Why Some Thrive Despite Them All* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2011), 18.

Empirical creativity is the ability to make educated decisions based on the observations and the facts surrounding the organization and its environment.¹⁸³ Lastly, productive paranoia is the ability to continue to produce, innovate, and create new ways to improve the service or product of the organization as if impending doom was certain.¹⁸⁴

The intent of this research is not to formulate strategies to develop a successful ministry by the world's standards. At the heart of this endeavor lies the desire to develop a body of best practices for leading organizational change in the ministry arena. It is my prayer that this research will assist God's church, through sound biblical, theological, and leadership practice to embrace change within its ranks in order to reach out to the unsaved world. These actions are not only prudent but necessary. They are also a profound and evident testimony of Christian stewardship at its best.

The apostle Paul, an example of Christian leadership and passion for the lost, states in 1 Corinthians 9:23: "I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some." Carson clearly points out that the apostle Paul does not advocate engagement in ungodly practices for the sake of gaining converts, but he is rather humbly stating that he is willing to adapt to certain practices and demands presented by society in order that the gospel may reach those who are unsaved.¹⁸⁵

If the church as an organization desires to thrive again and be sensitive to its calling, all three of Collins' proposed behaviors must be exemplified. This precious organization has plenty to offer to humanity as a whole, and it has an ample opportunity to do so. The only question is whether church's members have the courage and humility to submit in obedience to Christ's mandate to evangelize the world by adopting best

¹⁸³Collins and Hansen, *Great by Choice*, 22.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁸⁵D. A. Carson, *The Cross and Christian Ministry: Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 117-21.

practices and approaches that can help reach out and transform the culture without theological compromise.

Thesis

Implementing a biblical model of organizational change in the church can prove effective in helping this Christ-established institution to engage the culture around it and fulfill the Great Commission.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature review on the subject of organizational change suggests the existence of a number of best practices for leading and implementing the process across multiple organizational spectrums. Consequently, an organizational unit such as the local church should not be an exemption. It was of particular interest to this research study to find common trends and patterns among best practices in churches that have been successful in transitioning through change in the context of an urban setting. Therefore, this study in leading organizational change is of significance and contributes to a greater understanding of how this process can be successfully implemented in the local church.

This chapter describes the methodological design by which this case study sought to identify embedded best practices for leading local churches through change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. I will outline the design overview, identify the research population, define the population sample, and list delimitations. I will also identify the limits of generalizations, discuss research instrumentation, and articulate the procedures for the completed study.

The methodology for this research study consisted of a qualitative multiple case study approach rich in content analysis. Creswell writes, “Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible.”¹ He further defines qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. The researcher attempts to make sense, draw conclusions, and interpret certain

¹John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013), 43.

phenomena.² This approach requires the researcher to study artifacts, individuals, and organizations in the setting in which they occur. Creswell also asserts that qualitative research is used to explore and comprehend the meaning individuals and groups ascribed to a social or human problem.³

The use of qualitative content analysis is an efficient strategy for answering the questions that this research study aims to target. The qualitative research method “allows for the identification of general concepts, the development of theoretical explanations, beyond the known and offers new insights into a variety of experiences and phenomena.”⁴ Creswell writes, “The procedures of qualitative research or its methodology are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher’s experience in collecting and analyzing data.”⁵

Corbin and Strauss add that qualitative research allows the researcher to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables.⁶ They also argue that qualitative research work is fluid, evolving, and dynamic in nature in contrast to the more rigid and structured format of quantitative research methodology.⁷

²Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 44.

³Ibid., 4.

⁴Juliet M. Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 6.

⁵Ibid., 22.

⁶Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 4.

⁷Ibid., 5.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from different texts.⁸ Klaus Krippendorff defines content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use.”⁹ He adds that content analysis has evolved into a repertoire of methods of research and promises to yield inferences from all kinds of verbal, pictorial, symbolic, and communications data.¹⁰

Krippendorff notes that the current research field of content analysis has three distinguishing characteristics:

1. it is an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent;
2. it transcends traditional notions of symbols, contents, and intents; and
3. it has been forced to develop a methodology of its own, one that enables researchers to plan, execute, communicate, reproduce, and critically evaluate their analysis whatever the particular results.¹¹

In this qualitative multiple case study, the focus was on the process, meaning, and understanding of how the phenomena of leading organizational change in the ministry arena occurs. The study also focused on identifying markers and best practices associated with implementing organizational change. In this research study, I was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, which was inductive in nature.¹² Creswell explains, “The logic that the qualitative researcher follows is inductive, from the

⁸Robert Philip Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1990), 9.

⁹Klaus H. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2012), 24.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 1–5.

¹²Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 266.

ground up, rather than handed down entirely from theory.”¹³ The rules of the inferential process were dictated by my theoretical and substantive interest.¹⁴

Additionally, I engaged in the systematic reading and analysis of the literature, materials, images, and symbolic matter produced by the leadership and ministerial staffs of the three model ministries.¹⁵ The aim was to examine the complete body of printed material and associated matter closely to extrapolate collaborating information, identifying markers and strategies that can be adapted for implementation by the local church.

Charmaz argues that the result of any investigative research becomes the construct of elements and processes that are already in place. In other words, the researcher does not discover anything but merely develops a formulated construction of his understanding surrounding a given phenomena. She claims that “viewing the research as constructed rather than discovered fosters researchers’ reflexivity about their actions and decisions.”¹⁶ Charmaz is equally adamant that the treatment of research as a construction does not mean that the researcher does not acknowledge that events occur under specific conditions independent from the researcher’s involvement.¹⁷

This research study was also strengthened by a vigorous interaction with a limited body of literature on the topic of organizational change that emphasizes

¹³Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 22.

¹⁴Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, 9. The researcher establishes variables by which the content analysis is measured according to the research intent. The reliability of data is preserved by continually using the same variable designed for each particular element being analyzed. Krippendorff writes, “We must do our best to explicate what we are doing and describe how we derive our judgments, so that others can replicate our results” (Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 5).

¹⁵Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 10.

¹⁶Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 12.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 13.

leadership aptitudes and procedures as well as cultural engagement predominantly from a Christian worldview. Perspectives from secular literature were also considered but vetted through rigorous biblical and theological examination established by biblical Christian doctrine. All reviewed literature was consistent with a timeframe in which all three participating model ministries have been in existence (1994 to 2014).

At the conclusion of the research study there will be a summary presentation of viable, successful strategies and best practices for leading organizational change in the local church. All best practices were scrutinized and evaluated under the lens and guidance of Scripture. The final aim was to provide the ministry arena with sound and reliable data for consumption. This last step will also serve as a concluding basis to inform the findings of the research as to whether it is possible for the local church to carry out successful organizational change and engagement of the culture without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Research Question

The research question that this multi-case study sought to answer was “What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?”

Design Overview

Creswell argues that researchers always bring along particular worldviews that affect the approach and/or methodology they choose for conducting their investigations. He explains that it is the researcher’s worldview that helps determine whether the research will be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method in nature. He defines a worldview “as a basic set of beliefs that guide action.”¹⁸ These philosophical assumptions

¹⁸Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 5–6. The worldviews expounded by

are grouped in the following categories: metaphysics, epistemology, axiology, and methodology, which are essential principles in interpreting qualitative research.¹⁹ The worldview approach affecting this research study comes primarily from an evangelical Christian worldview.²⁰

Qualitative Design

This qualitative, multi-case study sought to identify best practices for leading organizational change in the ministry arena within the local urban church. Qualitative research, therefore, allows the researcher to understand how people within their natural setting interpret their experiences as well as the meaning they ascribe to their experiences.²¹ Merriam adds that qualitative research provides “an umbrella covering an array on explanatory techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning of a certain phenomena.”²²

What the study sought to identify was the processes and best practices utilized by local urban churches that were engaged in organizational change. A secondary area of

Creswell include the post-positivist view, which challenges the traditional notion of absolute truth of knowledge; the constructivist view by which individuals seek to understand the world in which they live by drawing inferences and making empirical assessments of their experiences; the transformative view which holds that research inquiry must be connected with politics and a political agenda to confront social evils and injustice in the realm in which they occur; and the pragmatic view which is concerned with researching problems for the purpose of finding the appropriate applications and solutions to them. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 7-10.

¹⁹Ibid., 23. All four philosophical assumptions seek to engage research from their perspective field of interest. Metaphysics is concerned with explaining the nature of being; epistemology seeks to evaluate the level of knowledge and truth; axiology seeks to assess the value in things; and methodology is concerned about processes and practices that can lead to generalizations in a particular event or phenomena.

²⁰I am a self-proclaimed evangelical Christian operating from that ideological framework and worldview. The study focuses on identifying and isolating best practices for leading organizational change in the context of the local Christian church. Consequently, such practices may indeed be unique to the Christian context of operations while others may have a lot in common with general practices exhibited by secular organizations also engaging in organizational change.

²¹Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 5.

²²Ibid., 13.

inquiry also included the identification of markers that indicated whether the participating local churches were able to maintain biblical and theological orthodoxy while engaging the culture within the change process. For this purpose, a qualitative multi-case study approach was utilized, which provided opportunities for employing multiple methods of data collection, observation of participants in their natural setting, opportunity to engage in inductive and deductive analysis as well as reflection based on the participants' meanings and experiences. Access to interview participants and the gathering of documentation, including printed and audio-visual materials related to the specific case being studied, were also important components of this process.²³

Consequently, a qualitative research design was appropriate for identifying best practices utilized by the local church while engaging in organizational change. The flexibility that qualitative research provided is that while, I as, the researcher engaged in capturing and studying the complexity of the phenomena, I was allowed to recognize the many dimensions and layers within it in order to portray the findings in a multidimensional format.²⁴

A research study seeking to identify best practices makes good use of qualitative research methodology. An example of this is qualitative content analysis, a technique that allowed me as the researcher to make replicable and valid inferences from collected data in the context of their use.²⁵ Krippendorff claims that “recognizing meanings is the reason that researchers engage in qualitative content analysis rather than some other kind of investigative method.”²⁶

²³Creswell, *Research Design*, 211.

²⁴Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod, *Practical Research Design: Planning and Design*, 10th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2013), 139.

²⁵Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 24.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 27.

Since qualitative research is a situated activity that places the researcher in the world of the participants, it is only natural that the data analysis will include inductive and deductive discernment that will include patterns and themes associated with the organizational change process occurring in the participating sites.²⁷

Case Study Method

The case study method is a unique type of research approach that provides a practical vehicle for answering the questions brought about by the how and why of a certain phenomenon within a social context.²⁸ It is also an appropriate method of research in situations where the investigator has minimal to no control over behavioral events, and the focus of the study is a contemporary occurrence.²⁹ In this particular study, organizational change is considered.

Another important characteristic of the case study method related to this study is that it adds two important sources of evidence that increase its validity, namely, direct observation of the events being studied and interviews of the persons involved in the events.³⁰ For this study, in-depth interviews were completed with the participating site leaders and other members, analyzed available organizational documents, and conducted observations at the participating sites.

Essential to the case study methodology in qualitative case study research is the use of open-ended questions for gathering information that may shed light on the

²⁷Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 43–44. The inductive process requires the researcher to work back and forth between the themes and the designated database until he is able to establish a comprehensive pattern within the study. The deductive process requires the researcher to look back at the data to determine if more evidence can be found to support the established themes or if more data needs to be gathered. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 186.

²⁸Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 4.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 2.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 12.

research question. Open-ended questions should be formatted in a way to allow the respondent not to feel threaten while also satisfying the needs of the line of inquiry that address the research question.³¹ The strategic purpose of the open-ended question and answer format is to allow the researcher to document the connection between particular pieces of evidence to the research question from the perspective of the participant.³² Therefore, based on the information provided by the literature review, I conducted interviews and content analysis on a number of artifacts to establish themes and patterns for coding purposes.

Since case study research involves the study of specific issues through one or more settings or contexts, I identified three sites for the study through a sampling of Southern Baptist churches in the greater Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. These local churches are actively engaging the culture in the context of their ministry. The identified churches were personally contacted and received invitations to participate in the study.

After implementing a detailed data analysis of the findings, I compared case discoveries and outcomes to the list of best practices expounded in the literature review on the subject of leading organizational change. The study reports a holistic account of the findings in the sites studied as well as a composite of the generalized and established list of their best practices.³³

Selection criteria. Case studies begin with the identification and selection of a specific case or several of them. The case may involve a determined entity such as a group of people or an organization. This type of research requires the collection of a

³¹Yin, *Case Study Research*, 110.

³²*Ibid.*, 126.

³³Creswell, *Research Design*, 186. Creswell points out that the qualitative researcher tries to develop a complex picture of the issues under study. Such effort involves reporting multiple perspectives and identifying other factors involved in the situation. This provides a visual and procedural model that aids in establishing a holistic understanding of the problem during the reporting of the findings.

significant amount of data associated with the phenomenon taking place within the target entity over a specific time period.³⁴ Merriam states that qualitative researchers make use of a case study design to “gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning of those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice and future research.”³⁵

The principal concern in the process of case study research is the understanding of the phenomenon of interest from the perspective of the target population. This is only possible if the participants can acquire meaning based on their organizational beliefs and cultural values.³⁶ Consequently, three cases were selected based on a common trait or particular phenomenon. These organizations are local churches that seem to be engaging in constant organizational change within the context of their ministry.

The three cases selected for this phenomenological, multi-case study were selected through a purposeful sampling process. They represent the following criteria:

1. An evangelical congregation associated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).³⁷

³⁴Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 97–98. Creswell identifies case study and/or studies as “bounded systems.” He calls them bounded because they are bound to a time and place of occurrence.

³⁵Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, loc. 300, Kindle.

³⁶*Ibid.*, loc. 154, Kindle.

³⁷D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 444. Carson rightly argues that defining evangelicalism in the current cultural context is becoming increasingly difficult. This is due to wider groups of people appropriating the label on their own without fulfilling the traditional descriptors traditionally associated with the term. Nonetheless, Carson is able to narrow his definition within an historical context by limiting the definition to include evangelical, congregations of Christians that hold to the final authority of Scripture, the historical saving work of God in Scripture, eternal salvation only through Jesus Christ, a heightened importance of evangelism and mission work, and the importance of a spiritual transformation in the believer. Although, some slight variations in practice and implementation are to be expected, all three congregations participating in this study fit the definition of an evangelical congregation as described above.

2. An evangelical congregation that has gone through a significant amount of change in the last twenty years.
3. An evangelical congregation that is located in the urban metropolitan region of Dallas-Ft. Worth in Texas.

The case sites-organizations selected for this study included Lakeland Baptist Church (LBC) in Lewisville, Texas, Sunnyvale First Baptist Church (SFBC) in Sunnyvale, Texas, and The Village Church (TVC) in Flower Mound, Texas.³⁸

Case histories. In order to understand the appropriateness of the selected cases, a brief survey of their individual case history is offered in this section. The sites are similar in nature and they include a medium size congregation, a large size congregation, and a mega multi-site church that ranks among the top ten largest Baptist churches in America.³⁹

Lakeland Baptist Church in Lewisville, Texas, was established in 1961. It is one of the most prominent Baptist churches in an area populated by over 100,000 people. Lakeland's reputation as a church planter is well known. In fact, Lakeland is the mother church that planted Highland Village First Baptist Church, which later became the Village Church in Flower Mound, Texas.⁴⁰ Lakeland's new pastor is in the midst of an entire organizational change overhaul. He is a young man with great passion and mature

³⁸The reasons for selecting these three sites were the following: these congregations were conveniently located in an urban area within reasonable distance from the researcher. The sites location expedited the process to coordinate visits, conduct interviews, and properly investigate the sites. Another reason was the time-table allotted to conduct and complete the present research project, and, lastly, there were essential gatekeepers that facilitated the research process and made the interactions with the sites more accessible and manageable.

³⁹Thom Rainer, "Largest Churches in the Southern Baptist Convention," *ThomRainer.com*, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://thomrainer.com/2014/07/2014-update-largest-churches-southern-baptist-convention/>. SFBC reports over 1,500 members while TVC reports over 10,000. Lakeland currently reports over 500 active members with about 1,000 members.

⁴⁰"History," *The Village Church*, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/about/history/>.

insight. He believes sternly that the church of Christ should continually engage the culture around it for the purpose of spreading the gospel and making new disciples.

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church has been a leading SBC church in the North Texas area over many years. It is located in a prime location of North Texas that is beginning to see an explosion of new inhabitants through new residential and single family housing. The congregation has begun to prepare to reach these new residents with the gospel. Their intention is indicated clearly by the church's mission and vision statements.⁴¹ SFBC's new pastor is a young but seasoned leader with a visionary and relentless attitude regarding the preaching and proclamation of the gospel beyond the walls of his congregation. He has been with SFBC for one year in which he has been implementing gradual organizational change that he believes will position the church favorably as it engages the people and the culture around it.

The Village Church is a mega and multi-site congregation that operates out of Flower Mound, Texas. The main campus provides services and pastoral care for a combined 4,000 members every Saturday and Sunday. The Village Church has four additional sister congregations in the areas of North Dallas, Denton, Ft. Worth, and Plano, comprising of over 10,000 members.⁴² The Village Church has experienced an average growth of about 1,000 new members yearly for the past eight years. This colossal increase in people has created monumental challenges and opportunities for the leadership. Such challenges and opportunities have transformed the way in which the leadership is leading the congregation through constant organizational change.⁴³

⁴¹“Mission and Vision Statement,” *Sunnyvale First Baptist Church*, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us>.

⁴²“Mission Statement,” *The Village Church*, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/>.

⁴³Matt Chandler, *Church Growth: The Village Church*, accessed July 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVCAJjIfcEs>.

Population

The theoretical population for this study consists of Southern Baptist Convention churches who are intentionally engaged in organizational change and cultural engagement driven by the desire to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Since this study focuses primarily on evangelical SBC churches in an urban context, the population included all SBC churches with congregations of between 500 and 10,000 thousand members that are currently ministering in the urban setting of the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

Sampling

In qualitative studies, researchers analyze only a sample of an entire population due to cost and time constraints. The best strategy to address this issue is to separate a portion of the larger group of participants into a smaller cross-section and conduct the research with the smaller group. The smaller group is called a sample.⁴⁴ The current study utilized a maximal purposeful sampling to gain the most diverse findings possible related to the research problem.⁴⁵ The sample consisted of those medium to large SBC congregations doing ministry in an urban setting and those who agreed to participate in the study having met the research criteria.

Delimitations

The scope of the study was focused on local evangelical SBC churches ministering in an urban context and was delimited as follows:

⁴⁴Neil Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 128. Salkind suggests that samples be selected from populations in such a way that the sample matches as closely as possible the characteristics of the entire population.

⁴⁵Although the selected congregations do not share the same distinction regarding membership numbers, I was interested in their geographic location, their current engagement of the culture for discipleship purposes, as well as the urban context of their ministries. Additionally, all three congregations are Southern Baptist churches and have been ministering in the region for the last twenty years. Furthermore, the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area has one of the largest and fastest growing populations in the United States. It is an area prime for ministry and in need of insightful organizational change.

