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EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, CHURCH PROXIMITY, AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN CHURCH-BASED THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Michael Lee Wilburn

December 2018

APPROVAL SHEET

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, CHURCH PROXIMITY,
AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN CHURCH-BASED
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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To the Lord Jesus Christ

To his Bride, the Church

To my bride, Sarah

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PREFACE

The journey toward the completion of a dissertation and a Doctor of Philosophy degree requires endless hours of personal time, attention, and work. But it is never a private journey. Others help in your presence and much more in your absence. I praise God for each person who offered encouraging words, prayed to God in my behalf, demonstrated patience in my absence.

The Southern Seminary community provided a modular student like me the hospitality necessary to sequester class time in two-week blocks. I will always cherish friendships made with Neal Ledbetter, Steve Hudson, and Hans Googer. Even though we live in four different states, it always encouraged me to know these brothers were reading the same pages, writing the same papers, and responding to the same professors. Thank you to Dr. Hal Pettegrew and Dr. John David Trentham for teaching me in the classroom and serving on the dissertation committee. You exemplify what it means to be a gentleman-scholar, both old and young. Dr. Michael Wilder led my entrance interview into the Ph.D. program and shepherded me through the dissertation process. His suggested revisions and edits always made the research better. His willingness to let the research fit the researcher motivated me to remember that the results would be worth knowing. Thank you for regularly saying, "You can do this."

Along the way, many people and institutions contributed to the success of this dissertation. I could not have had access to the administrators included in this study without the networking help from friends like David Andersen, Brent Belford, Kyle Dunham, Mark Hassler, Jeff McCann, Jonathan Rinker, and Gary Thomson. Thank you to Barbara Luckett, who gave nights and weekends to transcribe interviews. Thank you to

the staff of the School of Harmony who shared office space and internet access. To the staff at Union Presbyterian Seminary, especially Christopher and Lisa, your friendliness and help made a difference.

To Immanuel Baptist Church, thank you for the privilege of leading and serving while pursuing this degree. You deserve the best of me. I hope you will receive the lasting benefit from my education. Thank you for allowing weeks away in Louisville and providing a portion of the tuition costs. This research study would not have been completed without the elders granting a five-week sabbatical during a critical phase of the research. To the pastors and church staff, thank you for taking initiate without me, waiting on slow email responses, and accepting additional work on my behalf.

Thank you, most of all, to my family. Thank you to Dr. Howard Wilburn, my father, who read the dissertation for content and clarity, and Dr. David Luethy, my father-in-law, who proofread every paragraph and footnote for accuracy. My wife sacrificed time and attention to see my education through to completion. To Sarah, your patience, support, and love were more than I deserve. Thank you for serving me first out of love. Our children sacrificed more daddy time than I am willing to admit. To Chloe, Titus, and Noelle, I am looking forward to more frequent bedtime stories, Krispy Kreme runs, and daddy dates.

Michael Lee Wilburn

Richmond, Virginia

December 2018

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

The history of theological education in North America is a study of the relationship between two institutions: church and seminary. While church and seminary exist in a complementary relationship, much has been written about the headship of this relationship and the inherent tension between them.[1] What is the core nature and purpose of theological education? What unifying goal joins church and seminary in theological education? Does the seminary serve the church or does the church serve the seminary? Who is responsible for maintaining institutional complementarity? After decades of debate the work of theological education remains inseparably linked to both church and seminary.

The history of the debate swings less like a smooth pendulum and more like a tug-of-war as problems, trends, personalities, and institutions pull with competing agendas.[2] David Kelsey described the underlying philosophical distinctions in the current

[1]H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry; Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education* (New York: Harper, 1956). James Montgomery Boice, "Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship," *Christianity Today* 23, no. 9 (February 2, 1979): 14–15. James Montgomery Boice called the relationship between the church and seminary "a reciprocal relationship," stating, "If seminary and church would wholeheartedly recognize and accept the dependence each has for the other, both would improve." Ibid., 14. James E. Sweeney and Steve Fortosis, "Seminary and Church: Allies for Change," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 3 (1994): 74–85.

[2]Russell W. West, "Church-Based Theological Education: When the Seminary Goes Back to Church," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 2, no. 2 (September 2003): 113–65. West's article is divided into two parts: (1) "When the Church Goes to Seminary" and (2) "When the Seminary Goes Back to Church." West argues that the context of church leadership training has slowly drifted from the context of leadership training. He suggests using BILD International's standard curriculum for church-based theological education (CBTE), writing, "Seminary seems to be making a return to context, the context of the local church from whence it came. If my accounting of dominant patterns is correct, leadership formation comes full circle in the present era. The life-on-life tutorship, on-the-job training, church-on-mission approach, so evident in the New Testament, is being preferred by some over traditional seminary options." Ibid., 133.

theological education debate as between Athens and Berlin: Athens representing theological education focused on identity formation and personal transformation and Berlin representing theological education focused on professional education through applied theory and practice.[3] Both Athens and Berlin are essentially and irreconcilably part of theological education in North America, according to Kelsey.[4] Robert Banks proposed a third missional model that can be typified as Jerusalem. The Jerusalem model views theological education as a teaching ministry of the church.[5] Brian Edgar suggested a fourth model identified with Geneva. The Geneva model is a confessional approach to theological education with the goal of knowing God through faith traditions, creeds, and confessions.[6]

Division in theological education may be the catalyst calling church and seminary together. Four decades of calls to reform theological education have led to a return of theological education to the local church. Common ground between church and seminary has formed out of the desire for unity in theological education.[7]

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[3]David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 19-20, 22. "I propose a typology. I suggest that for historical reasons Christian theological education in North America is inescapably committed to two contrasting and finally irreconcilable types or models of what education as its best ought to be. They are normative models, models of 'excellent' education. For one type I shall suggest that 'Athens's be the symbol, for the other 'Berlin'." Ibid., 5.

[4]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 6. Kelsey writes, "Christian theological education in North America is ineluctably located between "Athens" and "Berlin." Every theological course of study rests on some sort of more or less implicit negotiated truce between these two models of excellent schooling." Ibid., 6.

[5]Robert J. Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), loc. 1370-92, Kindle. Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 212.

[6]Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 212-13.

[7]R. Albert Mohler, "Thinking of the Future: Evangelical Theological Education in a New Age," in *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. R. Albert Mohler and D. G. Hart (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 278–83. Mohler called for a reclaiming of theological education for the church noting the danger of the two drifting apart and the movement of new congregational models emerging. Mohler wrote, "Over the past two centuries, theological education has been increasingly removed from the congregation to the seminary," and warned, "For evangelical institutions, distance from the churches means abstraction from the task and risks alienation from the faith." Ibid., 280. Carnegie Samuel Calian, *Where's the Passion*

Theological education between the 1980-2017 produced developing partnerships between churches and seminaries as extension centers, teaching sites, and branch campuses. In a select number of instances, local churches started independent seminaries under the church's influence and on the church's property. These church-based seminaries represent a model of theological education known as church-based theological education (CBTE). This research study examined the educational philosophy, unique church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE as it is observed in the relationship between church and seminary.

Principal to the research concern was my own relationship to CBTE. While pastoring a church in Virginia I attended Virginia Beach Theological Seminary (VBTS) in Virginia Beach, Virginia receiving a M.Div. degree in 2007 after 96 hours of course work over five years of academic training (2002-2007). During those years, VBTS achieved academic accreditation. While conducting the research study I served on the Board of Trustees of VBTS and desired to advocate the CBTE model.[8]

Research Problem

What educational philosophy distinguishes CBTE institutions from traditional seminaries? What are the hindrances to achieving high academic standards in a church-based seminary model of theological education? Academic standards remain as a key

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for Excellence in the Church? Shaping Discipleship through Ministry and Theological Education (Wilton, CT: Morehouse, 1989). Carnegie Calian accepts the inevitable tension between church and seminary, then warns theological education against drifting from the church. Calian observes, "There probably will always be a basic tension between the church's demand for accountability and the seminary's need for autonomy in pursuing its educational mission. In the midst of this tension, the church and seminary must, nonetheless, support each other." Calian, *Where is the Passion?*, 9. He then warns, "The seminary that divorces itself from the confessing church has no future; it will lose its purpose for existence," adding, "The theological school that does not identify with the church has no purpose and no constituency." Ibid., 11. Mohler, a Baptist, and Calian, a Presbyterian, recognize the schism between the church and seminary in their respective denominations. The effect shows that a complementary relationship between church and seminary is needed across denominations and theological perspectives.

[8]John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008). "Qualitative introductions may begin with a personal statement of experiences from the author, such as those found in phenomenological studies." Ibid., 99.

wedge separating church and seminary. Ted Ward called academics "a real misfit between academic theology and the contemporary church" in an interview with Linda Cannell. He pinpointed the problem:

> That's where theological seminaries, especially those that become obsessed by their own academic standards and the direction that accrediting associations push them, tend to look at the church and say, 'But you don't understand. We really have to be this way.' The honest answer to that question is, 'Because we are not really in the business to serve the church. We're in the business to serve the academic standards of academic theology.'[9]

Similar perspectives were rarely found in national, regional, or ATS accreditation reports or in institutional objectives in seminary catalogues. However, sentiments over academic standards dividing church and seminary existed among educators and church leaders as this research study pointed out in the literature review.

Educational philosophy and academic standards in theological education must be investigated at their root, the local church. Without academic credibility, CBTE institutions struggled, churches and seminaries remain estranged, and efforts to reform theological education, at best, continue in other forms. Both theological educators and church leaders agree that an ineffective relationship between church and seminary perpetuates an institutional disconnect between orthodoxy and orthopraxy.[10] Partial solutions have been suggested with mixed results.[11]

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[9]Ted W. Ward and Linda M. Cannell, "Theological Education and the Church," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (1999): 31. Also see John M. Frame, "The Academic Captivity of Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:59–76.

[10]James F. Hopewell, "A Congregational Paradigm for Theological Education," in *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*, ed. Joseph C. Hough and Barbara G. Wheeler (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 1-9. Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, "Friends in the Family: Church, Seminary, and Theological Education," in Hough and Wheeler, *Beyond Clericalism*, 49–60. Stanley Hauerwas, "The Ministry of a Congregation: Rethinking Christian Ethics for a Church-Centered Seminary," in Hough and Wheeler, *Beyond Clericalism*, 119–36.

[11]Linda Cannell, *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 252. Cannell infers three potentially unproductive responses including (1) "Churches, particularly multicampus churches, bypass theological institutions and create their own seminaries, or conduct conferences to teach what they perceive the seminaries have taught inadequately." (2) "Theological schools seek to connect with the church by teaching existing courses at a church site or by placing more of their students in churches as interns." (3) "Individuals and groups form institutes or training centers to train leaders and develop resources for the church." Ibid., 252. Donald E. Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary into the 21st Century* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 18. Messer acknowledges a

A Call to Reform Theological Education

Calls to reform theological education have grown to near consensus in need but not in solution.[12] In recent decades, reforming theological education has been based on theological, historical, missional, and cultural grounds. Calls for radical change have increased from struggling institutions as financial pressure builds against the viability of theological education. These voices create urgency for reform.