1. The study was delimited to local SBC churches within the urban Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area.
2. The study was delimited to local SBC churches that have undergone and/or are currently undergoing organizational change.
3. The study was delimited to local SBC churches with medium to large membership numbers.⁴⁶

Limitations of Generalization

The findings of this research were limited to the three cases studies, but may be transferable to other evangelical SBC churches that are currently ministering within an urban context and facing the challenge of organizational change. The findings may also be transferable to Christian leaders in churches who may be entertaining the prospect of leading organizational change with their congregations. The value of selecting cases within the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area to participate in this qualitative research is that such selections increase the possibility that the results of the inquiry into such cases may also apply to the general population from which the sample cases were taken.⁴⁷

A limitation of case studies in qualitative research is that such an approach is more exploratory than confirmatory in nature.⁴⁸ Additionally, generalization is not possible, and the transferability of findings is also limited.⁴⁹ However, Creswell suggests

⁴⁶It is important to denote that although The Village Church currently shows over 10,000 members in its rolls, these members are spread over five different campuses with strategically assigned pastoral staff to look after them. The main TVC site in Flower Mound, Texas, has over 4,000 members under its immediate oversight. This study focused only on the dynamics of leadership at the main campus.

⁴⁷Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research Design*, 230.

⁴⁸Dawson Hancock and Bob Algozzine, *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011), 428, Kindle. The authors readily affirm that the researcher using case study methodology is not trying to prove relationships or test hypotheses but is identifying themes or categories of behaviors and events.

⁴⁹Yin, *Case Study Research*, locs. 5193–217, Kindle. Yin addresses the perceived limitations argued in some circles surrounding the use of case studies in qualitative research. He attributes some of the apprehension to a lack of trust in the researcher's procedural approach due to the limited number of protective safeguards. Nonetheless, he provides excellent recommendations for increasing trust in case study methodology in the form of increased sources of evidence, use of robust databases, and establishment

that a rich and plentiful description in qualitative research studies allows readers to make decisions regarding transferability due to similarities in content, language, and settings.⁵⁰

Instrumentation

Data gathering for this research included personal interviews with the leadership of the churches and selected members, direct observations, and analysis of organizational documents. Approval of all interview questions, observation protocols, and analysis methods from my thesis supervisor and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary ethics committee.⁵¹

Data Collection

The procedures of the study included nine steps: identifying potential research sites, soliciting site participation, securing agreement to study the selected sites, developing instrumentation for the interviews and the general case study, consulting field experts, obtaining instrumentation approval by my thesis supervisor and the seminary ethics committee, conducting the research, analyzing data, and reporting the findings.

Following the identification of potential sites and the enlistment of three particular sites for participation in the study, data was collected in three phases: in-depth interviews, personal observations, and document analysis. The leadership at the selected sites were provided a copy of the Disclosures of Case Study document.⁵² I sent each intended interviewee a copy of the Informed Consent Letter and proceeded to schedule

of strong chain of evidence that can help increase credibility and minimize prejudices.

⁵⁰Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 252.

⁵¹Appendix 1 details the disclosures of this multi-case study. The Expert-Supervisor Approved Interview Questionnaire can be found in appendix 5.

⁵²See appendix 1.

the dates of the site visits as well as formalized the specific research schedule and approach.⁵³ Site research began with personal interviews of leaders and other members.

Interview Process and Implementation

Once in compliance with the approved interview protocol, personal interviews of leaders and other randomly selected team members were completed at each site. The instrument design followed an open-ended questioning format.⁵⁴ The interview questions were designed through a combination of material gathered from the literature review base and the premise of the research question driving this research study.⁵⁵

First, as to the level of culture engagement, the study sought to identify the church's leadership motivation and level of commitment behind their efforts in leading organizational change. Second, as to the mission of the church, the study sought to understand the leadership level of commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission in relationship to reaching the lost, discipleship, and multiplication of believers within the scheme of organizational change.

⁵³See appendix 4. Included with the informed consent letter was a copy of the appropriate questionnaire (see appendix 5).

⁵⁴Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 33. Krippendorff argues that structured interviews generate predefined question-answer pairs that are later distributed and categorized according to the researcher's analysis. He states that through this process the researcher's assumptions are imposed on the interviewees as these are not allowed to express the reason behind their choice of answers. Consequently, the interviewees' conceptions are usually ignored. In open-ended interview formats, however, participants are allowed to speak freely and in their own terms, which contributes to a more in-depth understanding of the reasons and motives behind their answers.

⁵⁵See appendix 5, which contains all the open-ended questions developed and approved with the help and advice of an expert panel. See appendices 2 and 3 respectively to view a copy of the requested assistance letter to the experts and their feedback.

Third, as to maintaining Christian identity, questions were developed and designed to prompt the leadership to describe how it was possible for their congregation to engage in culture engagement for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission while preserving biblical and theological orthodoxy. Fourth, as to defining successful organizational change, some questions were developed to allow the leadership to define in their own words what successful organization change in the church meant to them in light of the Scriptures.

Finally, the study also sought to identify distinctive markers among the church's leadership approach to congregational change that demonstrated best practices for leading organizational change within the context of ministry of an urban setting.

Three independent professionals were enlisted to analyze the interview protocol. This effort included the evaluation of individual questions, approval of my thesis supervisor as well securing approval from the seminary ethics committee.⁵⁶ The interviews and professional review of the interview protocol helped ensure the validity of the data collection instrument.⁵⁷ Instrument validation ensured that the interview protocol accurately reflected the sought results.

⁵⁶I requested and received the support for this part of the research by presenting the interview protocol and question format to my Southern Baptist Seminary thesis supervisor, Shane W. Parker. Additionally, I enlisted the expert advice of established leaders in ministry based organizations such as: David L. Allen, Dean of the School of Theology at The Southwestern Theological Seminary; Paul Chitwood, Executive Director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention; and E. Linsey Gunn, Senior Associate with the Cambrian Consulting Group in Montgomery, Alabama. All three experts have a well-established track record as leaders in managing and facilitating organizational change in their respective fields. The experts' suggestions and comments are found in appendix 3.

⁵⁷Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 329. Krippendorff states that validation provides compelling reasons for taking the results of scientific research seriously. He writes, "A measurement instrument is considered valid if it measures what its user claims it measures." I specifically enlisted the advice of my thesis supervisor as well as that of the field experts in order to ensure that the open-ended questions for the interviews were designed to provide ample opportunities to do an in-depth examination and analysis of the responses given by the participating leaders on the topic of leading organizational change in the local church.

The interview protocol contained the suggested modifications offered by the field experts. All interviews were carried out via face-to-face interaction with the leadership participants at each site. The responses to each question were transcribed using Microsoft Office and subsequently transferred into NVivo 10, the qualitative research software that was used for interpreting the data analysis in this research study.⁵⁸

Observation Protocol

In tandem with the personal interviews of the organizations' leaders and team members, time and opportunities were allocated to conduct a direct observation of normal operational routines and practices at each participating site. During the observations, data was collected on the daily procedural affairs, walk-throughs of the sites, conversations with participating personnel as well as official and informational documents stating the position and philosophical position of each church on a variety of issues.

Additional opportunities to gather data included access to the facilities during regular services. These opportunities provided me with familiarity as to the layout of each participating site. It also presented a chance to observe the leadership in full engagement mode with the congregation and its visitors, which included preaching the Word of God. The preaching aspect was also evaluated for content related to the matters of mission, culture engagement, and application of the Word.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Pat Bazeley and Kristi Jackson, *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013), 2–3. NVivo 10 is a computerized qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) used in research projects that involve interpretation of unstructured or semi-structured data. The reasons behind using NVivo are multiple because it can be used for exploration, description, comparison, pattern analysis, theory testing, theory building, or evaluation of data. Overall, NVivo 10 helps the researcher manage data, manage ideas, query data, visualize data, and ultimately report on the data findings in cohesive fashion.

⁵⁹The leadership at all three participating sites broadcast or post their services online. This provided ample opportunity to further analyze and engage the preaching content and correlate it to the churches' mission statements as well as their theological and doctrinal positions.

Pictographic samples from each site have been included and can be found in appendix 7.⁶⁰ All information collected was subject to data coding and analysis through manual and computerize means. The purpose of the observation data was to triangulate data from interviews and document analysis.⁶¹

Document Collection

Prior to the site visits, copious amount of information was obtained through the participants' own websites as well as other platforms in which information related to the leadership philosophy and ministry approach was available. Additional documentation was acquired on site during the visits. As stated previously, the purpose behind document analysis was to triangulate data collected through observations and personal interviews to increase validity. Likewise, data composed through document analysis was subjected to the same level of rigorous coding and content analysis as interviews and observation data to ensure reliability and validity.⁶²

Data Analysis

Leedy and Ormrod claim that data collection and analysis in case study research often occurs in a concurrent fashion. They describe the data analysis in the following sequence: description, analysis, and interpretation.⁶³ Upon completion of personal interviews, on-site observations, and documents collection, I analyzed the

⁶⁰See appendix 7 for pictographic samples of the three congregations involved in the research study.

⁶¹Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 89. In qualitative content analysis, interpretation of the data is supported by the connection and interlacing of quotes from analyzed documents and literature about the subject. Later the texts' content and analysis is drawn into conclusions. Parallels are built by engaging in triangulation that can identify patterns, ideas, and phrases within the textual data.

⁶²Yin, *Case Study Research*, 49. In order to increase reliability in case study research, Yin recommends making as many steps in the research process as possible and to conduct the process in way that another researcher could, in principle, repeat the procedures and perhaps arrive at the same results.

⁶³Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research Design*, 144.

content results for characteristics relevant for answering the research question.⁶⁴ The content data analysis involved reviewing coding assignments, categorizing, synthesizing, and interpreting the information attained from the data sources.⁶⁵ This analysis resulted in the discovery of patterns, explanations, and comprehension of the phenomena of organizational change in the participating sites.

The process of data analysis involved five phases: (1) examining the data, (2) categorizing the data, (3) tabulating/coding the data, (4) testing the evidence, and (5) reporting in writing empirically based findings.⁶⁶ Once all of the interviews were transcribed, the data was uploaded and organized utilizing the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10.⁶⁷ Due to the significant quantity of data collected throughout the research process in the form of interviews, field notes, observation memos, and organizational documents, it became vital to ensure safe storage of these and any other sensitive material. Consequently, the data was appropriately labeled and stored in multiple devices as well as saved electronically in the NVivo 10 software in two separate personal computers.⁶⁸

Prior to coding the data, I developed five sets of descriptors drawn from the interview protocols.⁶⁹ The interview questions were purposely designed to probe the

⁶⁴Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 176.

⁶⁵Dawson Hancock and Bob Algozzine, *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers* (New York: Teacher's College, 2011), 440, Kindle.

⁶⁶Yin, *Case Study Research*, 132.

⁶⁷NVivo is produced by QSR International, a well-known developer of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (QDA) software products. For more information on NVivo, visit the QSR International website at <http://www.qsrinternational.com/default.aspx>.

⁶⁸Creswell, *Research Design*, 100. Creswell recommends keeping the raw data and other research material for a reasonable period of time. He states that the American Psychological Association recommends a minimum of five years.

⁶⁹Content and markers for the descriptors needed to fall within the following areas: meaningful culture engagement, mission of the church, maintaining Christian identity, successful organizational change

leadership in the churches in the area of organizational change and whether successful organizational change was possible while preserving biblical and theological orthodoxy. Consequently, I expected to attain information related to markers for best practices and evidence of biblical and theological orthodoxy throughout the organizational change process. The descriptors played an essential role in the organization of data during the coding and testing process.

Each of the three case files was reviewed for inductive patterns that helped explain the collected data in each descriptor category.⁷⁰ Shared words, common themes, and general ideas emanating from the data were classified into appropriate categories thus creating meanings closely sought to answer the research question.⁷¹ During this process, unique statements and leadership philosophies expressed by the participants were examined, categorized, and allocated in sectors of decoded information that was utilized in the reporting process in support of suggested best practices for leading organizational change in the local church. Close attention was given to inferences made by the participants to best practices explicitly mentioned while answering other interview questions related to organizational change.

Once the data analysis process was completed, new data, including shared words, common themes, and general ideas, were juxtaposed to the best practices identified from the literature review. The purpose of the current research study, as

leadership, and best practices in leading organizational change.

⁷⁰Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 162, Kindle. Inductive research derives themes, categories, typologies, and concepts from collected data. Merriam explains that inductive research hopes to find a theory that explains the collected data while deductive research hopes to find the data to match a theory.

⁷¹Ibid., 97, Kindle. Merriam claims that “focusing on meaning in context requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. She argues that human beings are the best suited instruments for this singular task particularly because interviewing, observing, and analyzing are activities central to qualitative research.”

established by its title, was to identify best practices for leading organizational change in the local church.

The ultimate goal was to understand and identify markers that demonstrate best practices among church leaders in implementing organizational change in their congregations without forsaking Christian biblical and theological orthodoxy. Consequently, the final report of findings sought to answer the question “What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?”

Regarding reliability of findings in qualitative research, Weber argues that there are three pertinent types in content analysis—stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Stability refers to the extent to which the results of content classification remain unchanged over time. Reproducibility refers to the extent to which content classification produces the same results when the same data is coded by a different researcher and accuracy refers to the extent to which the classification of the data corresponds to a standard or norm.⁷²

On the other hand, also addressing reliability in qualitative research, Creswell quotes Lincoln and Guba’s naturalistic approach as “one seeking dependability rather than reliability.”⁷³ Lincoln and Guba use alternative terms that in their opinion are more appropriate for their naturalistic approach to qualitative research. Rather than internal validation, external validation, reliability, and objectivity, they use terms that convey

⁷²Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, locs. 224–49, Kindle. In the long term, essential to the reliability of this study will be any future findings in research related to SBC churches in the urban ministry context engaging in organizational change. Areas to consider would include engagement of the culture through organizational change as part of the mission of the church while remaining orthodox in theological and biblical doctrine, the leadership of those churches answering the same questions in the original open-ended interview within the same range of the type of content and categories found in this study, and future findings that identify accurately successful organizational change patterns and markers utilizing similar literature review material as well as using the same type of research methodology and artifacts of this study.

⁷³Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 246.

trustworthiness. These terms include credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.⁷⁴

Creswell considers “validation in qualitative research an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants. This view also suggests that any report of the research is a representation of the author”⁷⁵ He, along with Miller, has suggested some strategies for validating accuracy in qualitative research. They place all nine of their strategies under three philosophical paradigms approaches to research, namely, post positivists or systematic, constructivism, and critical.

Additionally, Creswell and Miller assign distinctive lenses to accompany each philosophical assumption paradigm; these lenses belong to the researcher, the study participants, and people external to the study.⁷⁶ Creswell recommends the use of at least two of these validation strategies by a qualitative researcher for “any given study.”⁷⁷

The present study utilized three of the verification strategies suggested by Creswell and Miller: triangulation, member checking, and rich-thick description. The reason for using three validation techniques as opposed to a minimum of two, as recommended by Creswell, is that one additional strategy helps increase the validity of

⁷⁴Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 246. Lincoln and Guba’s naturalistic research approach to reliability is more flexible in both language and implementation than Weber’s stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Creswell finds the naturalistic approach to reliability to be widely popular in the world of qualitative research. The key element in the naturalistic approach is that the researcher is looking for confirmability rather than objectivity in establishing the value of the data.

⁷⁵Ibid., 249–50.

⁷⁶John W. Creswell and Dana L. Miller, “Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry,” *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 124–30. See table 1.

⁷⁷Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 253.

the study’s findings. It also offers another perspective from the three paradigm assumption lenses suggested by Creswell and Miller.⁷⁸

Table 1. Creswell and Miller Validity and Lens Categories

Validity Procedures Within Qualitative Lens’ and Paradigm Assumptions			
Paradigm Assumptions/Lens’	Post Positivist or Systematic Paradigm	Constructivist Paradigm	Critical Paradigm
Lens of the Researcher	Triangulation	Disconfirming evidence	Researcher reflexivity
Lens of Study Participants	Member checking	Prolonged engagement in the field	Collaboration
Lens of People External to the Study (Reviewers, Readers)	The audit trail	Thick, rich description	Peer debriefing

Creswell and Miller define triangulation as a “validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories of a study.”⁷⁹ This study sought to merge the common themes, statements, words, and practices emanating from the data gathered from diverse sources within each participating organization to formulate a body of best practices, as demonstrated by model church ministries, for leading organizational change in the local church.

Member checking involves utilizing the participants in the study to become actively engaged in providing feedback regarding the findings of the study: “It consists of

⁷⁸These paradigm assumption lenses belong to me as the researcher, the participants, and ultimately the reviewers and/or readers of the research study.

⁷⁹Creswell and Miller, “Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry,” 126.

taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so they can confirm the credibility of the information.”⁸⁰ Lincoln and Guba describe this particular validation technique as “the most crucial . . . for establishing credibility.”⁸¹ Participants received a transcript or audio recording from their interviews as well as data visualization charts that depicted the frequency and themes found in their responses. Opportunities were granted to them to provide constructive feedback to correct misconceptions or to confirm the findings in the data.

Rich-thick description was used to convey a better understanding of the findings by deeply analyzing through word frequency data, emphasis, and detailed participants’ quotes the assortment of themes emerging from the study. Creswell claims that “when qualitative researchers provided detailed descriptions of the setting, for example, or offer many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer.”⁸² Such a procedure has the potential of adding to the validity of the research study.

Report of Findings

Upon completion and verification of the data, a written summary of the finding in this multiple-case study was issued by means of a descriptive narrative and graphic data visualization. Merriman makes the case that in multiple-case studies there are two stages for presenting the findings. These stages are called within-case and cross-case findings. In the report of the within-case findings, each case was treated as a comprehensive unit in its own merits. Meanwhile, the cross-case findings required an inductive approach that sought to create generalizations across the three cases.⁸³

⁸⁰Creswell and Miller, “Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry,” 127.

⁸¹Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1985), 314.

⁸²Creswell, *Research Design*, 201.

⁸³Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 204.

Yin argues that “both individual cases and multiple cases results can and should be the focus of the summary report.”⁸⁴ In keeping with Yin’s contention regarding multiple-case studies, this study endeavored to build a general explanation across cases that provided an overall explanation with a common meaning to the topic of leading organizational change in the local church while maintaining biblical and theological orthodoxy.⁸⁵

⁸⁴Yin, *Case Study Research*, 59.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 148.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Through observation of three purposefully selected research sites, this study endeavored to identify the representative best practices for leading organizational change in the local church as practiced within an urban context and without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. The present chapter describes the compilation and analysis of all data collected in this multiple-case study. The general discoveries and data visualization of the findings will be addressed in concurrence with the research question. The findings will be reviewed with special attention given to distinctive characteristics of each participating site. Finally, the overall strength and weaknesses of the methodology will be addressed.