First, there is a theological call for reform answering the question, what is theological about theological education? It is "the essential process of furthering the understandings of what God has said and how the Scripture applies to the circumstances of life in various places at certain periods of time."[13] Theological education fulfills, in part, the Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20).

The local church oversaw theological education for the first 1600 years of church history following the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-47). Scripture charges local church elders to teach and train the church laity (Eph 4:11-14). Education in the early

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one-sided conversation: "Unfortunately, this dialogue has been confined to seminary faculties and administrators, and the church has not been an active participant." Ibid., 18.

[12]Carolyn Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow: A Study of Ministry Needs of the Local Church in the 21st Century* (Granada Hills, CA: Multi-Staff Ministries, 1993). Weese conducted 91 on-site and 6 telephone interviews through Leadership Network of pastors of large church and educated at one of seven seminaries (Alliance Theological Seminary, Asbury Theological Seminary, Beeson Divinity School, Bethel Theological Seminary, Denver Seminary, Seminary of the East, and Western Seminary) to discuss curriculum, pedagogy, and the preparedness of seminary graduates to lead the church of tomorrow. After 97 two-hour interviews, Weese concludes, "Every pastor said that we must have seminaries, but that seminaries must do a more complete job of preparing men and women for ministry. They are convinced, that if we were to eliminate seminaries, the church may remain solid and on track through this generation, but with each succeeding generation the theology would become weaker, disjointed, confused, and degenerated into 'fluff and fuzz' religion." Ibid., 40. The consensus added, "If the seminaries do not take this seriously, and do not take significant steps to move closer to the emerging church, there will be more and more churches developing their own mini-seminaries, institutes, Bible colleges, etc. The pattern is already established. If the need is not met, the church will try to meet it." Ibid., 40-41. J. Russell Crabtree, *The Fly in the Ointment: Why Denominations Aren't Helping Their Congregations and How They Can* (New York: Church Publishing, 2008), 167-74.

[13]Ted W. Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," *Common Ground Journal* 11, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 64.

church was life-on-life discipleship following the pattern of Jesus (1 Thess 2:8).[14] The standard of success was multiplied leaders within the church (2 Tim 2:2). Ted Ward observingly writes, "Theological education in one form or another is as old as the Holy Scripture; it will surely continue. What is less likely to continue is the dominant form of the past hundred years or so."[15] For theological education to be truly theological it must restore theology as a biblical and systematic discipline.[16]

Second, there is a historical call for reform. Theological education in North America has followed the historical pattern of Friedrich Schleiermacher and the German academy. While it extends beyond the scope of this research study to detail the precedent relationship, it is helpful to note the impact of higher criticism on theological studies.[17]

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[14]Ted W. Ward, "Developing Christ-like Leaders," *Common Ground Journal* 10, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 9–11. Ward identifies nine education methods of Jesus needed in theological education: (1) Jesus invited people to walk with him, (2) Jesus invited people to do something and become something, (3) Jesus walked with his learners into a changed lifestyle, (4) Jesus felt compassion and showed his depth of feeling to his disciples, (5) Jesus responded with care and respect to the questions that people asked him, (6) Jesus was very demanding on the subject of competitive behavior and the quest for power, (7) Jesus put his disciples to work in active learning projects, (8) Jesus reoriented his disciples in their cultural relationships, and (9) Jesus demonstrated the holism of Godliness. Ward connects Jesus' methods to theological education: "Thus the full humanity of Jesus suggests that without a deliberate inclusion of the behavior, attitudes, interpersonal skills and communication style of Jesus pastoral education–indeed any Christian education is incomplete." Ibid., 9. Ward's pedagogical principles from the example of Jesus are similar to the apprenticeship method of discipleship training identified by Alexander R. Hay in *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary*, including the following principles: (1) Jesus taught by example, (2) Jesus taught his disciples in living situations, (3) Jesus used sound educational principles, (4) Jesus taught according to the needs of the individual in a personalized way, (5) Jesus taught his disciples by assessing them, and (6) Jesus believed in those he trained and delegated to them. Alexander R. Hay, *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary*, 3rd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010).

[15]Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," 64.

[16]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 3. Thomas C. Oden, *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995). Shoki Coe, "In Search of Renewal in Theological Education," *Theological Education* 9, no. 4 (1973): 237-38.

[17]Justo L. González, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015), loc. 2471, Kindle. González views much of the tension between the church and the academy, fundamentalism and liberalism, and pietism and rationalism as a result of Friedrich Schleiermacher's influence in *A Brief Outline of Theological Studies*, leading toward a theological tug-of-war "between fundamentalists and liberals, in which they first reject critical studies, and later gave them an absolute and final value. Thus, while the former canonized ignorance and promoted a sort of biblical imperialism, some among the latter canonized science and promoted studies and discussions that had little relevance for the life of the church and for its pastors." González, *History of Theological Education*, loc. 2471, Kindle. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 5. Kelsey frames the conversation as between Athens and Rome. Ibid., 5 Edward Farley,

Following Schleiermacher's model, theological education migrated into the academy and away from the church.[18] But why was this the case? Why were separate institutions considered essential after the church oversaw theological education for 1600 years? Even as theological education was absorbed into the academy, historical examples persisted demonstrating theological education as part of the church.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon established the Pastor's College at London's Metropolitan Tabernacle. On May 19, 1861 Spurgeon made a public appeal to the church to raise up new pastors. The goal was to train aspiring men for two years of ministry education. Spurgeon wrote of his personal investment, "But I have been content to spare everything that I could out of my own income, beyond that which is necessary for the support of my household, in order to educate any suitable young men who came in my way, that they might become ministers of the cross of Christ."[19] Eventually the Pastor's College became a ministry of Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Spurgeon wrote encouragingly about the necessity of theological education in the church.[20] Students were critically and selectively chosen by Spurgeon. Headcount was not the goal evidenced by Spurgeon's denial of men without preaching voices.[21]

Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 56-72.

[18]Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline on The Study of Theology*, trans. Terrence N. Tice (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1966).

[19]Charles H. Spurgeon, *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography: The Full Harvest 1860-1892*, rev. ed. (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1973), 2:97.

[20]Spurgeon, *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography*, 98-99: "It is a grand assistance to our College that it is connected with an active and vigorous Christian church. If union to such a church does not quicken the student's spiritual pulse, it is his own fault. It is a serious strain upon a man's spirituality to be dissociated, during his student-life, from actual Christian work, and from fellowship with more experienced believers. At the Pastors' College, our brethren can not only meet, as they do every day, for prayer by themselves, but they can unite daily in the prayer-meetings of the church, and can assist in earnest efforts of all sorts.Through living in the midst of a church which, despite its faults, is a truly loving, intensely zealous, working organization, they gain enlarged ideas, and form practical habits. Even to see church-management and church-work upon an extensive scale, and to share in the prayers and sympathies of a large community of Christian people, must be a stimulus to right-minded men." Ibid., 98-99.

[21]Charles H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954), 110-26.

Identifying and training gifted men called by God was the standard of success.[22] It was clearly a church-based model of theological education, which is why Metropolitan Tabernacle's congregation voted to approve and fund the Pastor's College on July 1, 1861. The Pastor's College trained over 900 men in Spurgeon's lifetime and among his students was Archibald Brown, Spurgeon's successor at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Another historical example of theological education in the church was Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Confessing Church. Bonhoeffer trained seminary students in a secluded, almost monastic, setting. His education efforts were part necessity and part ingenuity. Bonhoeffer's five year seminary experiment led Paul House to write about Bonhoeffer's influence,and along the way, causing House to rethink his pedagogical approach to seminary training: "I believe that a biblical theology of pastoral formation makes face-to-face community-based seminary education a priority, not a preference."[23] Drawing themes from *A Case for Costly Discipleship* and *Life Together*, House emphasizes "the narrow way of personal, incarnational theological education" based on Bonhoeffer's educational innovations.[24]

Phil Newton identified common themes between Spurgeon's and Bonhoeffer's philosophies of education. Both enjoyed personal relationships with students. Both

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[22]Ibid. Spurgeon qualified, "Candidates have always been plentiful, and the choice has been wide; but it is a serious responsibility to reject any, and yet more so to accept them for training," adding, "I never tried to make a minister, and should fail if I did; I received none into the College but those who profess to be ministers already." Ibid., 100-101.

[23]Paul R. House, *Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision: A Case for Costly Discipleship and Life Together* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 15. The five years of Bonhoeffer's theological education experiment was between 1935-1940, and House focuses his attention on Bonhoeffer's writing in this timeframe. Ibid., 15.

[24]Ibid., 30. Germane to this research project, House draws upon Bonhoeffer's work at Finkenwalde and Koslin to state propositions about theological education in North America. House concludes, "It is likely that seminary education has entered a new phase in the United States and elsewhere. . . . I believe that new forms of personal seminaries and related ministries will arise in response to impersonal approaches." Ibid., 28-29. "This book attempts to do two things. First, it tries to examine Bonhoeffer's theology and practice of theological education in their original context. Second, it endeavors to assert the biblical necessity of personal, incarnational, face-to-face education for the health of pastors and churches." Ibid., 29.

valued local church influence on education. Both modeled Christian ministry for their students. Both mentored formally and informally. Both emphasized theological education's dependence on God.[25]

Third, there is a missional call to reform theological education. If the work of making disciples and training church leaders is the goal, traditional seminaries may be structurally hindered from accomplishing these goals.[26] A way forward may be a return to a modest form of theological education found outside of North America.[27]

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was a missional model of theological education. It was often viewed as the international counterpart to the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in North America.[28] TEE designed a culturally situated and apprentice-styled approach to theological education.[29] It valued formal, nonformal, and informal education as described by Edgar Elliston in *Developing Leaders at a Distance*.[30] Jonathan Chao called for a complete reshaping of theological education's philosophy and structure by integrating education into the ministry of the church (both

[25]Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 113-14.

[26]Ralph D. Winter, "The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church," in *Disciple Mentoring: Theological Education by Extension*, ed. Sam Westman Burton (Pasadena: William Carey, 2000). Winter writes, "The major impediment which withdrew those schools from helping people into the ministry by extension was the fact that this pattern was not being followed in the United States." Ibid., 142.

[27]Jonathan Chao, "Education and Leadership," in *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, ed. Rene Padilla (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976). Chao calls for a "De-Westernization of the Ministry." Ibid., 191–204.

[28]Ralph D. Winter, *Theological Education by Extension* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1969). Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, *An Extension Seminary Primer* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1971).

[29]Robert W. Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education: Strategies for Change* (Wheaton, IL: Billy Graham Center, 1990). Ferris quotes the International Missionary Council conferences notes, Section VIII of the Madras Meetings that addressed "The Indigenous Ministry of the Church, Both Ordained and Lay." It called for a new approach to theological education worldwide. Ibid., 9.