Compilation Protocol

The study proceeded in three phases. The first phase involved the collection of data from relevant documents, site observations, and semi-structured leadership and staff interviews. Through the use of purposeful sampling, three Southern Baptist Churches in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area were selected for the study.¹ Although only three sites were chosen, invitations were sent to more than twenty churches within the geographical population of the study. The final purposeful samples include three sites with twelve participants.

¹John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications), 189. Purposely selecting participants or sites serves the objective of helping the researcher to better understand the problem and the research question associated with it. It does not require the random sampling or selection of a large number of participants and sites as with quantitative research methodologies.

The study focused on the participants' subjective experiences related to their leadership and ministerial responsibilities at each site. It was not my purpose to analyze the ministerial success or failure of the individual entities based on their congregational growth and prestige. The main objective was to understand the meaning ascribed to their processes for leading organizational change while engaging the culture and remaining distinctively Christian in their practices both biblically and theologically.

Research Process

The research process followed four standard protocols: (a) collection of site data; (b) interpretation of meaning contained in the data; (c) emergence of new questions based on data analysis; and (d) construction of inductive themes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis using MS Word. Preliminary results were isolated and compared to the list of best practices and models identified through the study's literature review. Additionally, relevant statements made by the leadership on the overall topic of organizational change in the local church were identified for inclusion in the report of the research findings. In order to validate the data, I utilized the qualitative research verification techniques of triangulation, member checking, and rich-thick description.²

Data triangulation. Data triangulation involves the compilation of multiple sources of data including interviews, documents, and observations. Experienced researchers have come to understand, however, that utilizing a variety of data sources does not guarantee lack of error or bias in the analysis of the data. Therefore, additional verification was necessary.

²Creswell, *Research Design*, 201. See also John W. Creswell and Dana L. Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 124–30. The authors provide more in-depth information regarding the use of validation techniques in qualitative research.

Member checking. Member checking was utilized to ensure the prevention of misinterpretation of respondents' statements with the goal of determining that comments were interpreted properly.³ Participant members were asked to verify the authenticity of the data and concurred with the research findings or provide additional insight that may provide more clarity or enhance the understanding of the research problem.

Rich-thick description. Rich-thick description was used to help develop conceptual categories such as themes and key linguistic features that helped illustrate, support, or challenge the hypothetical assumption. This assumption states that it is possible to lead successful organizational change in the local church within an urban ministry context through meaningful culture engagement without forsaking Christian orthodoxy. Merriam states that "thick description . . . is holistic and lifelike, simplifies data to be considered by the reader [and it] illustrates meanings, and communicates tacit knowledge."⁴

Demographic and Sample Data

From a general population composed of medium, large, to mega-size Southern Baptist Convention churches who are intentionally engaging in organizational change in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area, the study's sampling pool included twelve participants from three case sites: Lakeland Baptist Church in Lewisville, Texas; Sunnyvale First Baptist Church in Sunnyvale, Texas; and The Village Church in Flower Mound, Texas.

The individual participants were given the opportunity to remain anonymous if they chose as the study was primarily focused on gathering information related to best

³Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 198.

⁴Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 49.

practices and organizational change philosophy. Nonetheless, their permission was secured in writing to publish their names, years in ministry, and leadership positions as summarized in Table 3. Likewise, the participating sites data have been made public for this study, and their demographic data has also been summarized in Table 2.

Furthermore, although the investigative process would have been expedited by pairing or grouping the participants during the interview process, each participant was interviewed individually. While conducting interviews for her qualitative doctoral dissertation, Trascritti found that participants were inclined to give different answers in their responses based on whether they were interviewed together or individually.⁵ It is my conviction that the individual interview approach yields the greater degree of accuracy and validity for gathering data.⁶

Findings and Displays

One research question was used to organize the data visualization and communication of findings from this study. This question was designed to explore the practice of leadership in guiding organizational change by SBC model churches operating in an urban context. A unique criterion to the research question involves the location of these model churches within the urban context. To enhance the value of the findings from this multiple site case study, the data presented here includes unique characteristics for leading organizational change as identified in the individual participating sites. The study also offers visual and descriptive data from the cumulative cross-case findings.

⁵Maria Teresa Trascritti, "Marriage Mentoring with Couples in Marital Crisis: A Qualitative Study" (Ed.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 68.

⁶Although the participants interviewed for the research study belong to a reputable organization such as the church, I opted to do the individual interview model in order to provide the participants with ample room to elaborate on their answers without interruptions, concerns, or apprehensions about their statements. The results yielded by the interviews seemed to confirm the wisdom of such an approach.

Table 2. Participating sites: Demographic data

Church Name	Denomination	Membership ⁷	Location ⁸
Lakeland Baptist Church (LBC)	Southern Baptist Convention	500	Dallas-Ft. Worth Metropolitan Area – Lewisville, TX
Sunnyvale First Baptist Church (SFBC)	Southern Baptist Convention	1500	Dallas-Ft. Worth Metropolitan Area – Sunnyvale, TX
The Village Church (TVC)	Southern Baptist Convention	10,000	Dallas-Ft. Worth Metropolitan Area – Flower Mound., TX

Table 3. Individual participants: Demographic data

Name	Campus	Years in Ministry	Leadership Position
Donald Schmidt	LBC	1	Senior Pastor
Glen Blanscet	LBC	15	Executive Pastor
Mitchell Martin	LBC	4	Education Minister
Jesse Payne	LBC	4	Pastor of Students
Adam Dooley	SFBC	16	Senior Pastor
Mickey Henderson	SFBC	36	Spiritual Development Pastor
Wayne Wible	SFBC	20	Membership Development Pastor
Jeremy Fisher	SFBC	2	Pastor of Students
Jered Musgrove	TVC	8	Groups Pastor/Elder
Michael Dsane	TVC	8	Groups Minister
Geoff Ashley	TVC	9	Groups Minister
Rob Daniels	TVC	7	Connections Minister

⁷Thom Rainer, “Largest Churches in the Southern Baptist Convention,” *ThomRainer.com*, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://thomrainer.com/2014/07/2014-update-largest-churches-southern-baptist-convention/>. SFBC reports over 1,500 members while TVC reports over 10,000. Lakeland Baptist Church currently reports over 500 active members.

⁸According to the U.S. Census, the combined statistical area (CSA) of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan areas is home to approximately 6.8 million, residents making it the largest concentration of inhabitants in the southern United States. See <http://www.census.gov/>. The North Texas area is also the fastest area of population growth in the country. See Eric Aasen, “Dallas-Fort Worth Area Topping the Nation in Population Growth,” *The Dallas Morning News*, March 24, 2010, accessed August 20, 2015, <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/dallas/headlines/20100324-Dallas-Fort-Worth-area-topping-the-7663.ece>.

Research Question

What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?

Research Hypothesis

It is possible for the leadership in the local church to lead effective organizational change in the urban context through meaningful culture engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Summary of Findings

When viewed through the lens of organizational change theory, this multiple-case study validates the majority of best practices identified through the literature review. It also validates distinctive practices common to all three participating sites that are unique to the ministry context of the local church. The data analysis suggests that leaders in the local church ministering in an urban context embrace five distinctive best practices. These five distinctive and cross-case best practices are: (1) doctrine and theology inform practice, (2) discipleship engagement, (3) preaching for change, (4) adaptation and flexibility, and (5) internal culture change through transformational leadership. The research findings support the research hypothesis that local church leadership in the urban ministry context practice successful organizational change through meaningful culture engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Introduction

The research question examined the leadership style of the three individual sites through the perspective of an organizational change leadership model. Primary sources included field visits, data compiled from the participants' websites, and printed materials from training and public relations sources. Review of documents provided a

nonthreatening method for analyzing the leadership perspective and attitudes as well as norms exhibited by several layers of leadership at each participating site. The study endeavored to understand how each participating organization creates and supports an environment of successful and continuous organizational change with meaningful cultural engagement without compromising their Christian identity.

Theoretical Lens

Two of the main theoretical influences behind this study on organizational change leadership are those of John Kotter, Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr's studies and published models on organizational change. Kotter's secular organizational change leadership model offers a philosophical and prescriptive approach to change for organizations within a business context. On the other side, Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's model for organizational change offers a unique perspective for leading change in the church from a Christian perspective.

Kotter is a prominent expert and well-known authority in the field of organizational change leadership. He has reduced the phenomenon of change to a basic 8-step process that if adhered to faithfully can provide an organization with a successful change experience that culminates in a transformed organizational culture ready to accomplish any task. Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's approach borrows openly from Kotter's model in a non-prescriptive way. However, their model, the Transformation Journey Model, is an insightful approach to change that addresses the dynamics and complexity of leading organizational change from a biblical and theological perspective. Although, the Transformational Journey Model is not without its critics, it presents a legitimate model for engaging in organizational change that church leaders must consider as they embark on this challenging task.⁹

⁹Most of the criticism directed at the Transformation Change Model arises from arguments pertaining to the authors' perceived borrowing from general and business theories and the placing of

Descriptive Data

The research question drew upon my understanding of what is commonly known as change management. It sought to understand the role that this phenomena plays in the life of the church as it seeks to engage the culture around it to fulfill the biblical mandate of the Great Commission. Through the data collection process, I discovered that the leadership of all three congregations truly understood that engagement of the culture requires purposeful and necessary internal culture change on the part of their congregations. Although each participating local church in this study as an organizational unit has a distinctive culture and identity, they are fully committed to fulfilling the mandate of Christ to make disciples of all nations starting in their own communities.

An excellent example of the participating churches' commitment to engaging in making new disciples is the language of their organizational mission statements and how these statements shape the programs and approach of their ministries. Each mission statement reflects the church's level of shared commitment and passion for the gospel and for making it known to all people beyond their walls. The mission statements capture in their essence the process by which they are making Christ known. They also capture the means and processes by which making Christ known happens, as well as the expectation of their commitment that is to bring glory to God.

For instance, TVC lives by its mission statement, which permeates through every programmatic element and function of the organization. The Village Church claims that its existence is to bring glory to God by making disciples through the process of Gospel-Centered Community, Gospel-Centered Worship, Gospel-Centered Service, and

Scripture around these theories and practices to support their best practices. It seems that such criticism, although necessary in order to heighten awareness on the part of church leaders, is driven by fear and apprehension to accept the common wisdom and creativity emanating from men and women created in the image of God. This research study departs from the assumption that despite the unregenerate nature of secular theorists, such people can provide insightful and practical advice that is neutral in nature. As always, it is a sound and wise practice to use the lens of Scripture to assess the validity of every epistemological argument.

Gospel-Centered Multiplication.¹⁰ The multiplicity of instances for using a “Gospel-Centered” mission statement testifies of the leadership’s commitment in ensuring that the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the center of everything the church does. A clear example of this is the role that TVC’s mission statement plays in its engagement of the culture around it.

Lakeland Baptist Church (LBC) claims that the reason for its existence is “to honor and glorify God by obeying Jesus’ command to make disciples of all people and nations.”¹¹ LBC, however, goes on to explain its strategy for making disciples and turning them into mature believers. The leadership also explains the role of worship, the duty of funding the mission of the church, the expectation for a multiplying ministry, and the service expected of Christ’s disciples.

Lastly, Sunnyvale First Baptist Church (SFBC) combines its mission and vision statement to articulate its purpose for existing. Its mission and vision statements clearly state that “the purpose of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is to help people know God personally and make Him known publicly throughout the world.”¹² The leadership believes and teaches the congregation that only a personal relationship with Christ makes God truly known. The leadership also teaches its congregation that it is their obligation as members of the local and global church to make God known in the public square. Sunnyvale was unique in its vision statement by stating its identity as a Southern Baptist Convention church that is “theologically and doctrinally conservative, Bible-believing, and Bible-preaching.”¹³

¹⁰See appendix 6 or TVC’s website at <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/about/mission/>.

¹¹See appendix 6 or SFBC’s website at <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us>.

¹²See appendix 6 or SFBC’s website at <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us>.

¹³See appendix 6 or SFBC’s website at <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us>.

Data analysis suggests that the participant churches of this study hold to biblical and theological orthodoxy. The Bible and theology not only inform the leadership's and the congregation's direction but also informs the way in which they successfully engage the culture while leading their institution through organizational change. The leadership of all three participating sites believes that engagement of the culture is not something they choose to do but rather something they are obligated to do. They believe that it is a moral and ethical responsibility to reach people with the gospel of Christ as they faithfully engage the culture.

Lakeland Baptist Church. Lakeland Baptist Church is a medium size congregation of over 500 members. The church has seen a few changes and challenges in leadership in the last six years. Lakeland's third pastor led the congregation for over 30 years. His successor led it for almost five years with limited success and plenty of hardship. However, Lakeland's current pastor has led the congregation for one year with tremendous results. Prayer, a dynamic leadership, a visionary spirit, and powerful expository preaching seem to be translating into successful organizational change. The congregation's culture has seen a positive internal transformation and the outlook for the future seems brighter than ever.

Lakeland has been a very traditional church whose elderly population has been declining as new and younger members have started to fill the seats. It is an SBC pastor led congregation in its polity. There is a body of deacons whose role is to serve the congregation and provide counsel and support to the pastor as needed. No elders are part of the leadership structure at Lakeland. Moreover, although, Lakeland's leadership model is not changing in the foreseeable future, its approach to ministry is. The themes of culture change and culture engagement have become infectious through the leadership of its new pastor and its ministerial team as they seek to equip its congregational base to impact the culture around them.

Lakeland's transformation in the last year has been unique. Its congregation is reaching out to the community and the world at large with more energy and focus. There is a new Scripture-based mission statement that plays a central role in the life of this church and it is beginning to shape the direction and orientation of the congregation in every possible way.¹⁴

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church. Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a 1,500 member SBC church located in one of the fastest growing regions of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. Its polity is also pastor-led. Sunnyvale, however, has non-ruling elders that serve in an advisory role to the senior pastor. The church also has deacons whose role is to serve and provide assistance to the ministry needs of the congregation in accordance with a biblical model.

The pastor at SFBC has been with the congregation for one year. His goal is to expand the reach of the church in terms of the population around it. The church campus is located in a prime location near two major highways. The infrastructure of the church allows for plenty of room to grow. The leadership at SFBC has started to implement organizational changes with the intent of making its congregation more prompt and equipped to engage the community and the culture around it with the gospel. This objective has already prompted several minor but significant changes that have also included its pastor's approach. In order to present a more inviting and nonthreatening approach to visitors, the pastor has toned down his attire to be more inviting. He has done this while preserving the powerful expository preaching of the gospel for which he is well-known. This step, although it may not seem very significant to those unfamiliar with institutional denominational tradition, is very significant for a traditional church. This

¹⁴See appendix 6 or LBC's website at <http://www.lakelandbaptist.org/about-us/what-we-believe/>.

change has led to a new and increasing number of visitors to SFBC, who are continually expressing the feeling that the church seems more inviting and welcoming of them.

The Village Church. The Village Church is a mega and multi-site church consisting of about ten thousand members across five campuses in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. Although, the average growth of the congregation has been about a thousand members per year, the staff at the church has remained consistently low when compared to other ministry organizations of its size. The Village Church currently has about 150 staff members, including interns.¹⁵ Structurally, the church polity functions under an elder-led system in which all elders have equal voice and vote in the decision-making process.¹⁶

The church has three primary leaders who engage in constant discussion and planning regarding the day-to-day operations of the church. One minister, known as the teaching pastor, is charged with the preparation and delivery of the Word of God. A second minister, known as the leadership pastor, is in charge of the management and direction of the church. A third minister, the pastor of services, is in charge of the day-to-day operations of the church. It must be stated that due to the nature of the church having multiple sites, there is an overall executive team made up of all seven lead pastors and nine additional elders for a total of sixteen men.¹⁷

¹⁵This interesting note was provided to me by the one the senior leaders and elders of the main (and original) church office located in Flower Mound, TX. What is most telling about this number is that the church despite its size of over 10,000 members has maintained a fairly small administrative staff, which has allowed it to be not only fiscally responsible but able to spend money on other ministry opportunities.

¹⁶To read more about TVC's polity, see <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/about/beliefs/bylaws/>.

¹⁷The seven lead pastors of TVC are also considered elders. All sixteen men make decisions that impact the operations of the central church as well as its sister churches. For clarification purposes, every individual campus also has its own team of elders to attend to the daily matters that arise, which are unique to each congregation.

Best Practices

In order to ascertain distinctive best practices by church leaders in leading organizational change in the local church, it was necessary to establish the presence of established best practices in the day-to-day operations of their organizations. Particular attention was given to the original seven best practices singled out by this study and promoted by Kotter's and Harrington et al. models. These practices are personal preparation and spiritual leadership, establishing a sense of urgency, vision casting, effective communication, empowerment of members, effective use of teams, and transformational leadership that leads to establishment of a new organizational culture. Upon gathering and authenticating the data, the collected information was triangulated to verify the phenomenon of organizational change. Once verified, the new data were examined for similar best practices correlated to those in the literature review and those unique to the context of the local church.

Established Best Practices

The literature review related to this study about leading organizational change yielded seventeen best practices for implementing the process.¹⁸ However, the literature review devoted particular attention to exploring seven unique best practices. These practices embodied both unique and similar approaches from Kotter's 8-step model and Herrington et al. 9-step Transformational Journey Model for leading organizational change. Both models were comprehensively covered in the precedent literature review.

The purpose of this study was to discover and identify best practices for leading organizational change in the local church in an urban context of ministry.

¹⁸Although it appears as if the Transformational Journey Model contains thirteen strategies, it actually consists of nine. The authors consider the following: generating and sustaining creative tension, harnessing the power of mental models, enabling team learning, and practice of systems thinking to be disciplines under the umbrella of transformational leadership. Kotter's Eight-Stage Model, on the other hand, considers teaming and member empowerment as separate stages in his proposal for leading organizational change.

Therefore, a detailed data analysis was conducted of every piece of information by each participating site and it was then compared against the list of established best practices from the literature review. Using NVivo 10 qualitative analysis software, it was possible to isolate every single instance in which the language and descriptors associated with each particular best practice were utilized by the local church's leadership. The leadership used this language and descriptors to define their organizational change efforts. Figures 1 and 2 contain the results of the findings.

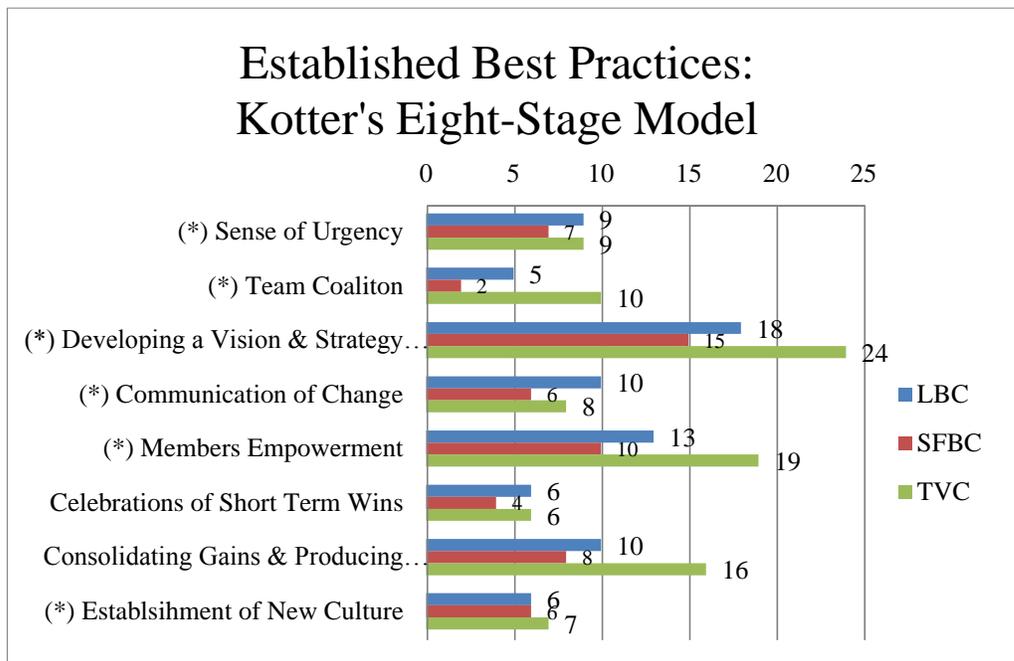


Figure 1. Best practices by participants exhibited by number of occurrences using Kotter's Eight-Stage Model for Leading Organizational Change; (*) = strategies selected for research by this study

The purpose behind this step was two-fold. First, it was to separate distinctive best practices for leading organizational change as exhibited by church leaders in the participating sites. Second, it was to conduct a comparative analysis of the best practices

promoted by the models of Kotter and Herrington et al. This analysis was done to classify their best practices and correlate them to the best practices discovered at the three participating sites. From the 17 best practices allocated from the literature review, 8 are promoted by Kotter’s 8-Stage model while 9 are promoted by Herrington, Bonem, and Furr’s Transformational Journey Model as illustrated by figure 2.



Figure 2. Best practices by participants exhibited by number of occurrences using the Transformational Leadership Model for Leading Organizational Change; (*) = strategies selected for research by this study; (**) = best practices unique to the Transformational Journey Model

As demonstrated by the data in figures 1 and 2, the presence of both sets of practices ascribed to Kotter’s and the Transformational Journey’s models were found and reflected in the best practices implemented by the leadership in the participating local

churches as they engaged in the task of organizational change. Even those best practices not selected for in-depth study were found present. The best practices of making personal preparation and the establishment of the disciplines of transformational leadership were unique best practices present only in the Transformational Journey Model. Unique to Kotter’s model were the celebration of short-term wins and the establishment of a new culture through the repetition of his change process. Table 2 next contains a comparison of both models in their order of progression.

Table 4. Correlating best practices yielded by the literature review; (*) making personal preparation and leadership model transformational leadership disciplines are unique stages to the Transformational Model

Best Practices: Kotter’s Eight-Stage Model	Best Practices: Transformation Journey Model
	<i>(*) Making Personal Preparation (Spiritual Leadership)</i>
Establish a Sense of Urgency	Creating a Sense of Urgency
Creating a Guiding Coalition (Teams)	Establishing the Vision Community (Teams)
Development of Vision & Strategy for Change	Vision Discernment & Determining Visionpath
Effective Communication of the Vision	Communicating the Vision
Empowerment of Members of the Organization	Empowering Change Leaders
Celebration of Short-Term Wins	Implementing the Vision
Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change	Reinforcing Momentum Through Alignment
Establishment of New Culture	<i>(*) Transformational Leadership Disciplines</i> <i>a. Generating and Sustaining Creative Tension</i> <i>b. Harnessing the Power of Mental Models</i> <i>c. Enabling Team Learning</i> <i>d. Practicing Systems Thinking</i>

Figure 3 illustrates the number of instances in which the best practices of teams, communication, sense of urgency, members’ empowerment, vision strategy, and culture change, were discussed during the interviews, reflected on field notes, or

addressed in discussion during site observations. These practices were also present during the deductive and exhaustive data analysis of the organization’s produced documents and public data. Kotter’s and Herrington et al. models include a variation of each of these practices. Communication transfers easily into both approaches. Empowerment of members and leaders is clearly present in both models. Meanwhile, culture change is addressed by Kotter as the establishment of a new culture. Herrington et al. break it down into a list of disciplines that demonstrate culture change through transformational leadership practices (see Table 4).

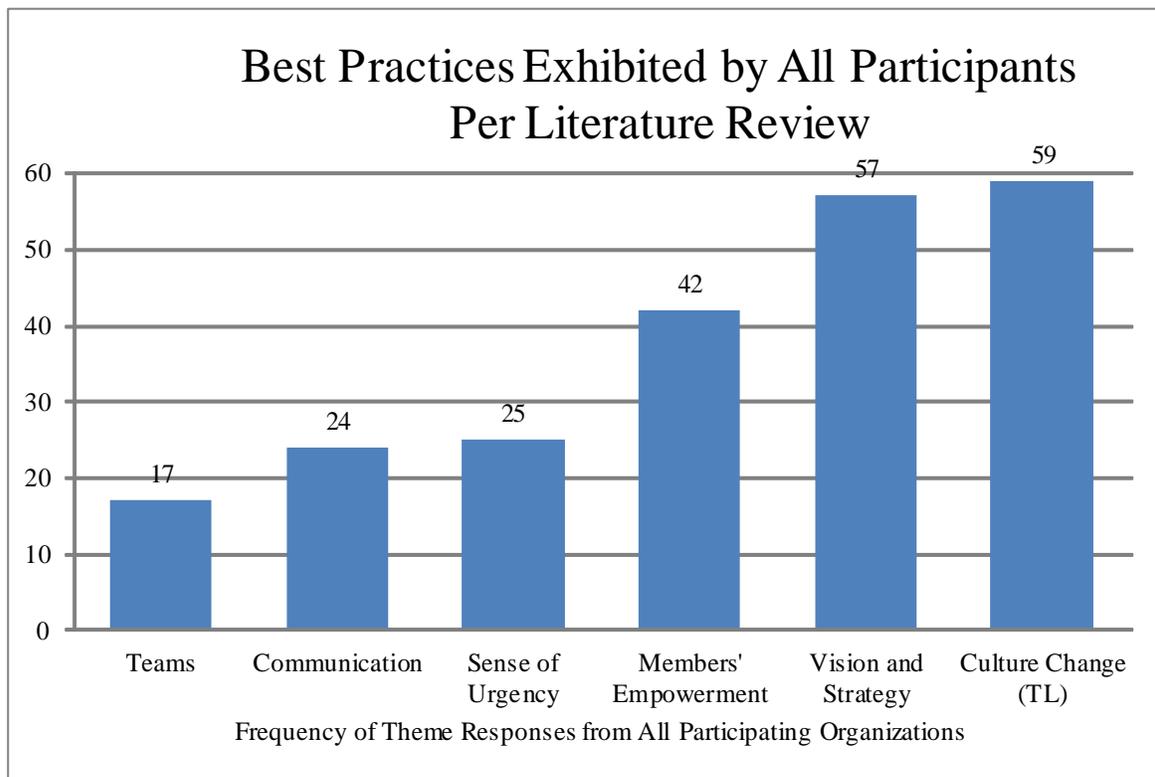


Figure 3. Best Practices exhibited by all participating sites that match Kotter’s model and the Transformational Journey Model by the number of occurrences

The best practices of sense of urgency, teams, and vision and strategy are also prevalent in both models and were widely discussed by the participants as part of their practices and methodology for organizational change implementation. Figures 3 and 4 depict the aggregated data from all participants as well as the individual segregated data by participating site.

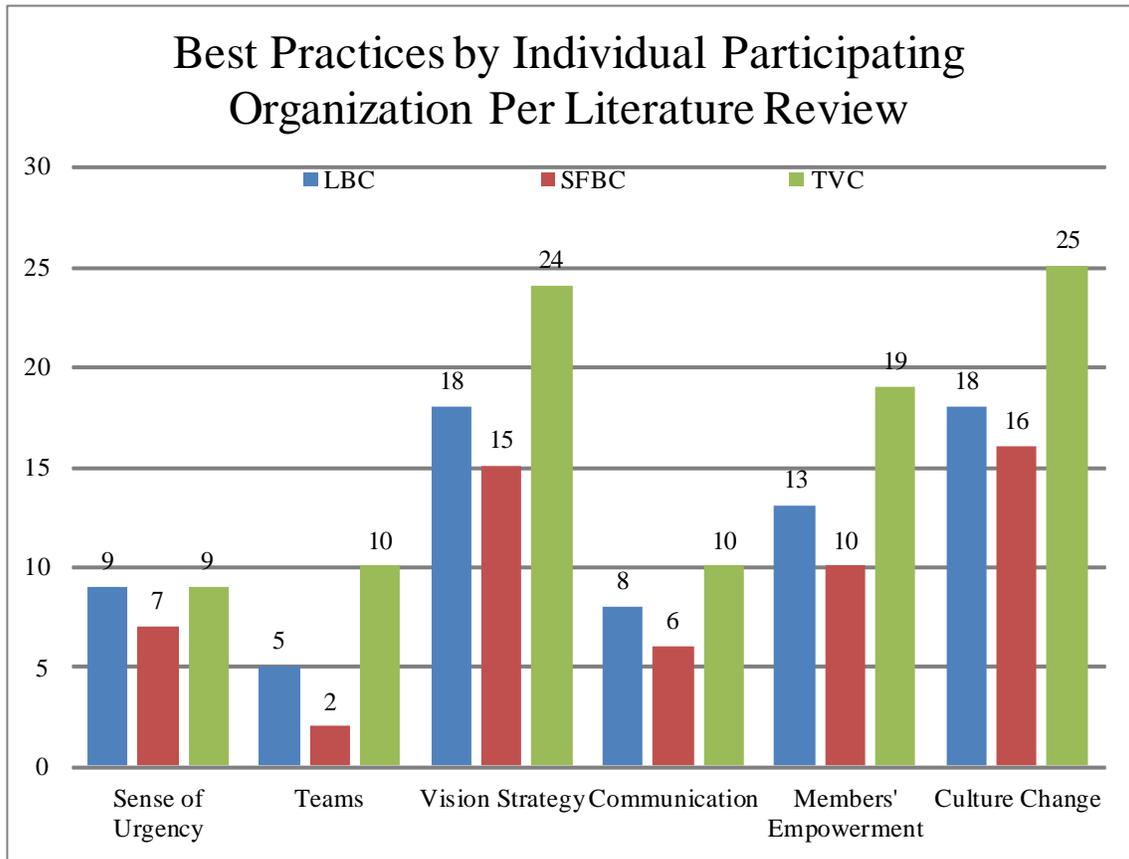


Figure 4. Individual participants' engagement of best practices found in the Kotter model and Transformational Journey Model by number of occurrences

Distinctive Best Practices Yielded by the Research

One of the most significant and encouraging findings was that despite the presence and intertwining of most elements from Kotter’s and Harrington et al. models regarding best practices, the cross-themed analysis conducted by this research yielded three additional best practices that were uniquely Christian in nature and distinctive to the participants environment and organizational context. These distinctive best practices were (1) doctrine and theology inform practice, (2) discipleship engagement, and (3) preaching for change.

Additionally, two supplementary best practices were present in the study that although not distinctively Christian, were addressed with biblical and theological

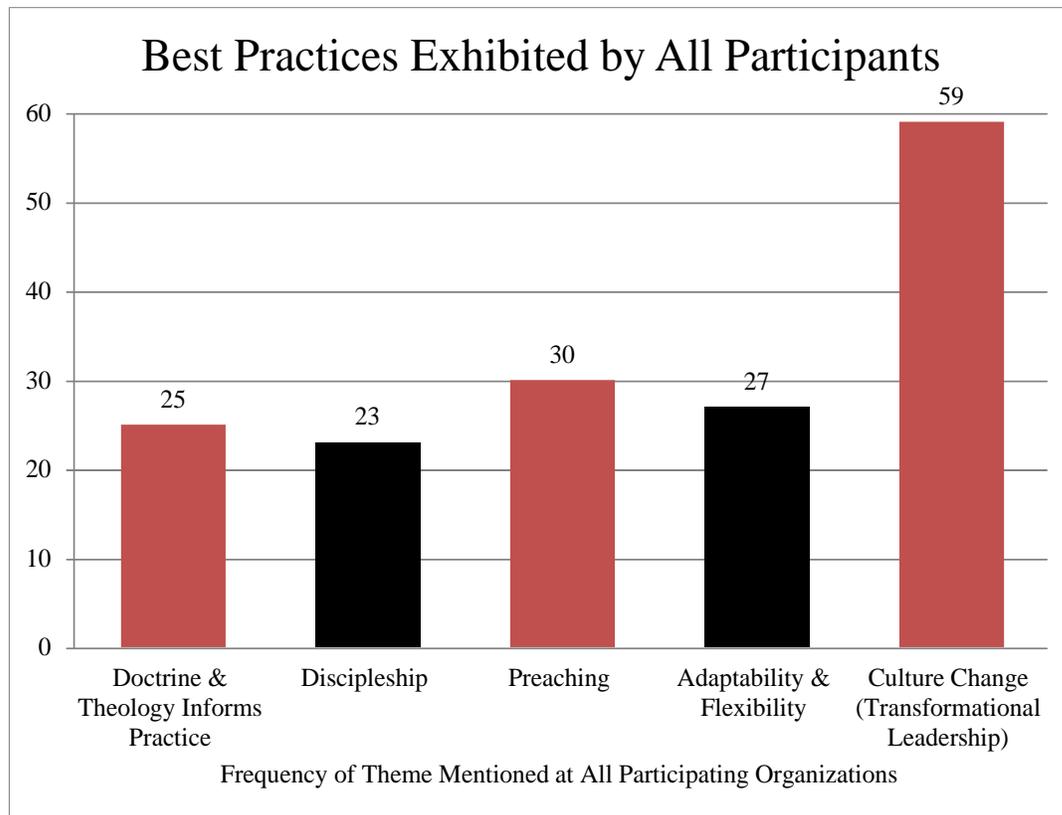


Figure 5. Combined distinctive best practices for leading organizational change among the participating organizations per number of occurrences

elements by the participants as was expected given the setting and organizational nature as the local church. These two best practices were internal culture change through transformational leadership practice and adaptation and flexibility. Figure 5 illustrates the aggregated occurrences of these findings in visual form.

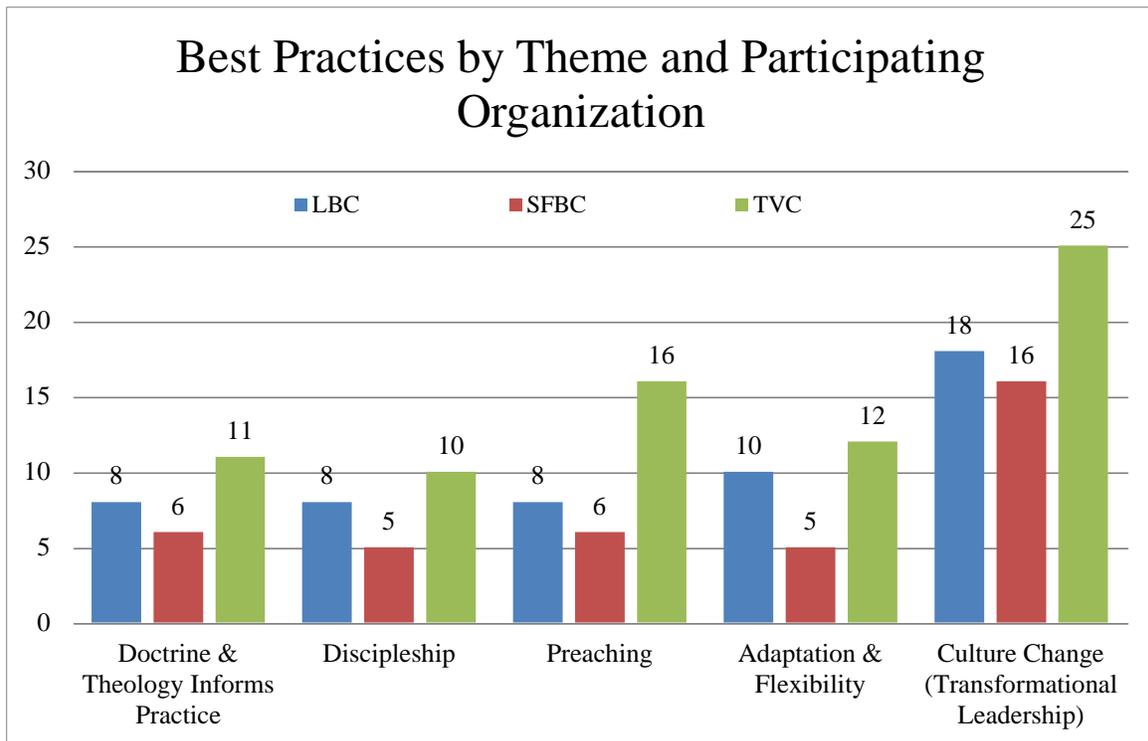


Figure 6. Individual distinctive best practices for leading organizational change by participating organizations per number of occurrences

Figure 6 illustrates the number of occurrences in which the three distinctive Christian best practices were mentioned by each participating organization in the research study as well as the two additional general practices. As mentioned previously, this finding uncovered explicit practices, ideas, and processes that were compiled through a

list of common themes related to the established best practices, leadership interviews, web content, and observations pieces. Additionally, a word frequency analysis was conducted using NVivo 10. The analysis further confirmed the re-occurring themes of biblical and theological nature, which permeated the research findings in these three participating sites.

Next a brief description of each distinctive practice will be given as well as evidence of their presence in the research results through specific illustrations, quotes, and word analysis data.

Doctrine and theology inform practice. The fundamental essence of a true Christian congregation is dictated by its ability to embrace orthodox Christian doctrine and to allow this doctrine to shape its theology and ministry practices. The blending of these two principles will yield a congregation whose practice is firmly grounded in divine truth. Wellum contends that Christians must apply the Scriptures to every aspect of their lives both individually and corporately and that Christian theology requires that God's Word be the final authority that rules [congregants'] "beliefs, doctrine, life, and practices."¹⁹ The centrality of Scripture in the formulation of doctrine is also affirmed by Carson: "The authority of the Bible must be recognized by Christians. The church cannot exist and flourish without unreservedly embracing the Bible."²⁰

It is primarily through Scripture that God reveals himself and bestows his will for his people. Frame asserts that God reveals himself in three distinctive ways, the narrative of his acts, the authoritative description of his nature, and the revealing of his

¹⁹Stephen Wellum "Postconservatism, Biblical Authority, and Recent Proposals for Re-Doing Evangelical Theology: A Critical Analysis," in *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, ed. Millard J. Erickson, Paul Kjoss Helseth, and Justin Taylor (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 161.