[30]Edgar J. Elliston, *Developing Leaders at a Distance: Contextualizing Leadership Development* (Pasadena: Fuller, 1997). Elliston categorizes three types of education: "Formal education refers to schooling; nonformal education refers to planned learning outside of the schooling environment for which academic credit is not given; informal education refers to the unplanned acculturation/ enculturation process that occur through relationships." Ibid., 13-14.

locally and globally) and by integrating education into all of life.[31] Without presently evaluating the history and outcome of TEE, it is sufficient to note its call for and contribution to a new model of theological education.[32]

A similar missional call to reform theological education was the development of a new accreditation scheme for Evangelical Theological Schools in Asia in the mid-1970s. It sought to create an integrative approach to theological education focused on character formation. Defining it as "a holistic integrated approach to ministerial training, in terms of a concern not only with the academic but also with the spiritual and practical aspects of leadership formation,"[33] Chow proposed theological education's return to a community such as the church.[34] Global calls for reform in theological education globally are similar to calls for changing theological education in North America. It proposed seminaries become spiritual communities in institutional structure, communal life, academic study, and field work similar to Bonhoeffer's efforts at Finkenwalde and Koslin.[35]

Fourth, there is a growing cultural call to reform theological education. Driving factors include the changing nature of seminary students, the increasing costs of

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[31]Chao, "Education and Leadership," 191–204. "If Jesus is our model, then the goal of leadership development and theological education is nothing less than equipping believers to *be* like Jesus, to *know* the redemptive work of God in Christ Jesus and to *do* the works of Jesus." Ibid., 201-2.

[32]Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education*. "Although TEE literature rarely mentions renewal of theological education, the effect of TEE has been to focus dissatisfaction with present patterns of training for ministry and nourish the hope that more effective strategies exist. To that extent, at least, it must be viewed as contributing to the present context for renewal." Ibid., 15.

[33]Wilson W. Chow, "An Integrated Approach to Theological Education," in *Evangelical Theological Education Today: An International Perspective*, ed. Paul Bowers, (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel, 1982), 49.

[34]Chow, "An Integrated Approach to Theological Education," 49–62. "One of the problems that the seminary now faces is being out of touch with the churches. Field education is a good means whereby pastors in churches participate in the training of students through their supervision on the field." Ibid., 60.

[35]Ibid., 49–62. "Unless there is a radical change, an abandonment of the residential seminary as a model of theological learning, there is little hope of providing sufficient spiritual training to students to equip them to be ready upon graduation to meet the challenges and requirements of the ministry." Ibid., 53.

education, and the needs and concerns of churches. Due to these developments, theological education institutions followed secular higher education institutions in a fight for survival. Ward offered a two-tier survival solution including "a more academic and higher order of substantially longer programs to satisfy the needs of churches that believe they need leaders with doctoral-level theological education, and a lower tier of academia to serve the vast majority of the churches through a more functionally-oriented and shorter education."[36] Social and economic trends have forced theological education institutions to rethink models of education delivery. The pragmatic realities of student recruitment and tuition costs are motivating reform in theological education.

Online education has increased the affordability and accessibility of many degree programs in theological education. It is yet to be determined if the digital revolution compromises the affective and relational aspects of education.[37] Because of the monetary benefit, few institutions have questioned the revolutionary impact of the digital revolution and the programmatic changes it creates. Institutions initially slow to implement online course offerings have now modified to the economic pressure and demand.

In addition to social and economic trends, the cultural revolution may soon

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[36]Ward acknowledges the increased likelihood of church-based forms of theological education, especially in larger churches. He writes, "Using the internship model coupled with intensive small-group educational experiences, many a church will come to be its own source of leadership resources." Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," 66.

[37]González observes, "It may be useful to suggest that what is happening in our time is parallel to what took place in the sixteenth century, when the invention of the printing press multiplied the number of books and their accessibility to an ever wider public." González, *The History of Theological Education*, loc. 2648, Kindle. Gabriel Benjamin Etzel, "Implications of Theological Anthropology for Online Pedagogy in Graduate-Level Ministerial Training" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), accessed November 29, 2017, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/dissertations/docview/1696782234/6C216694D63D4359PQ/11?accountid=14061, John Beck Cartwright, "Best Practices for Online Theological Ministry Preparation: A Delphi Method Study" (EdD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), accessed November 29, 2017, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/pqdtlocal1005843/docview/1647767773/649D8BD750CD400APQ/6?accountid=14061. Neal Brian Ledbetter, "Best Practices of Online Undergraduate Spiritual Formation at Select Institutions of Christian Higher Education: A Delphi Study" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), accessed January 31, 2018, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/dissertations/docview/1972878176/A65BC75888404261PQ/2?accountid=14061.

hinder theological education institutions from operating freely. Lack of federal financial aid programs, regulated accreditation standards from the department of education, and restricted free speech pose a real threat to theological education.[38] The retreat of religious liberty in North America is beginning to cause alarm. Rob Dreher called for the creation of "a Christian academic counterculture" in *The Benedict Option*.[39] While Dreher's proposal is a call for classical Christian Schools on the elementary and secondary school levels, he foresees the need at all levels of education, writing, "And they should not stop after twelfth grade—a Christian plan for higher education is also needed."[40] This cultural opposition may prompt the return of theological education, as well as Christian education in general, to the church.[41]

A Call to Return Theological Education to the Church

Reform in theological education has, in part, initiated a return of theological education to the local church. In 1989, Leon Pacala, the executive director of ATS, acknowledged that the greatest transition in seminary education was the shift from the clerical paradigm to the community of faith paradigm.[42] James Montgomery Boice called for a renewed relationship between church and seminary a decade earlier.[43] In his book

[38]Judith S. Eaton, "Disruption in the U.S. Accreditation Space," *International Higher Education* (Winter 2017).

[39]Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Sentinel, 2017), 171.

[40]Ibid., 146.

[41]Dreher appeals, "School-church integration in a post-Christian age also has a practical benefit. Existing under the umbrella of a church offers legal protection not available to other Christian schools. Legal experts say that Christian schools facing antidiscrimination challenges in court have greater protection if they can demonstrate that they are clearly and meaningfully guided by established doctrines of a particular church and can demonstrate that they enforce these doctrines." Ibid., 162.

[42]Timothy C. Morgan and Thomas S. Giles, "Re-Engineering the Seminary," *Christianity Today* 38, no. 12 (October 24, 1994): 74.

[43]Boice recommended, "If seminary and church would wholeheartedly recognize and accept the dependence each has for the other, both would improve." Boice, "Church and Seminary," 14-15. The relationship must respect both institutions in that (1) The call to the ministry should, and most often does,

Calling Church and Seminary into the 21st Century, Don Messer, then serving as the president of The Iliff School of Theology, echoed Boice's reciprocal relationship. "Theological schools are called to be servants of a servant God. A seminary that distances itself from the church is like a bishop demanding that an ordinand lie prostrate. A seminary caught up in its own hierarchical self-importance has forgotten to Whom it witnesses and for Whom it exists."[44] Sweeney and Fortosis called for a church and seminary partnership model that alleviates the tension in which "seminaries caught between the demands of academia and the values of the church have usually pleased academia."[45] Stanley Hauerwas argued that seminary curriculum must be restructured to be congregationally focused.[46] These calls to reconnect church and seminary come from mainline protestant and conservative evangelical perspectives.

An increasing number of church leaders and theological educators are voicing the conviction that the local church must reassume its position as the God-ordained institution raising up and equipping ministry leaders. Mark Dever in a 9Marks interview expressed his opinion that seminaries are often used for the wrong purpose, saying, "They're not made to make pastors. Churches make pastors."[47] In an interview between Linda Cannell and Ted Ward, Cannell asked, "Will the nonformal modes, for example,

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come through the church, (2) The seminary needs the church to provide students with models to follow, (3) The seminary needs the church to provide the context in which the student can practice what he learns in the classroom, and (4) To survive the seminary needs the financial support of the church. Boice, "Church and Seminary," 14-15. Boice's appeal was voiced nearly forty years ago.

[44]Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary into the 21st Century*, 22.

[45]Sweeney and Fortosis, "Seminary and Church," 74.

[46]Stanley Hauerwas, "The Ministry of a Congregation," 119–36.

[47]Mark Dever, "Raising Up Pastors Is the Church's Work," n.d., accessed June 13, 2017, https://www.9marks.org/article/raising-pastors-churchs-work/. Dever defends the role of a seminary as long as it remains subservient to the local church,"I'm not opposed to seminaries, although they are unknown among Protestants before the eighteenth or nineteenth century. I'm simply saying that in the Bible, the local church—a community where people are known, their conversion is testified to, and their gifts are witnessed—is the appropriate place to make that kind of heavy statement about God's gifting and calling in somebody's life. Raising up leaders is part of the church's commission." Ibid.

church-based theological education, supplant the formal seminary?" To which Ward answered, "At this stage of my life, I'm having fun interacting with theological schools and with churches, pushing both institutions toward each other, and especially to consider creating alternatives to their ways of doing their ministries."[48]

Perhaps the most vocal and enduring voice for reforming theological education and returning it to the local church is John Frame, retired Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary. Since 1978 with the publication of "Proposal for a New Seminary," Frame has called for ministry training outside of the academy.[49] He wrote in a recent publication, "The rush to become academically respectable has never borne good fruit in the church," concluding that the church has surrendered its place to the academy.[50] Frame calls for seminaries to forego regional or ATS accreditation, arguing that accreditation cannot adequately measure or assess what is most important for a seminary graduate. Frame argues, "I think the culture of assessment should be set aside, in favor of prayerful, biblical analysis of theological education in consultation with the churches in the seminary constituency."[51] He concludes, "In the deepest sense, *only the church may accredit a seminary*."[52] Essentially,

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[48]Ted W. Ward and Linda M. Cannell, "Theological Education and the Church," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (1999): 35, 40-41. Ward wrote elsewhere, ""If the seminaries and theological schools do not find effective ways to provide help and extension ministries the emergence of church-based theological education may spell the end of an era for the so-called 'modern missionary movement' and its counterpart, domination of theological education by formal schools." Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," 66.

[49]John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* (Winter 1978): 10-17.

[50]John M. Frame, "The Academic Captivity of Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:75. Frame writes, "The church (except for some small groups of fundamentalist anti-intellectuals) has assumed that academic learning is an unalloyed blessing." Ibid., 73.

[51]John M. Frame, "What Seminaries Can do Without," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings*, 3:155. For example, Frame urges, "Drop paper assignments, then, and replace them with training in other skills—such as evangelism—that have a legitimate purpose in ministry," and "The purpose of a seminary course should be to give students the information they need to prepare for ministry, and to prepare for the testing they will receive in a church context." Ibid., 149, 150.

[52]John M. Frame, "Seminaries and Academic Accreditation," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter*

examining this statement was the nexus to this research study.

Implication of the Research Problem

Responses to calls for reform in theological education and for the return of theological education to the church include a variety of solutions. Established seminaries are responding with curriculum design revisions and program changes, especially in regard to delivery systems and online education.[53] A handful of university structured institutions are developing innovative consortiums between baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate degree combinations.[54] Institutions of all types are partnering with local churches to extend their geographical reach through extension centers, teaching sites, and branch campuses. With recognition of these developments, this research study focused specifically on graduate-level theological education institutions identified with a single local church. The CBTE model of theological education began in the early 1980s after the publication of several articles emphasizing the relationship between church and seminary and with founding of significant CBTE institutions under a church's influence and on a church's property.[55]

One reason for the rise of the CBTE model was the ineffectiveness of

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Writings, (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:77–93. Frame comments, "In the final analysis, it is the church, and only the church, that is competent to make the final assessment of the teaching of its ministers and its seminaries." Frame, "Seminaries and Academic Accreditation," 2:81-82.

[53]T. Ryan Baltrip, "Identifying Standards of Quality in Christian Online Theological Education" (PhD diss., University of South Florida, 2015), accessed June 12, 2017, http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/1753920717/abstract/EE850526FC54EFBPQ/2.

[54]Karen Stiller, "Fast-Forward Future," *InTrust Magazine* (Autumn 2016). Josh Good et al., "A Five-Year B.A./M.Div? How 19 Schools Are Rethinking Pastoral Preparation" (Webinar, www.InTrust.org, November 2, 2016), https://webinars.intrust.org/products/a-five-year-bamdiv-how-19-schools-are-rethinking-pastoral-preparation.

[55]David Singer, "Seminary Goes to Church: An Alternative Approach," *Christianity Today* 22, no. 9 (February 10, 1978): 16–18. James Montgomery Boice, “Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship,” *Christianity Today*, February 2, 1979. John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* (January 1, 1978): 10–17. Nathan Busenitz, "The Church as Classroom: The History of Master’s Seminary," *9Marks*, February 26, 2010, accessed September 5, 2017, https://www.9marks.org/article/church-classroom-history-masters-seminary/.

traditional seminary education. Unfortunately, declining enrollment led to changes in curriculum, degree programs, and delivery methods that perpetuate the distance between church and seminary.[56]

The disconnect between church and seminary is the second reason for growth in the CBTE model.[57] In response to forty years of calls to reform theological education and to return theological education to the church, a growing number of CBTE institutions now exist. These institutions of theological education have operated long enough to develop degree programs, acquire accreditation, populate alumni associations, and gain a measure of name recognition.[58]

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[56]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*. In the 1980s and 1990s, traditional theological education was the subject of major studies investigating the perception that seminaries produced graduates unequipped for leadership in the church. Ibid., 1. *Readiness for Ministry: Criteria* (Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, 1975). "Readiness for Ministry," study by the Lilly Foundation. Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education*. Harry L. Poe, "The Revolution in Ministry Training," *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (1996): 23–30. Poe wrote of these misgivings in *Theological Education* in 1996: "The almost universal complaint, however, came in the area of preparation for the practice of ministry. Graduates of seminaries felt unprepared for the challenges of ministry, while the churches felt that seminaries did not turn out people ready for ministry." Ibid., 23. Poe's findings parallel those cited in Weese's research on the perceived need for leadership education of larger church pastors. Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow*, 27-28. Ineffectiveness in traditional theological education led to declining enrollment. The Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education reviewed enrollment at 205 ATS schools over a 20-year period and concluded the following: Graduate-level theological education in North America peaked in 2004 and then began to decline, MDiv degrees sustained major losses (7.5 percent since 2006), only 63 percent of theological education students are pursuing an MDiv degree (down from 69 percent in 1992), caucasian student enrollment has declined 17 percent since peaking in 2005 while African American and Hispanic enrollment has grown, and the findings were true of all religious groups. Barbara G. Wheeler and Anthony T. Ruger, "Sobering Figures Point to Overall Enrollment Decline: New Research from the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education," *In Trust* (Spring 2013): 5-11.

[57]See perceived flaws of the traditional seminary education. Sweeney and Fortosis, "Seminary and Church," 74–85.

[58]Jeff Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education: Creating A New Paradigm" (paper presented at the North American Professors of Christian Education, Dallas, TX, 1992), 6-7. CBTE institutions collectively account for the following nine shifts in theological education: (1) a shift from traditional academic-based accrediting systems to church-based assessment procedures, (2) a shift in emphasis from the residential, for-service model to a church-based in-service model of ministry preparation, (3) a shift of the foundational training back to local churches, with seminaries assuming a resource role to the churches, (4) a shift of the primary ministry context of professors back to local churches, (5) a shift from centralized staff to a decentralized staff, (6) a shift away from costly institutional overhead by selling unnecessary properties, (7) a shift from a fragmented curriculum based on Schleiermacher's four-fold model, to a model more consistent with the unfolding agenda of the Scriptures and current needs of the churches, (8) a shift from a curriculum based on systematic theology to a

Research exists to validate the trend of CBTE including strategic partnerships between churches and seminaries for pastoral training, case studies on individual church and seminary partnerships, and leadership styles in church-based pastoral training.[59] The relationship between theological education models and assessment criteria within the church-based leadership training has been studied, as well as the leadership readiness of pastors with various relationships to theological institutions and local churches.[60]

While research exists focusing on theological education efforts corollary to the CBTE model and on church and seminary partnerships, what continued to lack was a review of the forty years of CBTE history.[61] What remained to be explored was CBTE views on traditional forms of national, regional, and ATS accreditation, the validity of non-traditional, praxis-based programs, and the prospect of a church-based self-assessment model. Little empirical research had been done to determine the views of CBTE institutions on these issues specifically and CBTE educational philosophy, church

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curriculum based on biblical theology and theology in culture, (9) a shift from an academic, testing course design to a wisdom, problem-posing course design model. Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education," 6-7.

[59]Matthew A. Rogers, "Holistic Pastoral Training: Strategic Partnership between the Seminary and the Local Church in the United States" (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/1771283468/abstract/75F195FCA82A463CPQ/3. Aaron Francis Filippone, "Servant Leadership Development in Church-Based Pastoral Training Programs: A Multiple Case Study" (EdD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/1849030781/abstract/B9822B69358F4731PQ/1. Carl Arthur Moeller, "Church and Seminary Partnerships: A Case Study of the Formation of Mountain View Seminary from the Partnership of Mountain View Community Church and Bayside Baptist Theological Seminary" (PhD diss., The University of Utah, 2003), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/305298176/abstract/FA968C074F7843A7PQ/1. Andrew Thomas Hancock, "Pastoral Training Approaches in the Local Church: A Multi-Case Study" (EdD thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017).

[60]Thomas Lee Kiedis, "A Comparative Analysis of Leadership Development Models in Post-Baccalaureate Theological Education" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), accessed May 30, 2017, http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/205394512/abstract/AF43CFF6981F4142PQ/27. Jack Gregory Lewis, "The Involvement and Impact of the Local Church in the Professional Socialization of Pastors" (PhD diss., Gonzaga University, 2000), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/304651618/abstract/23CCAD8C37AD4B2APQ/1.

[61]As of 1994, Sweeney and Fortosis admit, "To our knowledge, to date no church-based seminary program is officially accredited." Sweeney and Fortosis, "Seminary and Church," 78.

proximity, and academic standards generally. This research study gathered the perspectives of leading CBTE institutions and administrators and identified common themes from a group of institutions that otherwise were not unified.

Significance of the Research Study

Because of the developing models within CBTE and the availability of forty years of history, a phenomenological research study investigating the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE institutions was needed. This research study offered significant insight into the CBTE model in the following ways: First, it studied the various methods by which CBTE institutions seek to gain accreditation. Second, this research study investigated the balance of emphasis between traditional academic standards and church leadership competencies. Third, this research study provided a catalyst for conversation about shared academic standards among CBTE institutions. Fourth, this research study identified key marks of academic standards unique to CBTE institutions and foundational for a future CBTE self-assessment.

Purpose Statement

The objective of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to explore the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in church-based theological education (CBTE).[62] For this research study, educational philosophy has been narrowly defined as classical, vocational, confessional, or missional models.[63]

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[62]John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), Kindle. "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a *case description* and *case themes*." Ibid., loc. 2088.

[63]Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 208–17. See comparison chart including nine dimensions of the four types of educational philosophy on p. 217. George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2006), loc. 3714-4030, Kindle.

Church proximity was defined as functioning under a church's influence and located on a church's property. Academic standards was defined as adherence to accreditation standards or academic recognition among common CBTE institutions.

Research Questions

This qualitative phenomenological research study answered the following central research questions supported by several sub-questions:

Central Questions

1. What educational philosophy underpinned the church-based theological education model?
2. How did close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in church-based theological education?
3. What was the state and significance of academic standards in church-based theological education?[64]

Research Design Overview

This research study used a phenomenological methodological design. A phenomenological research study "describes the common meaning of experiences of a phenomenon (or topic or concept) for several individuals. In this phenomenological study, the researcher reduces the experiences to a central meaning or the 'essence' of the experience."[65] This type of research methodology required the research to rely on "intuition, imagination, and universal structures" to describe the experience while using

[64]The state and significance of academic standards in CBTE was explored using the following sub-questions that shaped the interview protocol used in the semi-structured interviews: (1) What steps had the church-based theological education institution taken to develop academic standards? (2) How did a local church setting influence academic standards in church-based theological education? (3) What distinctions existed between church-based theological education and traditional theological education that informed the academic standards of the church-based theological education model? (4) What more could be done to create high academic standards in church-based theological education? (5) What role, if any, did regional or national accreditation hold in academic standards in church-based theological education? (6) What was the potential, if any, for local churches to create a self-assessment agency for church-based theological education?

[65]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 5231, Kindle.

systematic methods of inquiry.[66]

CBTE was studied as a model and movement of theological education and explained using methods in keeping with a phenomenological research design. Data was collected to understand the shared experiences and common views about CBTE. Semi-structured interviews gathered the majority of the data. Secondary forms of data collection included a preliminary questionnaire, document analysis, and some observation.

Interviews were transcribed. Significant terms, quotes, and themes were highlighted, codified, and reported using content analysis. This approach is called horizonalization, which reports an understanding of the participant's experiences and creates clusters of meaning from these statements.[67] Next, textual descriptions were written from the data reporting the participants' experience and, then, a structural description reporting the context and setting around their experience. Finally, an essential description was written describing the phenomenon as a whole.

Research Delimitations

This qualitative phenomenological research study necessitated delimitations to achieve its stated purpose. The following were the research delimitations:

1. This research was delimited to investigating theological education in evangelical institutions as defined theologically by the National Association of Evangelicals and historically by David Bebbington's key aspects of evangelicalism.[68]
2. This research was delimited to institutions offering graduate level degrees.
3. This research was delimited to theological education institutions in North America.
4. This research was delimited to the history of CBTE theological education

[66]Ibid., loc. 5257, Kindle.