²⁰D. A Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 151.

inner life through the trinitarian relationship.²¹ All three of these distinctives are found in the Bible. The Bible, therefore, is the essential and unique instrument by which the church develops doctrine. The norm for all doctrine is thus not to be found in traditions or church practices but in Scripture alone.²²

The concept of having the proper doctrine and theology that informs the right church's practice goes to the core of having a right relationship and fellowship with God. The right belief and proper theological understanding of God will determine how one relates to him and vice versa. John Stott, for example, asserts that "the kind of God we believe in determines the types of sermons we preach"²³ He also argues that our worship of God is poor because our knowledge of him is poor and this is the consequence of poor teaching of doctrine and theology on the part of those who are charged to shepherd the Lord's flock.²⁴ This last declaration is a clear example that a church's leadership with the wrong doctrine will unequivocally lead to an erroneous theology that will result in poor if not heretical practices under the pretense of right Christianity.

All three research participants completely agree that the central foundation and driving force behind their practices should always be informed by a sound and unyielding Christian doctrine and theology.

At Lakeland Baptist Church, one participant stated, "Scripture is our standard for doctrine. We identify from Scripture doctrines that develop our theology [, which is]

²¹John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 16.

²²Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. and Moisés Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 270. Kaiser Jr. and Silva argue that although the doctrines of "faith alone and grace alone" constituted the material principle of the Protestant Reformation, "Scripture alone" was the formal principle of it. Scripture alone became the standard by which church doctrine and theology must be developed.

²³John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 83.

²⁴Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 83.

fundamental to Christianity.” Lakeland’s leadership does not function in isolation as it adheres to biblical doctrines and develops its theological praxis. The leadership is quick to point out that their fundamental “beliefs and teachings are summarized in [their] confession of faith [The Baptist Faith and Message 2000], which is thoroughly biblical and also distinctively faithful to [their] Baptist tradition.” However, as another leader asserted, “We acknowledge and accept the Bible as the ultimate and final authority for all matters of Christian doctrine and practice.”

The leadership at Sunnyvale First Baptist Church stated,

The starting point of [cultural] engagement should be driven by theology, not methodology. The church engages the culture scripturally and theologically above all by moving people toward Christ so that [they] may know him and embrace him. Biblically, the only way the culture can embrace Jesus Christ is by accepting him as the only and true way of salvation by means of faith, through grace, and evidence of repentance.

Table 5. Word frequency chart: Doctrine and theology inform practice

Word Frequency Chart: Doctrine and Theology Inform Practice			
Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
theology	11	4.65	divine, theological, theologically, theology
Scripture	8	3.54	bible, biblical, biblically, scripture, scriptures, word
God	9	3.32	divine, god, worship, worships
doctrine	7	3.10	doctrine, doctrines, philosophy
practice	7	2.88	practical, practice, practices, praxis, useful
Christ	5	2.21	Christ, Jesus
faith	5	2.21	congregation, faith, faithful
fundamental	5	2.21	central, essential, fundamental
gospel	5	2.21	gospel
authority	5	1.99	authority, empowered, source, writers

The leadership further states that organizational change in the local church must be developed in a way that it “allows church [membership] to reach people successfully with the gospel of Christ and disciple them.” The leadership also argues that simple participation in organizational change “does not necessarily reflect good theology and practice,” if the engagement fails to align with the church’s mission of preaching the gospel and making new disciples. The pastor at Sunnyside stated that “the ultimate source of authority for leading God’s people should derive from the Scriptures and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.”

The Village Church exemplifies a fervent desire to submit to the authority of Scripture in all practices while holding to a theology driven by a conservative interpretation of the Bible. One pastor said, “Doctrine and theology have to inform the practices of our church. Theology informs a philosophy of ministry and this guides our practical approach.” The centrality of the gospel to the ministry of TVC is evident in every aspect of the church. Another leader stated that “gospel theology is the filter through which we run everything in our church. If the objective is not centered [on] the gospel, we are not going to do it.” Peck’s research on The Village Church found that the church’s epistemological stance is based on the nature of God’s revealed Word. Peck states, “This conviction was primarily focused on the centrality of Scripture in all teaching, programming, and published writings.”²⁵

The mission statement of TVC is the guiding compass that drives the ministry of the church. It reads, “The Village Church exists to bring glory to God by making disciples through the gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, gospel-centered service, and gospel-centered multiplication.” One leader stated that “any type of organizational change that takes place in our organization must be gospel-centered and

²⁵Kevin Peck, “Examining a Church Culture of Multiplication: A Multiple Case Study” (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 63-64.

distinctively Christian on the area of discipleship within the context of community, worship, service, and multiplication of disciples for the glory of God.”²⁶

Discipleship. Discipleship derives from the Greek word transliterated *mathetes* and it is usually translated as “a disciple,” but it can also be translated as “pupil” or “apprentice.” In its basic meaning, a disciple is a student or learner.²⁷ Wilkins argues, however, that the words “Christian” and “disciple” are not synonymous.²⁸ Morris adds that Christian discipleship means giving one’s first loyalty to Jesus, which translates into a whole-hearted devotion to him and his teachings.²⁹ Wilkins rightly claims that true disciples are those who have placed their faith in Jesus and are now his followers [real] converts.³⁰ Therefore, a disciple is one who has believed and trusted Christ rather than just acknowledged his identity.

For Christians, the spiritual discipline of discipleship is an essential component of the Great Commission and a fundamental trait and great responsibility of those who profess Jesus Christ as Savior.³¹ In Matthew 28, Christ’s followers [his disciples] are

²⁶Joshua Patterson, “Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach As a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth” (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 90-92. Patterson, a Lead Pastor and elder at The Village Church confirms throughout his work that the congregation’s and leadership’s fidelity to the church’s vision statement, which includes the centrality of the gospel in the areas of worship, community, service and multiplication. Such multiplication, according to Patterson, includes not only other disciples but also the reproduction of like-minded churches and congregations.

²⁷Walter Bauer and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 609.

²⁸Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 12.

²⁹Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 253.

³⁰Wilkins, *Following the Master*, 249.

³¹James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001), 293–95. In his treatment of Mark 9:43-48, Edwards makes a compelling and challenging case for the seriousness of misjudging or trivializing the call and commission of discipleship. Jesus gives a stern warning to his disciples as well as to those who would dare impede or forsake the exercise of obedient discipleship.

commanded to preach the gospel and to make disciples of all nations, to baptize them, as well as to teach them to observe everything Jesus had commanded. In this sense, everyone who has believed in Christ's gospel and followed his teachings in obedience from the beginning of Christendom to the present day can be called a disciple.³²

Discipleship in the context of the church goes hand-in-hand with the best practice of doctrine and theology informing practice. The theology of discipleship belongs in the church as the church is made up of Christ's disciples. Moreover, it is in the church where God's glory is on full display as he is worshiped and as his people accomplish his purposes.³³ Consequently, a sound biblical doctrine and theology of discipleship must be connected to the context of a true Christian church.

The best practice of discipleship was strongly represented at each participating organization. In fact, discipleship was a distinctively and unique Christian approach that was a constant presence through almost every piece of data associated with this research study. Lakeland Baptist Church as an organization believes that it is her duty to preach the gospel and to "instruct new believers to become faithful followers of Jesus." Lakeland's pastor believes that at the heart of discipleship is "Christian education and that [leaders] should strive to teach [our members] the doctrines [of the Christian faith] and all that Jesus commanded so that they will know them and thus be able to live them out practically in society."

Lakeland's leadership believes that "repentance and belief in the gospel result in a transformed life and thus in a new ethic for the people of God. [And that] Jesus

³²David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 689–90. Turner explains that discipleship was literal when Jesus was calling people to follow him during his earthly ministry, but as he departed into heaven the concept of following him (discipleship) took on a more metaphorical meaning. Nonetheless, the reality of what discipleship entails for Christians remains the same.

³³Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 110–11.

makes it clear [that] it is necessary for the new community of faith to live out this new ethic in a way that shows society the good works [that proceed from it].” The leadership is resolute that this new ethic of life can only be achieved through the proper and faithful implementation of Christian discipleship.

The leadership at Sunnyvale First Baptist Church adheres to a firm belief that creating a buy-in mentality in the process of leading organizational change is done through discipleship. Sunnyvale’s pastor concludes that “discipleship maturity helps overcome the barrier of believing that the business of the church is more about immature believers than the Great Commission.” In keeping with the theme of mature discipleship, the leadership at SFBC sternly believes that successful organizational change and cultural engagement can only occur when “mature disciples are able to work together despite their differences for the sake of obedience to the biblical mandate to make [other] disciples for Christ.” Additionally, members stated that programs and strategies that fall short of making disciples in accordance to Scripture do not align with Sunnyvale’s mission and are therefore discarded.

The leadership team at The Village Church believes that “it is their job to equip believers in their congregation with the tools and knowledge to live out and spread the gospel.” One leader at TVC put it this way:

The leadership identifies the need for organizational change by methodical observation and evaluation of programs that have the central objective to grow disciples across the generational and gender groups in the congregation. The idea behind this approach is that every demographic group that makes up the congregation can be properly equipped for the purpose of making other disciples in order to bring glory to God.

The theme of equipping believers to live out the gospel permeated a large part of TVC’s approach to discipleship. The leadership and members alike believe that “everyone has the opportunity to reach out to people in every aspect of everyday life and

discuss with them at every chance the gospel of Christ and how their relationship with him has caused them to see the world [from] a different [perspective].”

Table 6. Word frequency chart: Discipleship

Word Frequency Chart: Discipleship			
Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
Christ	10	4.95	Christ, Jesus
congregation	10	4.95	congregation, congregations, faith, faithful
disciples	8	3.96	disciple, disciples
God	8	3.47	God, worship, worships
gospel	7	3.47	gospel
people	5	2.48	people
society	5	2.48	order, society
believers	5	1.98	believers, worship, worships
Christian	4	1.98	Christian, Christians
community	4	1.98	community

Another leader put it this way: “Our congregation’s mission is also to make disciples in obedience to the Scriptures. In fact, our existence is to bring glory to God by making disciples.” The Village church currently faces the challenges that growth brings in the form of need for further equipping of the saints and the development of leaders. In arguing for the need to contextualize the ministry opportunities at their multiple

campuses, Patterson recognizes that multiplication of believers and churches is the byproduct of a “healthy development of leadership and discipleship.”³⁴

Preaching. Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes, “The primary task of the church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God.”³⁵ He also contends that true preaching is the most urgent need of the church and the greatest need of the world as well.³⁶ Lloyd-Jones argues that when the church acts in accordance with its mission, the preaching educates believers, grows them in knowledge and information, and brings them a level of joy, thus making them better than before. However, he quickly affirms that the principal aim of preaching is not to do all the above but to “put man into the right relationship with God, to reconcile man to God.”³⁷

In addressing the power and authority of the preached Word of God, Dever and Gilbert add that it is “the preached Word, which the Holy Spirit uses in a unique way to give and ignite faith in a person’s soul.”³⁸ Consequently, the only way in which a person can develop a true relationship with God is by hearing his Word and responding to it in faith. Eby states that the type of preaching that is anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit is the only preaching able to build up true Christian churches and bring about their growth. He calls it “power preaching.”³⁹ He also contends that it is only through power

³⁴Patterson, “Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach As a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth,” 96-97.

³⁵David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), loc. 302, Kindle.

³⁶*Ibid.*, loc. 130, Kindle.

³⁷Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, locs. 548–57, Kindle.

³⁸Mark Dever and Greg Gilbert, *Preach: Theology Meets Practice* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2012), 30.

³⁹David Eby, *Power Preaching for Church Growth: The Role of Preaching for Church Growth* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2009), 32. Eby makes the case that power preaching derives from the book of Acts. He clearly states throughout his book that the church in Acts depended mightily on the Holy Spirit

preaching that ministers of the gospel are able to cut through “the barriers of our post-Christian western culture and its growing secularism.”⁴⁰

Timothy Keller writes, “In the end, preaching has two basic objects in view: the Word and the human listener.”⁴¹ He argues similarly that healthy Christian preaching emanates from a love for the Word of God and a love of people and that both of these loves arise from a fervent desire to show people the magnificent grace of God.⁴² The aim of the preacher is to use the Word of God to debunk the myths established by the current culture and offer Christ as the only solution to the problems of mankind.⁴³ The engagement of the culture through preaching must appear relevant for the sake of relevance, but it must be relevant to expose, through biblical exposition, the perilous worldly foundations of the listener’s worldview.⁴⁴ Mohler argues that the preacher has the obligation to confront his hearers with the Word of God.⁴⁵

John MacArthur warns about a trend in contemporary churches to drift away from “biblical preaching to engage in an experienced-centered, pragmatic, topical approach in the pulpit.”⁴⁶ However, in true expositional preaching, the relevance of the

and the power he infused in those who preached God’s Word. He also argues that the early church leadership quickly recognized that if the church was to function properly, preaching and prayer needed to be the priorities of those leading it.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Viking, 2015), loc. 203, Kindle.

⁴²Ibid., loc. 206, Kindle.

⁴³Keller, *Preaching*, loc. 274, Kindle.

⁴⁴Ibid., loc. 291, Kindle.

⁴⁵R. Albert Mohler, *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), loc. 246, Kindle.

⁴⁶John MacArthur et al., *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992), 23.

sermon content lies ultimately on the biblical text, which is always the main point of the message.⁴⁷ MacArthur writes, “[Expository preaching is] preaching in such a way that the meaning of the Bible passage is presented entirely and exactly as God intended it.”⁴⁸

Expository preaching is the proclamation of God’s truth as mediated by the preacher of the gospel.⁴⁹ Stott contends that “all true Christian preaching is expository preaching.”⁵⁰

Moreover, preaching continues to be the most effective means of reaching people for Christ.⁵¹

All three participating churches exhibited an unbridled desire for the proclamation of the gospel through expository preaching. They also considered preaching an essential element undergirding the organizational change process at their sites. At Lakeland Baptist Church, the pastor believes that “the call to repentance and belief in the gospel of Christ should be proclaimed at every service and should at the heart of every message.” Lakeland’s website articulates to every visitor the type of preaching exhibited by its pastor. A quick visit to their website and exploration on the tab that reads “What to Expect” will give the prospective visitor information on what to wear, how to enter the building, information on Sunday School, the worship service, and the type of preaching. Under “Preaching,” the caption reads,

Our pastor leads us through expository preaching. What this means is that he allows the biblical text to determine the main idea and structure of his sermons. We believe that every word in the Bible is true and from God. Therefore, we seek to explain the meaning of the Bible in its original context and then apply that meaning to our lives

⁴⁷Dever and Gilbert, *Preach*, 36.

⁴⁸MacArthur et al., *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, 23–24.

⁴⁹Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, loc. 302, Kindle.

⁵⁰Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 125.

⁵¹Thom S. Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 1996), loc. 639, Kindle.

today. Expect biblical, relevant, and applicable preaching at Lakeland Baptist.⁵²

The leadership at Lakeland articulates equally that Christian formation in the church begins “in the form of text-driven preaching from the pulpit; it should extend to the teaching in the Sunday School classrooms, and culminate in small discipleship groups.”

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church’s pastor believes that that “the ultimate source of authority for leading God’s people derives from the Scriptures and must be empowered by the Holy Spirit through the medium of text-driven expository preaching.” Sunnyvale’s pastor is an accomplished writer and Christian scholar whose dissertation and published works principal subject is the preaching of God’s Word.⁵³ The sermons at SFBC are all recorded in audio and video format and are readily accessible for download. All the sermons are expository in format and faithful to declaring the original intent of the scriptural text.⁵⁴

Sunnyvale’s website makes explicit mention of the church’s identity as a conservative, “Bible believing and preaching Southern Baptist Church.” A visit to their “About Us” tab on their website followed by an exploration of their “What We’re About” information reveals the following:

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a theologically and doctrinally conservative Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Southern Baptist church. We are a church with open arms, receiving and welcoming all people and families of any size. Those who attend will encounter people who are kind and loving. Attendees will hear and participate in joyous praise and worship, and be engaged in a Biblically-based sermon message and presentation of the Gospel.⁵⁵

⁵²“Preaching,” accessed August 31, 2015, <http://www.lakelandbaptist.org/about-us/what-to-expect/>.

⁵³Adam Dooley, “Utilizing Biblical Persuasion Without Being Manipulative” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006). Adam B. Dooley and Jerry Vines, “Delivering a Text-Driven Sermon,” in *Text-Driven Preaching: God’s Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 243–68.

⁵⁴“Messages,” accessed August 31, 2015, <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/resources/messages>.

⁵⁵“About Us,” accessed August 31, 2015, <http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us>.

The Village Church also does a tremendous job making preaching the centerpiece of its ministry. One leader stated that “every aspect of our ministry approach is anchored by what our preaching pastor is declaring through the counsel Scripture. Our home groups, youth groups, and every other group type are studying the same content of Scripture that is being proclaimed through the preaching.” As the church faces opportunities brought in by growth, the pastors from the pulpit, with affirmation and support from the rest of the leadership, reinforce the message of organizational change through examples provided by the Scriptures.⁵⁶ In demonstrating that preaching is intrinsically connected to organizational change in their congregation, another leader said,

The why and how behind all of the church’s effort toward cultural engagement and organizational change must be in agreement with the mission that God is to receive glory in everything we do. This is ensured by aligning the staff, the facilities, and ultimately but most importantly “the preaching” around a simplification process that reflects God receiving glory through the saving of people.

The centrality of the preaching ministry at TVC is exemplified further by the fact that its central ministerial governance structure is led by three leaders whose gifts are accentuated by their unique responsibilities to the body. They have a pastor of leadership, pastor of ministry services, and a preaching pastor whose most important and fundamental duty is to deliver God’s Word. Once again, when refereeing to the importance of leadership and preaching, one TVC leader remarked,

There is plurality of leadership within our Christian community that leads to better decision making which is modeled after the trinitarian model of the godhead. We have a pastor that leads through preaching and teaching, another pastor that leads through establishing our philosophy of ministry and approaches to fulfilling the mission, and another pastor for ministry operations. These three pastors are always in constant conversation and interaction for the purpose of enhancing the overall ministry of the church Preaching is the central event of what goes on in this church every single week. Preaching also plays the most essential role in leadership and organizational change because it helps convey the conviction of why change is needed through the counsel of the Word of God.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Patterson, “Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach As a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth,” 91.