[67]Ibid., According to Moustakas, horizonalization is "the second step in the phenomenological data analysis, in which the researcher lists every significant statement relevant to the topic and gives it equal value." Ibid., loc. 5231, Kindle.

[68]"NAE LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition" (National Association of Evangelicals, October 15, 2015), https://www.nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/. David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1989), 2-19.

institutions between 1980 and 2017.

5. This research was delimited to theological education institutions associated with a single local church.

Terminology

The following terms and definitions are listed for clarity and specificity in relation to this qualitative phenomenological research study:

Accreditation. Judith Eaton defines accreditation as follows: "Accreditation is a process of external quality review used by higher education to scrutinize colleges, universities, and educational programs for quality assurance and quality improvement."[69]

Christian education. Robert Pazmiño defines Christian education thus: "Christian education is the deliberate, systematic, and sustained divine and human efforts to share or appropriate the knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, sensibilities, and behaviours that comprise or are consistent with the Christian faith. It fosters the change, renewal, and reformation of persons, groups, and structures by the power of the Holy Spirit to conform to the revealed will of God as expressed in the Scriptures and pre-eminently in the person of Jesus Christ, as well as any outcomes of that effort."[70]

Church-based theological education (CBTE). Graduate-level theological education as a ministry and on the campus of a single local church, including both church-housed and church-based models as defined by Jeff Reed in "Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm."[71]

Educational philosophy. "At its core, its innermost component, education is based primarily on a worldview, a philosophical or theological system of understanding

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[69]Judith S. Eaton, "Accreditation and Recognition in the United States" (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, USA, 2016), http://www.chea.org/userfiles/uploads/AccredRecogUS.pdf.

[70]Robert W. Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 91-92. Also see James R. Estep, Michael Anthony, and Gregg Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 22. "Education can and must be understood as a ministry of the church." Ibid., 21.

[71]Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education," 9.

reality, truth, and values. As such, education is ultimately a practical expression of one's philosophical convictions." For the purpose of this study, educational philosophy was defined according to a classical, vocational, confessional, or missional model.[72]

Evangelical. Theologically, evangelicals hold to the Bible as the highest authority, personal evangelism, the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ, and the exclusivity of the Gospel.[73] Historically, evangelicals are defined by: (1) Conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed, (2) Activism, the expression of the gospel in effort, (3) Biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible, and (4) Crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ and the cross."[74]

Local church. A regular gathering of regenerate, baptized believers for the purpose of worshipping the Lord, practicing church ordinances, teaching Scripture, and fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20).[75]

Ministry. For the purpose of this study, ministry was defined as vocational service to a church or para-church organizations with particular attention to church ministry leaders biblically defined as elders-pastors-overseers (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

Seminary. According to Gangel and Benson, "A graduate school for ministerial training generally offering a variety of masters degrees and possibly one or more doctoral programs . . . geared toward the graduate preparation of pastor and other professional

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[72]Michael Anthony, "The Nature of Theology and Education," in *A Theology for Christian Education*, ed. James R. Estep and Greg Allison (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 17. Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 217.

[73]"NAE LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition" (National Association of Evangelicals, October 15, 2015), https://www.nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/. Stated on the NAE website, "Evangelicals are a common subject of research, but often the outcomes of that research vary due to differences in the methods used to identify evangelicals. In response to that challenge the NAE and LifeWay Research developed a tool to provide a consistent standard for identification of evangelical belief."

[74]Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 2-19.

[75]Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 853-69.

church staff."[76]

Theological education. Ted Ward defines theological education as "the essential process of furthering the understandings of what God has said and how the Scripture applies to the circumstances of life in various places at certain periods of time."[77]

Research Assumptions

The following research assumptions undergird this qualitative phenomenological research study:

1. The local church is responsible for the theological education of its leaders.
2. There are multiple, emerging education models in theological education.
3. Theological education institutions are increasingly and rapidly developing multiple, emerging models of theological education in response to theological, historical, missional, and cultural calls for reform.
4. This research study assumed the validity of church-based theological education.
5. Academic standards are normally established by regional or national accreditation and by recognition from other theological education institutions offering similar degrees.
6. Church-based theological education needed academic standards.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the CBTE model and presented a case for the CBTE model as an appropriate response to calls to reform theological education and calls to return theological education to the church. In the following chapter, a literature review outlines the precedent calls to reform in theological education and calls to return theological education to the local church and a forty year history of the CBTE movement. It exposes the need for further research of the educational philosophy, church proximity,

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[76]Kenneth O. Gangel and Warren S. Benson, *Christian Education: Its History and Philosophy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 361-62. González, *The History of Theological Education*, loc. 2616, Kindle.

[77]Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," 64.

and academic standards of CBTE institutions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The aspiration to know and serve God creates a need for education, and such aspirations accompany Christianity whenever and wherever it is found. The history of theological education tells a story of education as God's people fulfill the Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20). Spiritual maturity develops cognitively and experientially when Gospel truth is learned and when Gospel implications are lived. The Christian life becomes a lifelong educational journey.

Theological education is a dual experience affecting both mind and heart. "The faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" is learned and accepted (Jude 1:3), and the application of the truth is obeyed and followed.[78] Those who learn, in turn, become leaders who teach and mentor. The church in the New Testament was responsible for accomplishing and overseeing theological education.[79] The church today oversees theological educators and theological education.[80]

The following literature review presents a forty year history and rationale for church-based theological education (CBTE). It began in the late 1970's with the

[78]David S. Dockery, *Renewing Minds: Serving Church and Society through Christian Higher Education*, (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 124. "Theological education must be academically sound; it must be grounded in the Scriptures; it must be Christ centered; and it must be ministry and mission focused." David S. Dockery, ed., *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 3-4.

[79]Eph 4:11-16; 2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:9.

[80]Precedent to this literature review is the biblical rationale and historical development of theological education prior to the recent forty-year CBTE history considered in this research study. Therefore, the following appendices are provided for the reader's benefit: appendix 1, "A Biblical Foundation for Theological Education" and appendix 2, "A History of Theological Education.

publication of James Montgomery Boice's *Christianity Today* article, "Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship," David Singer's *Christianity Today* article, "Seminary Goes to Church," and John Frame's article, "Proposal for a New Seminary."[81] The CBTE model of theological education, for the purpose of this research study, was defined as a graduate level institution of theological education under a church's influence and located on a church's property.

It was necessary to acknowledge the diverse approaches to theological education. Traditional seminaries of protestant and evangelical tradition have a mixed history of success and failure in theological education. Significant contributions continue to be made for the good of the church through these institutions. Concurrent with traditional seminary education, a case can be made for theological education independent of the academy. Volatile trends in education, technology, culture, and the economy present significant challenges to all theological education institutions, and the disruption has driven new creative programs, consortiums, and models.

The goal of this research study was to narrowly focus on institutions qualifying as CBTE institutions, investigating the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards present among them. The literature base showed a movement answered two questions: What is theological about theological education? What is the nature of the relationship between church and seminary?

Answering these questions led to theological, historical, missional, and cultural calls to reform theological education. These answers also led to calls to return theological education to the church. Thus began a forty year recovery of the complementary relationship between church and seminary in which theological education has been done for the church and in the church.

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[81] John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* (January 1, 1978): 10–17. David Singer, "Seminary Goes to Church: An Alternative Approach," *Christianity Today* 22, no. 9 (February 10, 1978): 16–18. James Montgomery Boice, "Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship," *Christianity Today* 23, no. 9 (February 2, 1979): 14–15.

Institutions pioneering the CBTE model included (among others) The Master's Seminary (Los Angeles, CA) in relationship to Grace Community Church, Bethlehem College and Seminary (Minneapolis, MN) in relationship to Bethlehem Baptist Church, Faith Bible Seminary (Lafayette, IN) in relationship to Faith Church, Southern California Seminary (El Cajon, CA) in relationship to Shadow Mountain Community Church, Shepherds Theological Seminary (Cary, NC) in relationship to Colonial Baptist Church, and Virginia Beach Theological Seminary (Virginia Beach, VA) in relationship to Colonial Baptist Church.[82] CBTE institutions practice the "wholehearted acceptance and dependence" between church and seminary that James Montgomery Boice called for in his 1979 *Christianity Today* article.[83]

The literature review presents an accurate and comprehensive picture of CBTE from 1980 to 2017. It allowed this investigative research study to gather information from a previously ungrouped set of institutions in order to further define the CBTE model of theological education and explore the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE institutions. Because CBTE institutions exist independently and the future of CBTE is unscripted, this literature review provided a common history from which future collaboration will be possible and self-assessment criteria will be helpful.

A Definition of Theological Education

Theological education since the 1980s exploded into a plethora of ideas like knowledge, professional development, praxis-based learning, spiritual formation, and social justice activism.[84] Defining theological education became a quest to answer the

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[82]Using the criteria and delimitations in chap. 1 of this research study, there are at least 20 identified schools qualified as the CBTE model.

[83]Boice, "Church and Seminary," 14.

[84]Linda Cannell, *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 36-38.

questions: What is theological about theological education? What is the nature and purpose of theological education?[85] Multiple answers were found in the literature, so definitions and qualifications were be made with particular application to this research study. Millard Erickson defines theology as a second-level activity.

> The actual living-out and personal practice of religion, including the holding of doctrinal beliefs, occur on the level of primary experience. There is also a level of reflection on what is occurring on the primary level. The discipline that concerns itself with describing, analyzing, criticizing, or organizing the doctrines is theology. Thus theology is a second-level activity as contrasted with religion. It is to religion what psychology is to human emotions, what aesthetics is to works of art, what political science is to political behavior.[86]

Theological education happens in that second level. Learning occurs at its highest level in application and experience.[87] Dieumeme Noelliste connects theology to the experiential goal of learning. Theological education is "the formation of the people of God in the truth and wisdom of God for the purpose of personal renewal and meaningful participation in the fulfillment of the purpose of God in the Church and the world."[88]

In *A Theology for Christian Education*, Michael Anthony writes that American evangelical theology in the twenty-first century included natural theology, historical theology, apologetic theology, exegetical theology, biblical theology, practical theology, and systematic theology[89] The setting of these theological pursuits was often narrowed to the church in which God's people worshiped God by reflecting on his Word and accomplishing his will. The implication was that theological educators identified assumptions and traditions and developed a distinct approach to education for the church

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[85]David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 2. David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What's Theological about a Theological School?* (Louisville: John Knox, 1992).

[86]Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 21.

[87]Lorin W. Anderson and David R. Krathwohl, eds., *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (New York: Pearson, 2000).

[88]Dieumeme Noelliste, "Toward a Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 19, no. 3 (July 1995): 299.

[89]Michael Anthony, "The Nature of Theology and Education," in *A Theology for Christian Education*, ed. James R. Estep and Gregg Allison (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 6.

that integrated a Christian worldview.[90]

David Dockery in *Renewing Minds: Serving Church and Society through Christian Higher Education* defines theology, not in its historical or systematic sense, but in a pedagogical sense applied to the learning process. He writes, "It seems best to think of theology in a twofold way: (1) as developing a mind for truth so that we can indeed articulate 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints,' and (2) as developing a heart for God so that our lives are built up in the faith. Ultimately, a distinctive theology for Christian higher education will have Christ at its center, the church as its focus, and the influencing of culture as a key element of its vision."[91] Theology leads to ethics in education. God's truth applies to life, society, economics, and politics.[92]

Linda Cannell asked the question, "What does it mean to be theologically educated?" in conclusion to *Theological Education Matters*. She appealed to history to answer. Since nonformal theological education was the normal pattern in church history, local churches stood at the center of theological education, and an apprenticeship model was the common pedagogy. Cannell called for a renewed relationship between church and seminary concluding, "We are long past the day when the seminary could do all that was expected of it."[93] Cannell's statement seems to drive the debate about the union between church and seminary. Becoming theologically educated occurs best when students learn in ministry life experiences, where members of the learning community value each other, and when students become obedient Christians committed to virtue and works of service as an outcome of their education.[94]

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[90]Anthony, "The Nature of Theology and Education," 22-23.

[91]Dockery, *Renewing Minds*, 124.

[92]Ibid., 125. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, eds., *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

[93]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 337.

[94]Ibid.

Friedrich Schleiermacher's Brief Outline of the Study of Theology

Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, published in 1811, marked a midway point in the theological encyclopedia movement. Publications of theological encyclopedias lasted from the 1760s to the 1910s and were primarily found in German institutions. In this movement, theology became classified as a science and categorized as a discipline similar to philosophy, law, and medicine. Theology was structured as a four-fold scheme: scripture, church history, dogmatics, and practical theology.[95]

Brief Outline was Schleiermacher's effort to retain theology as a discipline in the German university.[96] The significance of Schleiermacher's impact is widely accepted, but interpreting Schleiermacher's impact is more debated and nuanced. Edward Farley describes the dilemma of Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline*.

> Why it is a seminal work is not easily and quickly stated. Its immediate influence was negligible and, because its threefold scheme of theological disciplines was never widely adopted, it might be argued that it had little long-term effect. Any estimation of the importance of the work depends on its interpretation and, like so many of Schleiermacher's writings, this little work does not make itself easily available for interpretation. It is written in such a formal, abstract, and compact way that each sentence is virtually a new thesis and a new insight. Hence, the details of the work tend to overwhelm and obscure its radical and novel character. Interpreting this brief and compact monograph requires getting behind the details to certain overall paradigms and insights.[97]

Regardless of the exact measure of Schleiermacher's contribution, the effect of reshaping theological study had enormous influence on the curriculum, philosophy, and trajectory of theological education as it was incorporated by newer institutions, most notably for

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[95]Peter C. Hodgson, *God's Wisdom: Toward a Theology of Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 146, footnote 69.

[96]Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline on The Study of Theology*, trans. Terrence N. Tice (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1966). The first edition was printed in 1811 under the German title *Kurze Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums zum Behuf Einleitender Vorlesungen*. Subsequent editions were published in 1830, 1910, and 1961. Scheielermacher's work was translated into English by William Farrer in 1850 and by Terrence Trice in 1966. References to Scheielermacher's work come from Trice's 1966 translation.

[97]Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 84.

this research study, seminaries in North America.[98]

Edward Farley commented that this period was "enormously important" for the development of theological education in the next 200 years because tension in theology was viewed as a problem of justifying and relating independent disciplines within theology. A basic pattern of theological disciplines became standard in Europe and the United States, and theologians and philosophers formulated most of the issues and problems within theology.[99]

As stated previously, interpreting Schleiermacher's impact is debated. Farley points to Schleiermacher for two insights. First, Schleiermacher gave a teleological solution to the unity of theology, which Farley called the "clerical paradigm." Second, he gave a content solution to the unity of theology. The former addresses theology's status as a science, and the latter addresses theology's status in the university. Theology became accepted as a scientific methodology, even though it was not universally accessible as a pure science. Although Farley synthesizes all of this in the term "clerical paradigm," he does not view it positively.[100]

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[98]Robert W. Lynn, "Notes toward a History: Theological Encyclopedia and the Evolution of Protestant Seminary Curriculum, 1808-1968," *Theological Education* 17, no. 2 (1981): 118–44. Lynn traces historically the migration of Americans trained in German theological education implemented the structure of university education in the American theological schools between the 1830s and the 1880s. Lynn writes, "Under the tutelage of these and other professors [Friedrich August Gottreau Tholuck, professor of theology at the University of Halle; Johann August Wilhelm Neander, professor of church history at the University of Berlin; and Ernest Wilhelm Hengstenberg, profession of Old Testament exegesis at Berlin University] the Americans [Edward Robinson and Charles Hodge] encountered for the first time a theology of the study of theology. That theory was embodied in a curriculum in which the four sciences—exegesis, Dogmatik or doctrinal theology, ecclesiastical history and Homiletik or practical theology—were studied as separate and independent disciplines. . . . Therefore, when these Americans came back home, a fair number of them set out to criticize, if not to change, the course of Protestant theological education. Over the course of the mid-decades of the nineteenth century their writings, when considered together, comprised a major indictment of seminary life. . . . During the second half of the nineteenth century the four-fold nature of the curriculum came to be taken for granted." Ibid., 125.

[99]Farley, *Theologia*, 75.

[100]Ibid., 98, "Hereafter, this expression, *clerical paradigm*, will be used to refer to the prevailing (post-Scheiermacher) Protestant way of understanding the unity of theological education. According to this paradigm, the disparate fields and courses are connected by their capacity to prepare the student for future clergy responsibilities. Although this paradigm will be questioned as an adequate approach to theological education's unity, the author wishes to avoid the impression that this is a

Linda Cannell, in *Theological Education Matters*, believes Farley gives too much credit to Schleiermacher's impact. "To blame this shift entirely on Schleiermacher, however, is to miss the lingering effects of his pietistic upbringing on his conceptualization of the model for the German university, and the effect of the American context on the subsequent development of the university and seminary in the United States in particular."[101] Cannell quotes Schleiermacher, concluding, "The church is therefore the proper context for theology, and the purpose of theological study is to develop leadership for the church."[102] The importance of Schleiermacher's impact is germane to this research study because it establishes the tensions between the church and the academy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The struggle between the fragmentation and unity in theological education far preceded the development of CBTE, yet it revealed the foundational tension that motivated a theological education movement rooted in the church rather than the academy.

Richard Niebuhr's *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry*

In the 1950s, Richard Niebuhr, along with Daniel Day Williams and James Gustafson, published a comprehensive study of protestant theological education. It was conducted for the American Association of Theological Schools, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, and published in two volumes as *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry*.[103] The study concluded that theological education was in need of restructuring

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questioning of either the validity of clergy education itself or of the validity of education for specific activities and skills." Farley, *Theologia*, 98n37.

[101]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 180-81. Hans Küng, *Great Christian Thinkers* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 159. Dawn DeVries, "Be Converted and Become as Little Children: Friedrich Schleiermacher on the Religious Significance of Childhood," in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia Bunge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 329-49.

[102]Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline*, 16, 20 quoted in Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 181.

[103]H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry: Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education* (New York: Harper, 1956). Glenn T. Miller, *A Community of Conversation: A*

its curriculum to include field-based experiences.[104] Niebuhr recommended moving away from professional models of theological education because theological disciplines were not necessarily leadership focused. Theological disciplines were by nature theological. As Kelsey affirms, "Clarity about the nature of theological schooling depends on clarity about the nature of ministry; and clarity about ministry depends on clarity about the purpose of the church. And *that* is a theological question."[105] In effect, the fragmentation of disciplines led theological education toward the academy and away from the church, leaving the church with a diminished ability to influence theological education. It also left those being educated with little opportunity to apply theology in context. In short, orthodoxy became disconnected from orthopraxy.

The theological education debate in North America was not simply pedagogical. It was theological. It is critical to this research study to observe that fragmentation in theological education resulted in more than insufficient curriculum design. Sequestering theological education in the academy and from the church led to a division between church and seminary, resulting in an accountability struggle.[106]

Retrospective of The Association of Theological Schools and Ninety Years of North American Theological Education (Pittsburgh: The Association of Theological Schools, 2008). The American Association of Theological Schools was renamed as the Association of Theological Schools in 1974 to be inclusive of Canadian schools. Ibid., 2, 23.

[104]H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson, *The Advancement of Theological Education* (New York: Harper, 1957), 78-90. They conclude, "The net results of these observations and critiques may be stated simply: The greatest defect in theological education today is that it is too much an affair of piecemeal transmission of knowledge and skills, and that, in consequence, it offers too little challenge to the student to develop his own resources and to become an independent, lifelong inquirer, growing constantly while he is engaged in the work of the ministry." Ibid., 209.

[105]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 72.

[106]David S. Dockery, ed., *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 3-22. Dockery acknowledges the debate: "The work of serious scholarship by theological educators remains essential, but we must seek to eliminate the academy-versus-church or scholar-versus-practitioner dichotomy that tends to magnify specialization, leading to fragmentation of mission and disconnection from the church. . . . Theological education needs to be seen as an extension of the work of the church, similar in importance to evangelism and worship." Ibid., 18-19. Kristine Stache, “Formation for the Whole Church: A New/Old Vision of Theological Education in the 21st Century,” *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 53, no. 4 (December 2014): 286–92.

Niebuhr espoused what he called the "common idea." It attempted to reconnect theological education to the church by calling on theological schools to serve as the intellectual center of church life.[107] The "common idea" was common because both the church and school exercise intellectual love for God and neighbor, both were a community of learning, and both intellectual pursuits were theoretical and applicable.[108]

Niebuhr's "common idea" was applied to theological education in *The Advancement of Theological Education*. Niebuhr, Williams, and Gustafson suggested adding a fourth year to seminary education to sufficiently reorganize and expand the curriculum. A fourth year would be dedicated to applied theological practices.[109] The effectiveness of such a fourth year depended on an institution's ability to adapt. Schools must choose: either they would reduce the number of student graduates by one-fourth, or they would increase facilities to accommodate longer residence. Schools could adopt an internship year including "a fourth year of practical training in the parish ministry." Schools could establish summer school programs for the continuous education of recent graduates in the first few years of ministry.[110] While intended to promote financial solvency and institutional stability, a beneficial effect would be a longterm relationship between clergy and educators and a stronger connection to churches.[111]

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[107]Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church*, 107.

[108]Ibid., 110, 117, 125.

[109]Niebuhr, Williams, and Gustafson, *The Advancement of Theological Education*. "The addition of such a year, it is felt, will provide time for more adequate study of the basic disciplines, for the addition of the necessary new subjects in the practical and theoretical fields, in theological and social sciences; and it will allow for the inclusion of the field work program, the importance of which is generally acknowledged." Ibid., 217.

[110]Ibid., 219-25.