⁵⁷ Christopher Kouba conducted research on multi-site churches for his doctoral work at Southern Seminary. The Village Church is the only participant in this study that fits the profile of those

Table 7. Word frequency chart: Preaching

Word Frequency Chart: Preaching			
Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
preach	7	3.54	Preaching, teaching, proclaiming
mission	6	3.03	commission, mission
communicate	6	2.78	communicate, communicating, communication, convey
people	5	2.53	people
align	4	2.02	align, aligned, aligning, aligns
essential	4	2.02	essential
congregation	3	1.52	congregation
dictate	3	1.52	dictate, order
effectively	3	1.52	effectively, event, issues
gospel	3	1.52	evangelism, gospel

Adaptability and flexibility. The ability of an organization to adapt to change is brought about by internal or external artifacts or both. Artifacts are defined as those elements in an organizational culture that are both visible and invisible. These artifacts

churches studied by Kouba. Related to the subject of preaching, Kouba found that although preaching and teaching count as top spiritual gifts among pastors serving in multi-site churches due to those sites' organizational structures many pastors are not using those spiritual gifts. Nonetheless, Kouba's focus was not the exercise of preaching as an effective best practice for leading organizational change but rather the different models of preaching exhibited at multi-site churches and how their pastor deals with the challenges associated with leading from a secondary role. However, more research is needed to further measure the effectiveness in leading change by the unique best practice of preaching. See Christopher Kouba, "Role of the Campus Pastor: Responsibilities and Practices in Multisite Churches" (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 46-49.

include items that can be observed, heard, and felt outside and within the organization.⁵⁸ Understanding where these artifacts originate and how they impact the organization is essential to leading organizational change. Leaders must become acquainted with the degree of consciousness to which internal and external artifacts are perceived, appreciated, and valued within an organization.⁵⁹ This challenge must be addressed by engaging deeply in systematic change of “people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties.”⁶⁰ The theory of adaptive leadership has been developed to deal precisely with this dynamic of organizational change. Adaptive leadership is defined as “the practice of mobilizing people to tackle through challenges and thrive.”⁶¹

Heifetz and Linsky state that the type of leadership needed to lead an organization through times of change and adaptation is one that has “reverence for the pains of change, recognizes the manifestation of change, and also [possesses] the [right] skills to respond to it.”⁶² Regarding this declaration, Stott makes a compelling argument for the leadership of Christian churches to encourage their members to engage the culture with a gospel of salvation that fosters change. Stott contends that the church should not “shout the gospel from a distance but its members should involve themselves deeply into the lives, problems, and culture of the lost in order to feel alongside with them their fears, pains, and sufferings.”⁶³ These actions can be carried out with confidence because

⁵⁸Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 32.

⁶⁰Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 20.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 14.

⁶²Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2002), 48.

⁶³John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), loc. 279, Kindle.

believers do possess in Christ and his gospel the right response to the afflictions of people everywhere.

An example of adaption is contextualization. Contextualization means literally to put something into the context in which it occurs. Patterson offers a clear example of contextualization when he address the issue of The Village Church’s Denton campus transition to an independent status by stating that “the Denton church would have the latitude, under the leadership of their elder board, to prayerfully change and shape the church, as they deemed necessary to fulfill the call to make disciples.”⁶⁴

Kouba’s research also found that contextualization is a best practice exhibited by church leadership serving in multi-site churches and that contextualization allows congregations to modify their approach and style of operation in order to maximize the threshold of effectiveness in meeting the unique needs of new ministry locations.⁶⁵ According to Patterson, contextualization is one of the leading factors that led The Village Church to reconsider its approach to its original church planting strategy.⁶⁶

Consequently, an organization’s ability to adapt is fundamentally attached to the organization’s aptitude for flexibility as it seeks to modify and enhance its operational approach and delivery of service in the face of change. Flexibility in an organization is driven by a leadership principle that seeks to empower members throughout the organization to become decision makers by granting them the opportunities and license to make the necessary adjustments and decisions that lead to increase functionality and

⁶⁴Patterson, “Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach As a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth,” 102. Patterson’s work deals precisely with the phenomenon of organizational change in the context of ministry of The Village Church and cites the need for adaptation and flexibility under the particular strategy of ministry contextualization.

⁶⁵Kouba, “Role of the Campus Pastor,” 72-79.

⁶⁶Patterson, “Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach As a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth,” 90-93.

performance. According to Max Dupree, this principle “liberates people to do what is required of them which enable them to reach their full potential.”⁶⁷

Adair affirms rightly that unconscious organizations make the mistake of thinking that leadership development is something that starts and stops with top management.⁶⁸ Dupree argues that an essential responsibility of good organizational leadership is “to identify, develop, and nurture future leaders.”⁶⁹ This action helps nurture leadership traits and provides continuity and growth for the organization. It also leads to a calculated decentralization of authority that allows people to make an impact where they are the most capable. Empowerment of the internal membership increases both the adaptability and flexibility of the organization.

Organizations that strive to become the best have to be successful in developing a “less bureaucratic and more entrepreneurial environment.”⁷⁰ Adapting to new challenges and endeavors are key perspectives in leading organizational change; consequently, “environments can be adapted to organizations, just as organizations adapt to the environment.”⁷¹ The church as an organizational unit is not exempt from the challenges that face other organizations regardless of their nature. These challenges result from internal and external environmental factors.

Some research argues that what people resist is not the dynamic of change itself but rather the potential of loss. Consequently, they tend to hold on to their present

⁶⁷Max Depree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Crown Business, 2004), loc. 168, Kindle.

⁶⁸John Adair, *How to Grow Leaders: The Seven Key Principles of Effective Leadership Development* (Philadelphia: Kogan Page, 2009), loc. 1079, Kindle.

⁶⁹Depree, *Leadership Is an Art*, loc. 11, Kindle.

⁷⁰John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: Free, 1990), loc. 911, Kindle.

⁷¹Christiane Demers, *Organizational Change Theories: A Synthesis* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2007), loc. 239, Kindle.

environments and artifacts while resisting adaptation.⁷² What they fail to envision is the potential fruitfulness brought about by change. Robinson, however, asserts that “adaptive challenges are, at their core, spiritual work. They ask of us learning, authenticity, depth, risk, and change. They ask of us precisely the kind of work that Scripture prepares us to do.”⁷³ Stott eloquently articulates the necessity of the church to adapt and be flexible to spread the gospel in the current cultural context in which it serves. He writes, “The salt will be effective only if it permeates society, only if Christians learn again the wide diversity of divine callings, and if many penetrate deeply into secular society in order to serve Christ there.”⁷⁴

Lakeland Baptist Church has made a conscious effort to enable its members to become leaders in their own right. The leadership principles promoted by the ministerial staff at Lakeland seek to empower church members to serve the kingdom of God from every sphere of influence in which they operate in society. One church leader put it this way: “We have made program changes to position both our leadership and laity for concentrated efforts of evangelism and discipleship for the present time and the future.” Another leader was even more specific: “We have had to modify our budget expenditures to be able to allocate more financial resources to missional efforts locally and globally.”

The Lakeland Baptist leadership believes in flexibility and adaptation when leading organizational change. The pastor went through a process of analysis of the many programs and projects that were being implemented prior to his arrival. The end result of the evaluation process brought a reconfiguration of programs that needed enhancements. It also brought the implementation of new programs driven by the mission of the church

⁷²Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 22.

⁷³Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), loc. 278, Kindle.

⁷⁴Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, loc. 366, Kindle.

and an elimination of programs and strategies that had become obsolete. In the words of the new pastor, the indispensable fact about flexibility and adaptation is that the leader should “seek godly counsel, move at the right pace, and provide follow through with the target change.”

On the other hand, the leadership at SFBC approaches adaption and flexibility as part of the necessary process of organizational change when dealing with the business of being the church. According to the leadership at SFBC, change, flexibility, and adaptability are synonyms of doing missional work. The pastor is aware that an active engagement of the culture has produced growth and that “this growth necessitates organizational adjustments.”

The leadership an SFBC made an insightful comment—it was the admission that flexibility and adaptability must be embraced when decision-making, precipitated by change, threatens the comfort level of some that do not welcome the change and become uncooperative forces. The following statement captures the essence of this tension while providing insight of the greater good that being adaptable brings:

Decisions must be consistent and firm when dealing with the impact of change. When making decisions, the leadership must always be ready to allow dissenting forces to depart for the sake of a greater good for the organization. Church leaders must always be ready to adapt to the challenges and needs of the community in which they serve. Church leaders must be willing to step out of their comfort zone to improve the perception of the organization and increase the return on investment.

The leadership at SFBC does not rejoice in losing the dissenting forces, but it is cognizant that the result of the organizational change brings about a return on investment of eternal value and consequences. Therefore, adaptability and flexibility must complement a passion for the lost that will result in a congregation that is ready to make the internal changes necessary to engage the culture and bring people to Christ without compromising its Christian identity.

The Village Church is an organizational model of flexibility and adaptability. The Village’s philosophy is grounded on the firm belief that it is not only possible but

necessary for the Christian church to adapt and be flexible in its practices to reach the lost without compromising biblical and theological orthodoxy. Consequently, as one leader stated, “The type of ministry that we do within is going to have to correlate with the culture of the people we serve. The context of ministry in which God has placed us has necessitated the organizational change that has taken place in our church.”

The Village Church has demonstrated in the last ten years an incredible ability to adapt and provide consistent support to its congregants. In addition to this, the church has developed a remarkable and robust system that provides local and foreign missional support and participation. The tremendous growth that the church has experienced has necessitated an internal plan of action to accommodate the needs of its members. It has also necessitated a new model of ministry that allows for flexibility and adaptability in its approach to reach the lost. The mobilization, capacitation, and development of its membership of thousands has required a unique level of adaptation and flexibility, which is captured in the following statement by one of its leaders about their powerful groups ministry:

The change that this [opportunity and challenge] necessitated internally was the development of an action plan of ministry that mobilizes its people to meet the ministry needs of the inside and beyond the church’s walls. Hence, we invest heavily in the ministry of groups. Groups are mobile, ever growing and they can quickly be deployed to neighborhoods and other places in which our church and other churches in our area could not possible function. Therefore, group members become the first contact that people in the community have. They make contact with people that would never step inside the walls of our church. However, we are there through our groups ministering to the people and the culture around us.

The leadership at TVC believes that the universal principle of management calls for “placing the right people in the position to lead.” They also believe that the preparation of people requires foundational teaching and adjustment. This was exemplified in the statement of another leader, who said, “The teaching and practice [of the desired strategy] must be repeated several times through different modes for growth to take hold.”

Table 8. Word frequency chart: Adaptability and Flexibility

Word Frequency Chart: Adaptability & Flexibility			
Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
necessitated	7	4.29	necessitated, necessitates, need, needs
people	6	3.68	people
grows	6	3.37	development, grow, growing, grows, growth
ministry	5	3.07	ministry
organization	5	3.07	organization, organizations, organized
groups	4	2.45	group, groups
changes	3	1.84	changes, changing, modify
community	3	1.84	communicate, community
congregation	3	1.84	congregation
excellence	3	1.84	excellence

Culture change through transformational leadership. This type of culture change in the local church is inward in nature. It serves the purpose of affecting the external culture through internal transformation first. The church does not engage in internal culture change for the sake of mere strategy; it engages in internal culture change to become better equipped to fulfill its calling to make disciples for Christ beyond its walls. Leading culture change in the local church is a sensitive task that can bring

significant difficulties. Nieuwhof writes, “Change challenges assumptions, and people react [sometimes negatively] when assumptions are challenged.”⁷⁵ The church is no stranger to change; it has been dealing with it since its foundation. However, leadership plays a critical role in the change process. Essential to this process is the fashion in which the leadership of a church initiates and handles change. Initiation and handling of change are important elements for measuring congregational health.⁷⁶

As the church embarks on the serious task of engaging the culture with the gospel, it must be aware that the strategies and methodologies of the past may no longer be practical to affect successfully the current culture. In his book *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, Thom Rainer observes that the temptation of churches is to continue to implement the same plans, programs, and strategies of the past in an attempt to minister in the present cultural landscape. He writes, “The most pervasive and common thread of our autopsies was that the deceased churches lived for a long time with the past as its hero.”⁷⁷ Kotter calls these types of people and organizations the “complacent types.” They do not look for new opportunities and rarely initiate or lead; they merely do what has worked for them in the past without consideration for what is happening externally.⁷⁸

Gary McIntosh argues, “As a church ages and changes size, it demands new approaches to leadership, change, programming, training, and presents a host of new

⁷⁵Carey Nieuwhof, *Leading Change without Losing It: Five Strategies That Can Revolutionize How You Lead Change When Facing Opposition* (Cummings, GA: The reThink Group, 2012), loc. 172, Kindle.

⁷⁶Sam S. Rainer, *Obstacles in the Established Church: How Leaders Overcome Them* (Nashville: Rainer Publishing, 2014), locs. 10–11, Kindle.

⁷⁷Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2014), loc. 152, Kindle.

⁷⁸John P. Kotter, *A Sense of Urgency* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008), loc. 284, Kindle.

challenges that must be faced.”⁷⁹ It is here that transformational leadership becomes an active player in transitioning the church culture into a different kind of organizational unit. Transformational leadership can help create a new church culture by fostering a community that is apt and properly equipped to answer the moral and ethical duty to reach the lost. Herrington et al. assert that transformational leadership requires continuous learning and skill development as Christians engage in developing the capabilities that God has placed in them.⁸⁰ House writes, “There is no reasonable doubt that theology transforms culture or that culture requires constant renewal.”⁸¹ To a significant extent, House’s argument also applies to the internal culture of the local church.

Transformational leadership is defined as “a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and converts leaders into moral agents.”⁸² Burns alludes to two key elements in the transformational leadership model, namely the molding of followers to become leaders and leaders becoming moral agents. Although the transformational leadership argument is not entirely detached from Christian theological thought, its foundational model could be defined as non-Christian.⁸³ However, the two key elements mentioned by Burns are fundamentally true in the context of church ministry. A vital task of the church leader is to equip those under his care to

⁷⁹Gary McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won’t Get You There* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 11.

⁸⁰Jim Herrington et al., *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), loc. 2072, Kindle.

⁸¹Paul R. House, “Theology Transforming Culture,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (1997): 1.

⁸²James M. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010), 4.

⁸³Richard Parrott, “Transformational Leadership: Theory and Reflections,” *Ashland Theological Journal* 32 (2002): 70.

become disciple-leaders in their own right.⁸⁴ Additionally, the argument can be made that church leaders are moral agents indeed empowered by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, it is their task to proclaim salvation to the lost by means of the transforming gospel of Christ.⁸⁵

The leadership at Lakeland Baptist Church has successfully embarked in a process of internal culture change within its ranks. Both sound biblical teaching and theological education have played a part in this process. The pastor and the ministry team have undertaken a systematic approach that consists of using the preaching of the Word of God and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to transform the minds and practices of its church members. This process has allowed the leadership to move at the appropriate pace with the collaboration of the membership. They have been able to implement initiatives that focus primarily on internal preparation and spiritual renewal with the intent to prepare believers to be used by God to impact their local neighborhoods and the world for Christ.

Lakeland's pastor stated, "Our church members have a responsibility to engage the culture and the world with the gospel in both words and works." Additionally, he explained that the engagement of the culture is also "an ethical and moral responsibility affirmed by sound biblical interpretation, theological understanding, and proper obedience to the mandate of the Great Commission." These concepts have started to become a reality at Lakeland. The leadership believes that "a change of mentality, spiritual conviction, and doctrinal maturity have taken place due to the proper

⁸⁴Thom S. Rainer, *Breakout Churches: Discover How to Make the Leap* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), loc. 350, Kindle. Rainer calls these types of leaders "legacy leaders." They are not only concerned with making decisions and equipping others in the local church during their lifetime but will also impact the local church in the future as result of their unselfish dedication.

⁸⁵Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 246.

proclamation of the Scriptures, obedient evangelism, and sound biblical discipleship.” Subsequently, these events have resulted in a transformed culture at LBC.

At SFBC the leadership was equally direct in their calls for internal culture change. They discussed the need for church members to become active agents of change in the current cultural landscape. The following argument by the church’s leadership captures the essence of the call of new attitude within the church:

Before engaging the culture, churches must first engage their congregations internally. Thus, it is essential for the church to make its congregations part of its mission and goal to reach the world and make disciples. Programs do not engage the culture, people do. The failure to correlate the objective of existing programs to the mission of the church is not acceptable. Therefore, a fundamental shift in the mind, heart, and culture of the church member has to occur for organizational change to be effective.

Sunnyvale has developed an interesting and unique perspective about what it takes to build a culture that thrives in the process of reaching people for Christ. The ministerial staff once again captures this approach in the following statement:

The leadership of the church must place organizational structures in place that support the role of the leadership in engaging the lost. It must develop a system that leads through agents of change in the congregation. The language and attitude of the leadership becomes the language and attitude of the identified change agents. Our congregation’s culture, identity, and mission are established in a group of disciples who are driven to make disciples and therefore will cooperate with any strategy and best practice that helps the church accomplish that mission.

The leadership at TVC also provides a unique and equally powerful perspective to the issue of creating a new cultural shift in the life of the church. One of the pastors expresses it this way:

Different congregational culture will help dictate how we do ministry because the type of ministry that we do within is going to have to correlate with the culture of the people we serve. This does not mean that we change the Gospel, but we might have to change the delivery and the way in which we serve people in that context. It is extremely important to remember that people can always sense authenticity; therefore our best practice is always to be sincere about the work we do and filter it through the lens of the gospel.

In developing a better understanding of their congregation, one pastor stated that it was discovered that the believers at TVC “wanted to be connected meaningfully.”

Consequently, as the church began to formulate strategies to reaching people with the gospel, it found that the following questions needed to be answered: “What are the needs of the people? What is it that the people in our geographical area are looking for? What kind of issues are they confronting? What kind of problems are they facing? All of these questions need to dictate the way in which we do ministry here in suburban Texas.”

These questions prompted another similar, yet unique approach to creating and fostering a culture of believers with a unified purpose and objective.

This unified purpose and objective is “to bring glory to God” through the full expression of a gospel-centered approach to ministry anchored by the preaching of God’s

Table 9. Word frequency chart: Internal culture change

Word Frequency Chart: Internal Culture Change			
Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
people	10	5.41	people
gospel	6	3.24	evangelism, gospel
congregation	5	2.70	congregation, congregational, congregations
helps	6	2.70	help, helps, serve, support
mission	5	2.70	mission
disciples	4	2.16	disciple, disciples
language	4	2.16	language, word, words
ministry	4	2.16	ministry
need	4	2.16	need, needed, needs, want
programs	4	2.16	program, programs

Word. The essence of this principle is captured in the following statement:

Our church does not look to create or roll out programs, but rather it focuses on its people as its best asset for internal culture and programmatic change. This is ensured by aligning the staff, the facilities, and, ultimately, but most importantly, the preaching around a simplification process that reflects God receiving glory through the saving of people. Preaching is the central event of what goes on in the church every single week. Preaching also plays the most essential role in leadership change because it helps convey the conviction of why organizational change is needed through the counsel of the Word of God. We believe that this is precisely how culture is changed.

Summary of Research Findings

This study sought to identify best practices for leading organizational change in the local church in the urban context of ministry. I hypothesized that it was possible for the leadership in the local church to lead effective organizational change in the urban context through meaningful culture engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. The research confirms the original hypothesis. The research also indicates that the leadership of the local church embraces standard best practices as identified through the literature review.

Additionally, the data also indicates that there are at least five best practices for leading organizational change unique to the context of ministry of the three research participating model ministries in this study. Other practices unique to leading organizational change in the local church were observed at each participating church; however, these practices may not be identified as best practices as they were not uniformly observed at each site. Further research might validate these unique practices as best practices.