[111]Ian Lovett, "Seminaries Reflect Struggles of Mainline Churches," *Wall Street Journal*, August 10, 2017, sec. US, accessed September 2, 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/seminaries-reflect-struggles-of-mainline-churches-1502357400. Russell D. Moore, "Student-Loan Debt and the Future of Seminaries," *Wall Street Journal*, August 23, 2012, sec. Opinion, accessed November 9, 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390444358404577605340767163460. Mark L. Bailey, "The Foundation and Shape of Theological Education," in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017): 36-40.

Edward Farley's *Theologia*

Edward Farley published *Theologia* in 1983 as a response to theological education's loss of theology as its unified subject matter.[112] Theological education had been fragmented and diversified into specialization. Because fragmentation was more than a failure of curriculum design, it required, in Farley's opinion, institutional reform to create change. Central to the problem was the false dichotomy between theory and practice in theological education.[113] Institutions have struggled to unify theological education since the nineteenth century.[114]

Farley's solution for unifying theological education was *theologia*. *Theologia* unified displaced and dispersed theological education by returning to a less abstract, more intuitive and practical, theological wisdom and re-envisioning the ministry as more than a set of professional and specialized functions.[115]

It is difficult to grasp Farley's idea because *theologia* is loosely defined in his work.[116] "*Theologia* is a cognitive activity that is both contemplative and deductive. It has an affective side to it, and helps develop a propensity to action," according to Robert Banks.[117] It was the solution to Farley's most perplexing problem. "The most serious and

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[112]Farley, *Theologia*. "'Theology' has long since disappeared as the unity, subject matter, and end of clergy education and this disappearance is responsible more than anything else for the problematic character of that education as a course of study." Ibid., ix.

[113]John E. Mehl, "Reforming Theological Education: Four Perspectives and a Few Observations," *Religious Education* 86, no. 4 (1991): 636.

[114]Farley writes to expose the damaging effects of the theological encyclopedia movement saying, "This literature is not widely known." Chaps. 3-5 are dedicated to its history and chap. 6 is given as a critique. Farley, *Theologia*, 49-150. Summarizing, Farley writes, "This is why the narrative concentrates on the literature and movement which once upon a time was called 'theological encyclopedia.' The origin, course, and final cessation of that 150-year-long movement is at the same time a story of the displacement and dispersion of *theologia*." Ibid., ix.

[115]Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 222, Kindle.

[116]Mehl writes, "One of the difficulties with Farley's essay is the various ways in which he uses *theologia*. While he indicates that personal existential wisdom is the primary and most authentic meaning of theology, and thus central to *theologia*, he also refers to theology as a discipline and an 'dialectic of understanding.'" Mehl, "Reforming Theological Education," 637n15.

[117]Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 210, Kindle.

sobering aspects of this account of the career of theology is simply the disappearance of theology as wisdom and theology as a discipline (science) from the theological school—their disappearance, that is, as the overall unity and rationale of theological study."[118]

Perhaps Linda Cannell has defined *theologia* the best by situating it in historical context and justifying the following lengthy quotation:

> Throughout the pre-Enlightenment era, neither emphasis would ever completely displace the other, and this interplay between the path of reason and the path of love continues to be present. The most significant insights from the pre-Enlightenment era involve expressions of theologia and the desire to know God in ways that were unquestionably multifaceted. Reason and spirituality were not in opposition; apprehension of what can be known and contemplation of what cannot be known were equally valid; virtue and action were in most cases conjoined; and it was demonstrated that the individual life and communal life could, at the best of times, exist in healthful tension.
>
> Contemporary theological education presumes that through the accretions of the theological curriculum God can be known. If, however, God can be known only in part, and if the way of the Spirit is critical to knowing, reason is neither the sufficient nor the ultimate measure of our knowing. If theologia is the unifying principle, the pre-Enlightenment theologians teach clearly that theological education must allow room for a God-filled silence. Paul's notion of a greater mystery in the Christian faith (see 1 Cor. 2:6-12; Eph. 1:7-10; Col. 2:2-3) would seem a corrective to the excesses that tend to occur in both mysticism and rationalism. In this the duty of theological education is clear: to uphold a reasonable apprehension of the faith but never to presume that God can be known thereby. As the people of God, our acknowledgement of a greater mystery leads us in humility to worship and prayer eventuating in service. Those who claim to be teachers must never be guilty of influencing leaders of the church who will allow that which cannot be known to be obscured by reason, or by piety.[119]

Farley contends that *theologia's* place in theological education transcends theological conviction, even though he identifies as a protestant liberal and revisionist. In other words, reforming theological education is equally acceptable to liberal educators as it is to conservatives. Farley writes, "The problem of theological education is, in other words, an ecumenical problem, embracing the major branches of Christendom."[120] To the extent Farley was correct in his assessment, the impact of this research study may be meaningful to theological education institutions regardless of denomination or

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[118]Farley, *Theologia*, 44.

[119]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 246.

[120]Farley, *Theologia*, x.

theological persuasion.

What is Farley's goal in *theologia*? "The main thesis of the essay urged the restoration of *theologia* to clergy education. But the effects of the eclipse of *theologia* on that education had parallels in church education, higher education, and graduate theological education....Accordingly, while the essay is focused on clergy education, it is really about all education which purports to promote a Christian *paideia* or which would interpret the Christian religion."[121] Farley's influence contributed to the literature base by highlighting the need for unity in theological education and creating an ongoing debate concurrent with the beginnings of the CBTE movement.

Theological education, in Farley's estimation, was a hermeneutical task taking into account the believer, the church, and scholarly inquiry. These three can be addressed as corresponding pedagogical areas: ecclesial existence, theological understanding, and church leadership. Farley calls for a complete reform of theological education that restores *theologia* as its center. Reforming church and seminary was difficult and required strategy for the following tasks: (1) A specific pedagogy addressing both a theology of ministry itself and the institutions and cultural situations in which ministry will occur. (2) A descriptive account of *theologia*, of theological understanding, the ecclesial counterpart to and specification of *paideia*.[122] (3) Disciplines of theological understanding must be propaedeutic to theological understanding. (4) Ministerial pedagogical requirements must reflect a synthesis of theological knowledge and ministry situations. (5) The collective

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[121]Farley, *Theologia*, xi.

[122]Edward Farley, *The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and the University* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988). Farley defines a modern version of *paideia*: (1) An educated person is sufficiently exposed to a plurality of experiences and modes of interpretation to be self-conscious in his or her responses, decisions, and policies. (2) This self-consciousness has a critical dimension. It is a self-consciousness about evidence and what constitutes the establishment of a claim or the grounding of a tradition or policy. (3) This critical attitude reflects the capacity to look behind things and beneath things, to respond not just to surfaces and face values. (4) The educated person is self-conscious in his or her general existence in society, in the exercise of discerned obligation. (5) The educated person is sufficiently introduced to the heritage of cultural accomplishments to enjoy the aesthetic dimensions of experience beyond those which are commercially and faddishly orchestrated. Ibid., 60.

understanding of *theologia* must be exercised in the institutionality and situation of ministry.[123]

Chapter 8, "*Theologia* in Clergy Education," offered a host of suggestions and criteria for reforming theological education. Unfortunately, the implementation was philosophical and ambiguous, which Farley acknowledges.[124] The message was not diminished, even though it was poorly applied. With the publication of *Theologia*, the focus of theological education was narrowed to "the nature of ecclesiality itself, the essential activities and institutions of the ecclesial community, and based on these first two themes, the essence, nature, and responsibilities of the church leader."[125] Farley contributed to the development of theological education in the past forty years by addressing the fragmentation of theological education. Theological understanding in pastoral training lost out to professionalize pastoral training in the eighteenth century.

David Kelsey's *Between Athens and Berlin*

Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate is a literature review on the competing views of fragmentation and unity in theological education. David Kelsey identified and examined five voices contributing to the discussion in the 1980s and 1990s. Those voices include Farley's *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* and *The Fragility of Knowledge*, the Mud Flower Collective's *God's Fierce Whimsy*, Hough and Cobbs's *Christian Identity and Theological Education*, Stackhouse's *Apologia: Contextualization, Globalization, and Mission in Theological Education*, and Wood's *Vision and Discernment*.[126]

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[123]Farley, *Theologia*, 155.

[124]Ibid. Farley writes, "The problem is that the proposal to reinstate theologia in theological education is ambiguous." Ibid., 177-78.

[125]Ibid., 189.

[126]Ibid. Farley, *The Fragility of Knowledge*. Mud Flower Collective, *God's Fierce Whimsy: Christian Feminism and Theological Education* (New York: Pilgrim, 1985). Joseph C. Hough and John B.

Athens and Berlin typologically represent the conflicting and unavoidable realities of theological education. Kelsey writes, "I suggest that for historical reasons Christian theological education in North America is inescapably committed to two contrasting and finally irreconcilable types or models of what education at its best ought to be. They are normative models, models of 'excellent' education. For one type I shall suggest that 'Athens' be the symbol, for the other 'Berlin.'"[127] He defined Athens and Berlin, then described the tension resulting in a negotiated mix of both approaches in theological education institutions.[128]

Athens: *Paideia* as character formation. Kelsey defined the Athens model of theological education as "a movement from source to personal application of the source, from revealed to the appropriation of revealed wisdom in a way that is identity forming and personally transforming."[129] Farley and the Mud Flower Collective represent the Athens model. The heart of theological education, in the Athens model, was the Greek understanding of *paideia*.

Paideia is a process of soul care or character formation. Originating with the Church Fathers in the fourth century and shaped by Platonism, *paideia* included the following principles: (1) Education is an inquiry into a single, underlying principle of all virtues. (2) The good is not only the underlying essence of the moral and intellectual virtues; it is the highest principle of the universe. (3) Knowledge of the good only comes through contemplation, the ultimate fruit of which is an intuitive insight. (4) Education as

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Cobb, Jr., *Christian Identity and Theological Education* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1985). Max L. Stackhouse, *Apologia: Contextualization, Globalization, and Mission in Theological Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988). Charles M. Wood, *Vision and Discernment: An Orientation in Theological Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002).

[127]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 5. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly*, 63-102.

[128]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 6.

[129]Ibid., 20.

paideia is inherently communal.[130]

Within the context of Farley's *theologia*, *paideia* became the driving force in theological education in the Athens model. It broadened theological education beyond pastoral training to include the entire church congregation, theological seminary, or university religion department. Kelsey describes, "Consequently, the paideia through which that habitus is nurtured in people is itself one selfsame process of 'theological education.' Hence, theological schooling is basically the same pedagogy (paideia) in all times and places," adding, "It may equally well take place in the churches and in college and university departments of religious studies."[131]

The Athens model focuses on character formation. Individual and personal character formation occurs through diverse modes and social settings. The goal is to educate well-rounded people capable of sound theological judgments.[132] Much like discipleship in the early church, character formation is inherently group focused. Kelsey writes, "Theological education of the 'Athens' type is unavoidably done in public and is unavoidably engaged in self-conscious cultural transactions with its host culture."[133] Students and teachers share direct and indirect relationships as both seek to personally gain wisdom about God.[134]

Berlin: *Wissenschaft* as professional formation. Kelsey defined the Berlin model of theological education as "a movement from data to theory to application of theory to practice. This movement correlates with its bipolar structure: *Wissenschaft* for critical rigor in theorizing; 'professional' education for rigorous study of the application of

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[130]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 8-9. Werner Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paidea* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1961).