Evaluation of the Research Design

Qualitative research in a multi-case study format serves as a valuable tool for identifying best practices. Case study research allows the researcher the unique opportunity to explore the meaning ascribed by various individuals to any particular

phenomenon occurring in a given context. The major premise of the present study was that it is possible for the leadership of the local church in an urban context of ministry to lead successful organizational change without losing biblical or theological orthodoxy.

Case studies benefit research by acquiring knowledge, leading to a hypothesis. Through interaction with the case study participants, I was enabled to collect data, develop educated impressions, and report findings in support of the research question: “What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?”

Although the research design was adequate for the current study, the findings of the study may not be generalized to all instances of leading organizational change in the local church in every context of ministry. The findings of the study, however, are available for people and other researchers to understand and apply as they develop their own practices for leading organizational change in the local church in an urban ministry setting.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The results of the current study aimed to serve as a guide and resource for Christian leaders in the local church who desire to lead successful organizational change. This change focuses on achieving success through effective cultural engagement without losing unique Christian distinctiveness in the biblical and theological arenas. The results of the research showed that it is possible for the leadership of the local church to lead successful organizational change through effective culture engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. Accordingly, this research study sought to answer the following question: “What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?”

Although every participating urban local church in this study is recognized as a faithful evangelical organization and model institution in their area of ministries, each of them exhibited a range of best practices similar to those of secular businesses and other non-profit organizations that exhibit successful organizational change. Although it was equally reassuring to identify unique best practices for leading organizational change that were completely distinctive to the local church as a Christian institution. Another significant finding was the degree of faithfulness with which each participating local church lived out the goals and objectives defined by their mission statements. Research shows that organizations that communicate, believe, behave, and act in accordance to the reason for their existence are significantly more successful than those that do not.¹

¹Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (New

The qualitative research data upon which this study was grounded led the research to draw the following conclusions: (1) recognized best practices for leading organizational change were incorporated and applied by the leadership of the local church, (2) unique best practices native to the Christian church were employed by its leaders in guiding their congregations to successful organizational change, (3) biblical and theological principles were the foundations for effective organizational change and culture engagement, and (4) biblical and theological orthodoxy goes beyond formalities and traditional practices within the local church.

Research Conclusions

The leadership at the three participating local churches exhibited significant knowledge of the nature of organizational change and the need to implement it through proven and well-established practices. They were also well acquainted with the role that culture, personal emotions, and other artifacts play in successfully managing organizational change in the church. The leadership acknowledged that there is usually an overlapping of best practices used and promoted by secular theorists that find their way into the church. This happens because many of the best practices themselves are inherently neutral when properly vetted and evaluated through the lens of Scripture.²

John Frame argues that the question should not be whether some products and activities of the culture should be used by the church but rather what should be the extent

York: Penguin Group, 2009), 39.

²David Powlison, "The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies," in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology & Theology*, ed. Mark R. McMinn (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 32-36. Powlison argues that Christian thinkers should not be so quick to dismiss all epistemological arguments on the basis of their secular origins. He rightly argues that Christians, through the lens of Scripture, should be able to articulate biblical truth, expose, debunk, and reinterpret alternative models, and learn everything they can from defective models while discarding what Scriptures negate. Personally, I believe that this is precisely the approach that Christian leaders should embrace in their approach to evaluating non-Christian proposals for leading organizational change in the local church.

of their use.³ “The church is itself part of the culture, and culture is inseparable from the church The church fools itself if it thinks it can operate apart from cultural influences.”⁴ Some of these cultural influences are the language used, the ways church members interact with people, the approach to teaching used, dress, architecture of the church, and music. Frame further argues that if one considers any of the cultural influences mentioned before to be inherently bad, then, by mere association, any ministry impacted by such influences would be sinful. However, he quickly insists it is also true that “the culture has itself been influenced by common grace and the gospel.”⁵

The leadership at Lakeland Baptist Church believes that knowledge and implementation of general theories and practices for leading organizational change are acceptable so long as these are used in non-prescriptive fashion. The pastor believes that prescriptive doctrine and practice belongs to the Bible alone. Likewise, the leadership at Sunnyvale First Baptist Church believes that general theories and practices should be viewed as informational material. This material aids and informs the process of organizational change but the primary focus should be on personal spiritual growth and change through biblical discipleship. A similar approach has been taken by the leadership at The Village Church. At TVC, the leadership agrees that “[they] can learn some good and practical things from [general theories] so long as these do not overshadow the gospel.”

In summary, all three sites have a clear understanding that common wisdom is closely associated with common grace. The participating leadership at these sites recognizes the value behind empirical evidence as demonstrated by general best practices

³John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2008), 903.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 904.

but use the Scriptures as their ultimate guide and authority for vetting their applicability to their ministry context before applying them.

It was extremely encouraging and affirming to identify unique best practices that were native to Christian churches engaging in the organizational change process. This study found that the following best practices are distinctively Christian: doctrine and theology informing practice, discipleship, and preaching. Paramount to the church's success is the importance of allowing doctrine and theology to set the standard by which it adopts internal practices and cultural engagement. Based on the previous statement, one would logically conclude that a church organization that leads through doctrine and theology will inevitably engage in the best practices of sound discipleship and preaching.

An important principle gleaned from the empirical observation of native Christian best practices in this study is the inference that because organizational change is a continuous feature in all organizations, including the church, the leadership must be aware that it is worthwhile to assess and manage organizational change from a biblical and theological perspective. If the mission of the church is to preach the gospel and make disciples, a missional church, according to Stetzer, begins and ends with a solid foundation of accurate biblical theology.⁶

Lloyd-Jones makes a wise assertion of the significance of the imperative distinctive of theology and doctrine informing practice in the Christian church. In evaluating the apostle Paul's plea for unity in Ephesians 4, he points out that Paul makes a persuasive case for agreement, tolerance, humility, patience, and love among believers while quickly going back to addressing the doctrinal and theological implications of the

⁶Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can, Too* (Nashville: B&H, 2007), 9.

reason why in verses 4 and 5: “In the last analysis, we [the church while seeking unity and peace] can not and must not separate doctrine from practice.”⁷

Biblical and Theological Principles for Change

The biblical and theological principles for change and cultural engagement were also an essential aspect of the concluding evidence of this study. It was important to determine how change, whether personal or organizational, plays a vital role in the lives of believers and non-believers alike. Equally important was to encapsulate the biblical and theological elements around culture engagement from the perspective of the church.

The leadership at the participating churches in this study approaches the reality of change from the perspective of a rescue mission that must adapt to the challenges of the landscape to fulfill its objective. According to them, this rescue mission is clearly explained by the Scriptures and right at its center is the person of Jesus Christ. According to the Scriptures, mankind is lost and headed for destruction without Christ (Rom 3:10; Ecc 7:20; Isa 56:3). Packer simply states, “Man without Christ is a guilty sinner, answerable to God for breaking his law.”⁸ Consequently, an almighty and loving God has set in motion a mission of salvation to rescue mankind from eternal destruction (Gal 4:4-5; Rom 5:6; 2 Cor 5:21). The means of this saving mission and work is Christ Jesus, its facilitator is the Holy Spirit, and the conduit, in this world, is his church.

At the heart of this saving effort is a personal change of heart, mind, and soul through the Holy Spirit of those willing to embrace the gospel and follow Christ (Gal 5:5). Man is incapable of achieving this transformation on his own. Schreiner, in this regard, rightly asserts, “The Holy Spirit transforms human beings so that they put their

⁷D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Christian Unity: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:1-16* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 11–12.

⁸J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Books, 2012), 30.

trust in God's saving work instead of relying on themselves."⁹ Thus, the Spirit acts as an agent of change in the Father's rescue-mission process of salvation (2 Cor 3:6; Titus 3:5). This transformational event is internal and supernatural in nature, but its work is revealed in the way of a changed life that has gone from death to life in the sight of God.

This is the work of God's redemption. It is also a process of renovation that is only possible through the mysterious working of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The leadership at the participating churches in this study methodically engages in this mission. They pursue to be obedient and faithful to Christ's mandate to take the gospel to everyone and to make disciples of those who believe by teaching and educating them through sound doctrine. All three leadership groups agree that the reason behind organizational change at their congregations is motivated by obedience, a desire to be more efficient in the spread of the gospel, and to bring more people to saving faith in Christ.

Biblical and Theological Principles for Culture Engagement

The church has always wrestled with the appropriate level of association that should exist between the established culture of the day and Christians.¹⁰ Many Christians attempt two extreme and different approaches relative to cultural engagement. Some followers become so entangled with the culture that their Christianity becomes almost unrecognizable from the world. Meanwhile, other Christians retreat so much from the

⁹Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 316.

¹⁰D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 4. Carson argues that Christians of this age should not fall into the trap of assuming that they are the first generations of believers to think substantially about the appropriate level of engagement that should exist between the church and the culture around it.

culture that they become almost total antagonists dissociated from the reality of the world in which they live.¹¹ Both of these extremes are equally unproductive and unbiblical.

The participating churches in this study have adopted safeguards in their processes for cultural engagement by vetting their programs and approaches through the counsel of Scripture and measuring initiatives against their organizational mission according to the Great Commission. All three participating churches agree that engagement of the culture is not only expected but mandated by the Scriptures (Luke 21:13-14; 2 Cor 10:11; Phil 2:15; Matt 5:16; 1 Pet 3:15). The commands to be light and salt to this world are as important as the Great Commission (Matt 5:13-16; Matt 28:18-20).

The leadership of the churches in this study understands that cultural engagement is an imperative as the church makes disciples of all people while operating as a living testimony of God's grace and salvation to the entire world. A good example of this argument is found in 1 Peter. Jobes explains how Peter provides the church with significant information for how believers should live among an unbelieving culture. Jobes writes, "Peter offers various examples of how [Christians] should be accommodating, rejecting, subverting, and transforming the culture" in which they live by genuine and practical engagement.¹²

The wisdom demonstrated by the three participating churches validates the principle that the answer to engaging the culture properly is found in striking the precise balance between Scripture and theology. This balance helps tremendously in the development of programs and approaches that can help facilitate, through organizational change, the engagement of the culture and the making of new disciples.

¹¹Richard Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom: Biblical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 54.

¹²Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 3-4.

Christians must not confuse tradition and cultural formalities with biblical and theological orthodoxy. Tradition and cultural formalities can be considered additional artifacts in the quantity of objects that affect the culture of a congregation. Believers should give careful attention not to make idols of those traditions and practices that only serve the purpose of making people feel comfortable in their environments. Stetzer and Rainer point out that “too often the church has become a symbol of gathering for one another rather than scattering for the sake of others.”¹³

Believers must move beyond the mindset of treating the church as a social club for which a membership fee is collected under the pretense of an offering. The focus on traditional formalities and superficial routines creates the danger that church members may develop a self-centered mentality that focuses inward rather than outward, which is contrary to what the Great Commission explicitly states (Matt 15:9; Mark 7:7). Church leadership that fails to correct this distortion and instead passively encourages it, will eventually engage and address its members “as consumers [rather than citizens of heaven,] in a material society of great sophistication but with little sense of purpose.”¹⁴ Rainer wisely affirms that “[believers] should not go to church to get [their] self-centered needs met. Instead [they] should go [to church] to worship the one true God as they serve along other believers.”¹⁵

The particular ability of the three participating churches in this study to focus outwardly without forgetting to minister properly to their congregants has created three successful urban ministries. All three sites exhibit the right balance between preserving

¹³Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 6.

¹⁴John R. W. Stott et al., *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 23.

¹⁵Thom S. Rainer, *I Will: Nine Traits of the Outwardly Focused Christian* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2015), loc. 339, Kindle.

traditions and themes that are cherished by their congregation while ensuring that they do not become idols at the altar of self-indulgence. A tremendous part of the success experienced by the participating sites has been because of their ability to focus on their discipleship programs and Christian formation efforts to educate their congregations. They have been extremely successful in facilitating the teaching of Christian doctrine and theological principles to transform the mindset of their members. These efforts are confirmed by the increased spiritual maturity and focus on evangelism by their members. The members now look beyond themselves to meet the needs of those who need Christ.

A Theology of Passion for the Lost

As discussed throughout this thesis, at the heart of organizational change in the local church is the desire to be obedient to the mandate of the gospel and its Great Commission. An additional aspect that should not be missed is that fact that at the core of this act of obedience, an honest and relentless passion for the lost must exist. This attitude develops from a sound doctrinal and theological teaching that stimulates radical internal change in the culture of the local church. Mancini notes, “Nourishing internal culture must precede expanding outside influence. Real change is [initiated from the] inside-out.”¹⁶ Consequently, a true Christ-exalting and Bible-loving church does not engage in organizational change and involvement with the culture for societal approval or to follow the latest fad. It engages in organizational change because it desires to bring as many people as possible into saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:4-7 serves as a constant reminder to the church that every single life is precious to God and particularly those who are destined to perish without the opportunity to receive the gospel. Second Peter 3:9 also supports this premise: “God is not slow about his promise, as some count slowness, but is

¹⁶Will Mancini, *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), loc. 418, Kindle.

patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” In his parable of the lost sheep, Jesus emphasizes the importance of seeking out every single lost individual that he or she may be restored, thus causing joy in heaven (Luke 15:7).

Morris argues that the key point of the parable of the lost sheep is the biblical truth that “God is a seeking God, a God who takes the initiative.”¹⁷ The one lost sheep takes precedence over the ninety-nine who are saved. Bock points out that “the [one] lost sheep receives special attention over those that are safe and sound.”¹⁸ Bock claims that some take exception to the shepherd leaving the ninety-nine sheep behind to look for the one missing but he adds that what is usually missed is that the shepherd has left them [safely] grazing while he seeks out the one that is lost.¹⁹ Morris contributes to Bock’s argument regarding the safe status of the remaining sheep by affirming that “the ninety-nine are not in danger; they are found.”²⁰ The theological argument here does not suggest that Jesus cares less about saved believers in his church but that he equally desires to seek and save those who are lost without him.

Therefore, it is theologically imperative for the local church to engage in calculated and strategic organizational change without hesitation and fear. Instead, the local church should embrace internal organizational change as an opportunity to be

¹⁷Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 255.

¹⁸Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 1300.

¹⁹Bock claims that the Greek word ἄρημος is interpreted as “an open field where animals graze.” The shepherd has left his sheep occupied as he searches for the one lost sheep. Bock states that by introducing this parable with the rhetorical question “What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?” Jesus is indicating that any responsible shepherd would do precisely what he is about to describe.

²⁰Morris, *Luke*, 255.

fruitful in its mission by multiplying numerically and in its efforts to expand the kingdom of God and to bring glory to his name.

Contribution to the Literature Base

The literature base for organizational change is extensive in the area of general theory and secular approaches, although organizational change literature is somewhat limited in terms of the church as an organizational entity. Christian leadership, however, has made tremendous strides in the last two decades. They have substantially increased the Christian literature base on the subject by engaging the field from a biblical and theological perspective while taking into consideration the unique identity of the church. As referenced before, much of the research in the area of organizational change leadership has focused on the business sector and public industry. The findings of this study will therefore prove helpful in contributing to the practitioner's knowledge-base of organizational change from a Christian perspective.

Due to the nature of this research study and its format as a multi-case study approach, the current findings cannot be generalized to all local churches that engage in organizational change. Neither can the findings of this study be generalized to all local churches leading organizational change in an urban ministry context. The intent of the research was to ascertain the best practices for leading organizational change in the local church without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. The research was successful in accomplishing the last objective by identifying such best practices in local churches serving the urban context of ministry.

The analysis of the data findings suggests that Christian leaders can successfully engage in leading organizational change in the local church without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. The study further suggests that while engaging in organizational change, the local church leadership exhibited the use of

generally-accepted best practices as well as unique and distinctive best practices that are native to the local church as a Christian organization.

Since the literature base for this study did not singularly recognize these unique and distinctively Christian best practices as viable practices for leading organizational change in the local church, the current research findings will add to the body of knowledge related to leading organizational change in the ministry arena. Consequently, the findings may be considered and reviewed by Christian practitioners, leaders, and academic researchers for consumption or further research.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are areas where future research could enhance the findings of the present study. First, further research is needed in measuring how the implementation of the local church's distinctive best practices for leading change can significantly impact the effectiveness of the church's most important mission, the Great Commission. Consequently, with the theoretical framework for leading organizational change in view, an in-depth study of each distinctive best practice discovered by this study could be further explored.

Second, this research study focused primarily on identifying the presence of generally accepted best practices and the discovery of existing best practices unique to the local church as an organizational system dealing with change. Further research is needed, however, to compare, contrast, and critique the correlating philosophical inferences of secular leadership in organizational change management versus unique Christian practices identified in the research. One could, for instance, analyze in detail how the Christian best practice of preaching for change in leadership compares against the deeply-rooted philosophical operating principles of a distinctive secular organization.

Another interesting area to explore, research and critique would be how Christian discipleship engagement for Christian formation compares to employee development and

coaching in the business sector. While a third option for future research could consist of conducting a Christian theological evaluation to the entire phenomenon of organizational change from the perspective of divine stewardship and vice regency. Furthermore, a future researcher could consider the material content and findings brought about by the first and second suggestions for further research mentioned above and provide a more in-depth analysis from a Christian perspective. The possibilities for further research are intellectually stimulating, formative, as well as potentially beneficial because they could assist church leaders in developing a more robust understanding of the phenomenon of organizational change to benefit the church's mission.

Recommendations for Practice and Closing Considerations

The notion that the church must reject every form of wisdom that derives from a secular framework is not only unfounded, but biblically unwise. Departing from the theological principle of what it means to be created in the image of God, I argue that human beings, by virtue of being created in the *imago dei*, are capable (although to a less significant and tainted degree due to sin) of imitating God's attributes and traits in the form of creativity, leadership, wisdom, and knowledge. Ward's research in the area of organizational culture correlates well with this assertion. Ward argues that although the *imago dei* in human beings has been seriously distorted by sin, "it has not been completely erased."²¹ Nonetheless, wisdom is always needed. For, as Hoekema points out, due to the fall, people are prone to use their God-given gifts in ways that are contrary to God's will.²²

²¹Angela Ward, "Church Organizational Culture: A Construct Definition and Instrument Development" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 12.

²²Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994), 83.

Grudem offers a good example of the presence of the *imago dei* as it relates to the fields of business and entrepreneurial activity: “Human desires to increase production of goods and services are not themselves greedy, materialistic, or evil. Rather, such desires to be more productive represent God-given desires to accomplish, achieve, and solve problems.”²³ Ernest White equally addresses the essence of Grudem’s argument as it relates to the area of leadership and the *imago dei*: “The theological base which Christian leaders implement focuses on God as Creator whose creativity is gifted to persons as expressions of [the] *imago dei*. Dominion responsibility, for creation, requires creative activity. The human spirit possesses a creativity dimension.”²⁴ Although it is obvious that White is writing from a Christian perspective and for a Christian audience, he addresses the subject of the God-given gift of creativity as a gift that is not exclusive to Christians but rather to “all persons.”

As this research study has confirmed, at least three model ministries in the local church arena have implemented a blend of generally-accepted theories and unique best practices vetted through the Word of God for the purpose of bringing about successful organizational change in their congregations. This approach to organizational change aims at the spread of the gospel and the making of new disciples. At a minimum, this research study found that the integration of generally-accepted theories and best practices in the context of the ministry arena is possible. Furthermore, the study found that such integration will not, if carefully evaluated and vetted through Scripture, lead to a compromising of the Word of God and Christian orthodoxy. As Rainer plainly writes, “There is no wrong way [or system] to share Christ as long as we do not compromise the

²³Wayne Grudem, *Business for the Glory of God: The Bible’s Teaching on the Moral Goodness of Business* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), loc. 301, Kindle.

²⁴Ernest White, “The Crisis in Christian Leadership,” *Review and Expositor* 83, no. 4 (Fall 1986): 554.

gospel.”²⁵ Still, godly wisdom in any particular area of leadership is always advised: “Where there is no guidance the people fall, [but] in abundance of counselors there is victory” (Prov 11:14).

²⁵Thom S. Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 1996), loc. 468, Kindle.

APPENDIX 1

DISCLOSURES OF CASE STUDY

Research Title: Best Practices for Leading Organizational Change in the Local Church: A Multi-Case Study.

Background: The argument of this research study is that visionary leadership in leading organizational change in the ministry arena is essential to efficacy and relevance of the church as it engages the present post-modern culture. The purpose of this study is to review existing models of local church ministries that have been successful in the area of leading organizational change. All three selected and participating sites minister in the urban context. The objective of this study is to create a body of work that describes and advances successful practices and approaches in leading organizational change based on proven and successful models.

The scope of this study will require the researcher to become intimately acquainted with the precedent literature involving leadership in organizational change across the entire spectrum of organizations with particular attention given to the organizational unit known as the local church. Since change affects organizations regardless of their nature, the researcher will have to become an expert on the phenomenon organizational change or change management and learn how it affects primarily individuals and then the organizations in which they function. An in depth understanding of leadership, management, culture and organizational behavior as well as organizational planning will be necessary in order to identify, analyze and evaluate and culminate with a final product of best practices that can be instrumental in helping those in the ministry arena to successfully thrive as they engage the phenomenon of change within their organizations.

Participating Research Sites: Given the assortment of ministry styles, denominational identities and the sizes of congregational bodies in the American evangelical arena, this study will focus on conducting a multiple case study of three widely known evangelical Southern Baptist Churches ministering in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of Texas. These ministries are Lakeland Baptist Church in Lewisville, Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, The Village Church, in Flower Mound, Texas. All three congregations are considered model ministries and they range in size from medium, to large, to mega church status in accordance to their membership. The ministries at these churches have undergone a transformational process of sorts that has helped them thrive in spite of societal change and challenges, while similar ministries that have struggled with organizational change have either disappeared or are only a feeble resemblance of their former selves. Many factors can be attributed to the growth and thriving nature of these ministries of which first and foremost is sound biblical teaching and doctrine. However,

other contributing factors could include the charismatic personalities of their leaders as well as innovative and engaging approaches to ministry but their most successful attribute seems to concentrate on the ability of their leadership to lead and manage organizational change.

Research Question:

What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?

Limitations of Generalizations of the Research:

Because the research method for this project will be a case study limited to three evangelical Southern Baptist Convention churches with recorded membership of 500, 1,200 and 10,000 respectively, there will be a gap among churches operating in an urban context of ministry that find themselves with larger or smaller number of members than those in the study. However, the centrality of the research will concentrate specifically on the leadership practices and strategies implemented by the congregations in the case studies and how they have dealt with the phenomenon of organizational change. For the purpose of this study, the ministries that were selected are examples that fit the criteria of “model ministries” that have done exceptionally well dealing with the subject of leading organizational change in the ministry arena.

Case Study Research with Qualitative Approach: This approach is going to rely on the content analysis of text, data, verbal exchanges and visual observations. The reason behind the use of a qualitative case study approach is that it is usually the type of research inquiry that involves an in-depth study of phenomenon within an “actual cultural group in their natural setting.” Experts in research identify a natural setting as the place where the issue, problem, or phenomenon occurs. This type of approach is also used by researchers to look in depth at an entire group, more specifically, a group that shares a common culture. Since, case studies are done for the purpose of gaining useful understanding of the particulars habits, customs, and day to day operations, of a certain group; SBC church model ministries functioning in an urban context of ministry, for the purpose of this qualitative case study are considered a “cultural” group.

The researcher plays an essential player to the execution of the research plan.

Research Methodology Scope and Sequence:

A. The first step will required me, as the researcher, to conduct a detailed and exhaustive compilation of literature in the form of books, articles, videos and other archives that relate to the ministries of the targeted ministries in the case study.

B. The second step in the process will be to gain access to key personnel at the target sites that will be provide essential information to the researcher in conducting the study.

C. Access to key personnel will be gained through the proper channels established by targeted ministries in their websites and offices. The key personnel will serve as the researcher's gatekeeper and will introduce the researcher to other key players in order to make the appropriate acquaintances as well as to ensure a smooth transition and access to the sites.

D. Once access has been gained to the sites, I, the researcher will gradually identify the "key informants" who will provide the information and data relevant to the research questions as well as point the researcher(s) in the right direction toward other key people in the ministerial group that can provide further assistance.

E. Multiple sources of data will be considered during the implementation of the plan including, but not limited to, the use of books, articles, commentaries, videos, recordings, personal observations, interviews, active listening, field notes, conversations and organizational charts, etc. Conducting the right type of case study requires a skilled researcher who will not be unsociable but rather professional at all times in order to avoid entanglements. I, the researcher must be aware of the issues, but not become involved in them. As the researcher, I must talk to people but not become too talkative. It is my mission to get people to share information, but not to interject my opinions for the sake of the investigation.

F. The next step is the analysis of the data. This process encompasses three key elements: the description of the data, the analysis of the data and the interpretation of the data. It is imperative for the researcher to do his best in order to provide total objectivity to the evaluation of the information.

G. The last step in this process will be the writing of the research report, which must contain the following parts: an introduction, a review of the precedent literature, an explanation of the research methodology, and analysis of findings, and a conclusion. It is in the conclusion that the answers to the research questions will be confirmed or not. Additionally, the conclusions chapter will contain a summary of the research results, any contributions to the literature base, and recommendations for practice.

APPENDIX 2

FIELD EXPERT LETTER OF ASSISTANCE REQUEST

April 1, 2015

Dear Dr. _____,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area here in Texas. A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a series of field interviews as part of my thesis research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous interaction.

The central thesis of my research focuses on whether it is possible to implement successful organizational change in the local urban church for the purpose of engaging the culture with the gospel of Christ without forsaking biblical Christianity. Additionally, if successful organizational change is possible, as the research seeks to find, what are some of the identifying markers of best practices for leading change in the local urban church without abandoning biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Part of the research instrumentation requires the composition of a set of questions that I will use in carrying out interviews with the leadership and members of three Southern Baptist Churches ministering in the urban setting within the Dallas-Fort Worth area. These local churches seem to have been successful in the implementation of organizational change over the two decades without abandoning the orthodox principles that make them biblically and theologically Christian. I have designed and written ten questions (see attachment) that I am planning to use during the above-mentioned interviews. My humble request is that you assist me in this endeavor by modifying, editing, and offering suggestions for enhancing the strength of the questions as I seek to identify some the trends and markers stated in paragraph two.

I am eternally grateful for your kind response and willingness to assist with this research effort. Your participation will help me assist local congregations in urban settings in

providing valuable insight for church leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

Sincerely,

Juan Carlos Martinez
Doctoral Student
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

APPENDIX 3

FIELD EXPERT CONTRIBUTION

Juan Carlos Martinez
To: Paul H. Chitwood
Re: Field Expert Feedback

April 1, 2015

Dear Dr. Chitwood,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas. A few weeks ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous at Southern and our phone conversation.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

Paul H. Chitwood
To: Juan C. Martinez
Re: Field Expert Feedback

April 6, 2015

Juan,

See your attached letter & questions. My thoughts are inserted in blue type. You have done a good job. Hopefully my suggestions will prove helpful.

Blessings,
Paul H. Chitwood, Ph.D.
Executive Director-Treasurer, Kentucky Baptist Convention

email: paul.chitwood@kybaptist.org
blog site: www.paulchitwood.com
twitter: @DrPaulChitwood

"The Kentucky Baptist Convention: Created by churches, for churches, to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ."

Juan Carlos Martinez
To: David L. Allen
Re: Field Expert Feedback

April 4, 2015

Dear Dr. Allen,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas.

A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous phone conversation.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

David L. Allen
2015
To: Juan C. Martinez
Re: Field Expert Feedback

April 13,

Juan,

Attached is the list of questions with my suggested thoughts/changes in red.

Blessings!

David

David L. Allen, Ph.D.

Dean | School of Theology

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

2001 West Seminary Drive | Fort Worth, TX 76115

Post Office Box 22140 | Fort Worth, TX 76122

office 817.923.1921 x 4200 | *fax* 817.921.8767 |

dallen@swbts.edu | <http://www.swbts.edu>

Juan Carlos Martinez

April 1, 2015

To: Lindsey Gunn

Re: Field Expert Feedback

Dear Dr. Gunn,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas. A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous phone and e-mail interaction.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

Lindsey Gunn

April 5, 2015

To: Juan C. Martinez

Re: Field Expert Feedback

Juan Carlos,

Attached is a copy of your questionnaire with a few comments. These are not suggestions, but merely considerations. I am sure you have thought through all possibilities. Another thought is the potential value of personal interviews in lieu of

questionnaires. I know the value and consistency of written responses but the depth of your questions might benefit from face-to-face interaction. You might even consider personal interviews as follow-up after completion of questionnaires.

Thank you for pursuing this valuable study!

God bless,

Lindsey Gunn, Ph.D.
Senior Associate
The Cambrian Group
662-801-4866
elgunn@thecambriangroup.org
www.thecambriangroup.org

APPENDIX 4

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER

Juan Carlos Martinez
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
104 Briergate Lane Hickory Creek, Texas 75065
972-754-5799
Jmartinez739@students.sbts.edu

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Dear participant you are being asked to take part in this research effort due to your leadership in a Southern Baptist Church in an urban setting context. Part of the research effort requires an interview component dealing with the subject of organizational change and specifically leading organizational change in the context of the local church within an urban setting. Your participation will help assist local congregations in urban settings by providing valuable insight for their leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

The purpose of this research is to investigate whether it is possible to implement successful organizational change in the local urban church for the purpose of engaging the culture with the gospel without forsaking biblical Christianity. Additionally, if leading successful organizational change is possible, as the research seeks to find, what are some of the identifying markers of best practices for leading change in the local urban church without abandoning biblical and theological orthodoxy.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

*Greetings and Procedures; Informed Consent Disclosure; Time and Language;
Research Tools*

RISKS

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Participant's Initials: _____

BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, I hope that the information obtained from this study may help assist local congregations in urban settings by providing valuable insight for their leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses to this interview will be used exclusively for the purpose of advancing the researcher’s understanding of the phenomena of organizational change. All efforts will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality. Participants’ data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents or reveal the names of the study participants to the faculty of SBTS in relationship to the written portion of the research report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 5

EXPERT-SUPERVISOR APPROVED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What do you believe is the local church's responsibility, if any, in engaging the culture? Please explain.
2. How does your congregation engage the culture around it while holding on to fundamental Christian doctrine and practice?
3. Has your church's engagement of the culture necessitated internal organizational change? Please explain.
4. How does the church leadership identify the need for organizational change as it relates to cultural engagement?
5. How does the church seek to ensure that organizational change align with the church's mission and objective?
6. From most to least important. What are some of the barriers that your local congregation has had to overcome while engaging in organizational change?
7. What are some of the steps for leading organizational change that you would consider as imperatives in the process? If possible, please list them in sequential order.
8. How helpful do you consider general theories and practices dealing with organizational change in the context of the church? Please explain and provide examples.
9. What are some of the best practices utilized by your congregational leadership in leading organizational change? Please explain how these best practices are compatible with Christian doctrine and practice.
10. How do you define successful organizational change for culture engagement in terms of the church's mission?

APPENDIX 6

CHURCH MISSION STATEMENTS

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

LAKELAND BAPTIST CHURCH EXISTS...

To honor and glorify God by obeying Jesus' command to make disciples of all peoples and nations.

Our strategy for achieving this mission is five-fold:

Make Disciples

In order to make disciples, we seek opportunities to be with people and to use those opportunities to share Christ with them.

Mature Believers

Studying and knowing the Word of God is essential to growing in spiritual maturity. We provide multiple opportunities to study God's Word together through Sunday School, Discipleship Classes, and other Bible study groups.

Magnify God in Worship

Our times of worship are always focused on praising and worshiping God through song, prayer, and preaching.

Maximize Funding

We recognize that God owns everything and requires His people to acknowledge Him and His blessings through the faithful giving of their resources, including the giving of tithes and offerings.

Multiply Ministry

God has given each of us spiritual gifts along with natural talents and abilities. We believe that He also expects us to use those gifts, talents, and abilities in service to Him and to other people. We provide many opportunities through our church for people to invest their lives through serving in ministries, both in the church and in the community.

SUNNYVALE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MISSION/VISION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is to help people know God personally and make Him known publicly throughout the world.

OUR VISION

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a theologically and doctrinally conservative Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Southern Baptist church.

We are a church with open arms, receiving and welcoming *all* people and families of *any* size. Those who attend will encounter people who are kind and loving. Attendees will hear and participate in joyous praise and worship, and be engaged in a Biblically-based sermon message and presentation of the Gospel.

The members of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church know God personally by participating in weekly corporate worship, through Bible study in Bible Fellowship Groups and other discipleship opportunities, and through the building of relationships by serving one another.

The members of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church are all ministers and make God known publically by having the capacity and ability to minister to the whole person; to meet physical and material needs [the temporary] and then to meet the more important spiritual needs of the soul [the eternal]. Personal interaction comes from involvement in social and civic community events, local outreach and evangelistic programs and events, and world missions via short-term trips to other states and countries around the world.

OUR BELIEFS

We affirm the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000.

If you would like more information on the Baptist Faith and Message, [click here](#).

THE VILLAGE CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of God

All things exist and are being worked according to the triune God's passion, pleasure and plan (**Ephesians 1:11**), which is the demonstration of His own intrinsic glory. God creates, calls, rescues, redeems, saves, restores, restrains and grants all to the end that He might be praised. His desire, which He will surely fulfill, is that the knowledge of His glory would cover the earth as the waters do the sea (**Habakkuk 2:14**). God's mission is the manifestation of His magnificence. His mission is glory.

What is the glory of God? The glory of God is the gravity that keeps those who see and savor it from spinning off into the spacious trivialities of sin. God's desire is that He might be known and enjoyed for His nature and character. He seeks to be recognized as supremely valuable, supremely worthy and supremely splendid. God's glory is sensed when we feel the reality of His presence, goodness and superiority.

Isaiah 48:9-11, Ephesians 1:3-14, Isaiah 43:6-7, Ezekiel 20:14

The Mission of the Church

The mission of the Church universal is to glorify God by making disciples through the gospel of Jesus Christ. God's mission and the mission of His Church are inseparably linked. If God's mission is to be glorified through the redemption and reconciliation of a people, the Church's mission must orient around the glory of God and seek to glorify Him through redemption and reconciliation.

The mission of the Church is highlighted in **2 Corinthians 5**. As those who have been reconciled to God through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are now ambassadors of reconciliation to a lost and broken world. We plead, urge, implore, reason, pray, serve, preach, teach and gather to see God glorified through reconciliation.

Mission of the Village Church

At The Village Church, the means by which we pursue the glory of God in the making of disciples is four-fold. Our mission is to bring glory to God by making disciples through gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, gospel-centered service and gospel-centered multiplication.

What is a Disciple?

A disciple is a person who has been reconciled into relationship with God through new birth by trust in the gospel and is subsequently growing in a love for God and love for others.

What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the historical narrative of the triune God orchestrating the reconciliation and redemption of a broken creation and fallen creatures, from Satan, sin and its effects to the Father and each other through the life, death, resurrection and future return of the substitutionary Son by the power of the Spirit for God's glory and the Church's joy.

Why Gospel-Centered?

We are gospel-centered because the gospel stands at the center of God's redemptive plan, and in it we see Him most clearly for Who He is and what He has done.

APPENDIX 7

PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAYS



Lakeland Baptist Church engages in contemporary but gospel rich worship, its pastor preaches the Word of God expositively. The leadership of the church is currently engaging in organizational change driven by preaching, teaching, and application.



Lakeland Baptist Church engages in urban mission work and gospel outreach. This an example of its youth ministry actively participating in urban outreach in the inner city. The church minister to the needs of families in the community while also taking the opportunity to share the gospel to anyone willing to listen.





The Village Church lives and thrives under the theme of its mission statement, which is constantly communicated to its congregation. The leadership engages church membership, biblical and theological teaching, and gospel-central ministry with passion. The pictographs show the congregation engaging in community prayer, Dr. Russell Moore from the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission of the SBC preaching on contemporary culture engagement, the church announcing its upcoming theological classes, and as well announcing its groups leaders in view of the new fall ministry emphasis.



Sunnyvale First Baptist has under taken a tremendous organizational change effort under its new leadership. Their intent is to become more increasingly Christ-centered, Discipleship-Centered, and Mission-Centered in its approach to ministry. In its pastor the congregation possesses a tremendously gifted Bible expositor whose personal ministry continues to be blessed. The church understands its new leadership has become more inviting and welcoming of people in its community while holding on the strong and sound biblical and theological convictions of Southern Baptist faith.

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ABSTRACT

BEST PRACTICES IN LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH: A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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The current study was designed to identify embedded best practices for leading organizational change in the local church ministering in an urban context. The study also sought to determine whether it was possible for the leadership in the local church to lead their congregations through successful organizational change and meaningful culture engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

The study validates the majority of best practices identified through the literature review and it also encountered distinctive best practices common to all three participating sites that are unique to the ministry contexts of the local church. These five distinctive best practices are: allowing doctrine and theology to inform practice, discipleship, preaching, adaptation and flexibility, and internal cultural change through transformational leadership.

Chapter 1 introduces the research problem and the purpose of the research study. Chapter 2 reviews extensively the precedent literature on the subject of organizational change. This chapter emphasizes the church's role as an organizational system and provides essential information on the area of leadership. It also focuses on John Kotter's 8-Stage Process for leading organizational change and The Transformational Journey Method proposed by Jim Harrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research methodology of the

entire research study while describing the roles of the case study and content analysis approaches. Chapter 4 provides a profound and detailed analysis of the findings, and chapter 5 offers some concluding thoughts regarding the study's contribution to the literature base as well as considerations for future research.

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