[131]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 107-8.

[132]Ibid., 213.

[133]Ibid., 22.

[134]Ibid., 20, 21.

theory in practice."[135] Hough and Cobb and Stackhouse represent the Berlin model. *Wissenschaft* was a set of research agendas determined by the educator. Learners engaged in the research process, not for their personal development, but rather for the accomplishment of the research.[136] Professional education was rooted in practical theology from Schleiermacher's four-fold scheme previously noted.[137]

Kelsey pointed out the church's elevated responsibility in Hough and Cobb's approach calling theological education a "joint task."[138] "Churches would assume the major responsibility for this if they adopt Hough and Cobb's proposal that, following graduation from theological school, students would be placed in 'teaching congregations' for one year as 'probationary ordinands.'"[139]

The *wissenschaft* as professional formation was a movement from theory to practice in theological education. Hough and Cobb's approach moved toward a theological education focused on applying while learning. The application was made in the church. As Kelsey describes, "Professional church leaders are to be reflective practitioners whose purpose is to assist congregations to keep clear a vision of God redemptively at work today and to test critically how far the church's active response to God's action is consistent with its own identity."[140] Theological education, then, is a

[135]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 22.

[136]Ibid., 23-24.

[137]Ibid., 13-15.

[138]Ibid., 166-69. The practical theology in the Berlin model of theological education appeals to the church-based model of theological education. Hough and Cobb, Jr., *Christian Identity and Theological Education*, 127. Reviewing Hough and Cobb's work on theological education, Kelsey presents their view as practical theology. A church leader simply does theology professionally, and that means (1) the Bible and church history form Christian identity, (2) a global consciousness must be well-informed and highly self-conscious, (3) future church leaders must be practical Christian thinkers, and (4) future church leaders must be reflective practitioners in the church. Hough and Cobb's speak to the relationship, "The joint task of the church and the seminary. While the church must assume a major responsibility for education for pastoral reflection in practice, the seminary makes its major contribution by providing opportunities for reflection on the practice of Christian leaders in general and specifically on the practice of pastors." Ibid., 127.

[139]Ibid., 169.

[140]Ibid., 195.

matter of educating according to the nature and purpose of the church.

Kelsey concluded with the following exclusions necessary for institutions to address the fragmentation of theological education. (1) Focus on clarifying the end of theological education, but do not define that end as the training of clergy exclusively. (2) Focus on clarifying the end of the theological education, but avoid definitions of that end that are explicitly or implicitly individualistic. (3) Focus on clarifying the end of theological education, but do not define that end by reference to *the* "essence" or "underlying structure" (4) Focus on clarifying the end of theological education, but avoid doing so in a way that systematically disengages theology and lives of faith from the public realm.[141]

Kelsey believed theological education was lodged in an unavoidable tension between Athens and Berlin. He writes, "The best that can be hoped for is an unstable truce, constantly threatening to break down into educational incoherence. The underlying reason for this is that each type presupposes a different view of the nature of 'reason' and, indeed, a different view of 'human nature.'"[142] If Kelsey was correct, perhaps theological education should be done in the local church, the institution that most closely draws Athens and Berlin together. In the local church, theory and practice, academic and professional, objective and subjective implications run together.

A Call to Reform Theological Education

Calls for reforming theological education came from inside and outside institutions of theological education. Mainline protestant denominational seminaries in North America called for reform largely because of enrollment decline, as represented by the Auburn Center in 2013, or because of graduate evaluations, as represented by

[141]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 223-25.

[142]Ibid., 228.

Transition into Ministry report in 2014.[143] Conservative evangelical seminaries called for reforming theological education attempting to restore theological confessionalism and missional effectiveness. A review of the literature reveals theological, historical, missional, and cultural calls for reforming theological education.

A Theological Call for Reform

Theological calls for reform emphasized the question, "What is theological about theological education?" As previously cited, Linda Cannell answered the question, in part, "Surely to be educated theologically means that we are becoming obedient disciples of God, committed to virtue and works of service."[144] Among conservative evangelicals, reforming theological education meant restoring theology in its biblical and systematic forms.

Voices calling for reform among mainline protestants focus on liberating theology from its previous forms and adapting theological education to a globalized and pluralistic culture. Lynn White identified the need for "changing canons of culture."[145] Don Messer called for a tolerance of societal pluralism and a new vision of seminary education. Theology must be freed from Aristotelian, Latin, and Teutonic thought. It is an incarnational theology described as "a vision of preparing persons for Christian ministry and other forms of religious leadership who have more than an Occidental or Western

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[143]Barbara G. Wheeler and Anthony T. Ruger, "Sobering Figures Point to Overall Enrollment Decline: New Research from the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education," *In Trust* (Spring 2013): 5-11. David Gortner, *Clergy Leadership for the 21st Century: Are We Up to the Task?*, Transition into Ministry (Alexandria, VA: Virginia Theological Seminary, January 2014). Barbara G. Wheeler, "Is There a Problem? Theological Students and Religious Leadership for the Future," *Auburn Studies* 8 (July 2001): 1–29.

[144]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 337. Ted W. Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," *Common Ground Journal* 11, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 64–74. Ward answers similarly. It is "the essential process of furthering the understanding of what God has said and how the Scripture applies to the circumstances of life in various places at certain periods of time." Ibid., 64.

[145]Lynn White Jr., "The Changing Canons of Our Culture," in *Frontiers of Knowledge in the Study of Man*, ed. Lynn White Jr. (New York: Harper, 1956), 302.

perspective. The canon or norm is now global and interreligious."[146] Carnegie Samuel Calian in *The Ideal Seminary* called for a forgiveness motif that strives to reconcile and heal divisions that theology caused and fragmented theological education has created. He writes, "I believe forgiveness ought to be emphasized in future interfaith dialogue within our multicultural society."[147] Forgiveness, then, becomes a platform for peacemaking, globalization, and liberation.

While a majority of theological education in mainline protestantism trended towards progressive, globalized, pluralistic reform, there was also represented in the literature base calls to restore theology as a biblical and systematic discipline. Thomas Oden represents one conservative proponent from within mainline protestantism. Oden called out liberation theology that he described as doctrinally imaginative, liturgically experimental, disciplinarily nonjudgmental, politically correct, multiculturally tolerant, morally broad-minded, ethically situational, and sexually lenient, permissive, and uninhibited.[148] He delivered the indictment in *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements*, and among the factors that caused this theological decline, Oden pointed to the disconnect between church and seminary.[149] He called on churches to take action, writing, "If the liberated have the freedom to teach apostasy, the believing church has the freedom

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[146]Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary*, 56.

[147]Calian, *The Ideal Seminary*, 49. Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education*, ed. Clarence W. Joldersma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). Carnegie Samuel Calian, *Where's the Passion for Excellence in the Church? Shaping Discipleship through Ministry and Theological Education* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse, 1989).

[148]Thomas C. Oden, *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 34. Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary*. Messer's *Calling Church and Seminary into the 21st Century* was a response to Oden's criticism of theological education in mainline Protestant seminaries. Messer writes, "One disservice Thomas C. Oden has rendered in his writings and speeches has been to give the impression that theological schools are somehow ahistorical and antagonistic to historical theology." Ibid., 78. James M. Wall supports Messer in the foreword, "He identifies Thomas Oden's recent writings as a prime example of what he calles an assault on the seminaries . . . .Anti-intellectualism, and fear of change—and that is what is finally at the heart of this conflict . . . " Ibid., 10.

[149]Oden, *Requiem*, 41.

to withhold its consent."[150] Signs of hope could be found in a fifth generation that strives for reform from within mainline protestant institutions. Oden situated the fifth generation in the following descriptive outline.

1. Generation 1: the poor but pious Bible-reading, praying generation
2. Generation 2: the upwardly mobile sons and daughters of pious generation 1
3. Generation 3: the modernizing grandchildren of the revival, who take over its robust institutions and turn them into a secularizing counterrevival
4. Generation 4: the spoiled, spendthrift, reckless intellectual elites, the great-grandchildren of the revival who detest the revival and see it as alien to their interests, but benefit daily from the inheritance and legacies of the institutions it has built
5. Generation 5: those who grasp anew the vital vision of generation 1 and is trying to make the institutions proximately accountable to the first generation's values and the second generation donors' bequests[151]

"Generation 5 must deal simultaneously with a severe debt crisis, theological recovery, institutional nurture, and fence-building with an alienated constituency. This is an arduous task facing young fogeys."[152] While Oden's hope in a fifth generation may be idealistic, it did express a call for reform from within mainline protestant theological education.

Mediating calls for reform in theological education may allow both mainline protestants and conservative evangelicals to pursue reform in different theological directions. Essential to this research was that both are moving towards new models. Shoki Coe wrote in the mid-1970s, "The search for renewal in theological education had reached the most critical point. We were driven to ask the basic question, "What is theological education?"[153] Coe's mediating answer was that theological education must be

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[150]Oden, *Requiem*, 38.

[151]Ibid., 49-50.

[152]Ibid., 50. Oden wrote an open letter to evangelical students in tradition-impaired seminaries." Ibid., 66-79.

[153]Shoki Coe, "In Search of Renewal in Theological Education," *Theological Education* 9, no.

involved in a "double wrestling"—simultaneously grappling with both the Scriptural text and the social context. He writes, "By them I mean wrestling with the Text from which all texts are derived and to which they point, in order to be faithful to it in the context; and wrestling with the context in which the reality of the Text is at work, in order to be relevant to it."[154] This created a three-fold formation including Christian formation, theological formation, and ministerial formation.[155]

George Barna included a section, "Creating a New Model for a New Era," in *Today's Pastors: A Revealing Look at What Pastors Are Saying about Themselves, Their Peers, and the Pressures They Face* published in the mid-1990s.[156] Barna blamed seminary education for a lack of readiness among ministers. Failures included identifying leaders, preparing them to lead, evaluating their leadership, and providing pastoral support systems. Barna suggested an alternate approach that required a higher theological standard in admissions. Entrance criteria should include a passion for ministry, a clear sense of calling, evidence of service in a local church prior to seminary, evidence of spiritual fruit, and academic experience.[157] Curriculum should include training as well as education. Barna encouraged internships with real-world ministry experience and a future assessment of graduates similar to teacher certification. He summarizes, "One of the greatest benefits of a new system might be to place future pastors in leadership positions within existing churches so that they not only would gain valuable experience, but also would acquire it under the watchful eye and supervision of a practicing leader."[158] While Barna was not advocating a church-based model of theological education, CBTE could

4 (1973): 237.

[154]Coe, "In Search of Renewal," 238.

[155]Ibid., 238-39.

[156]George Barna, *Today's Pastors: A Revealing Look at What Pastors Are Saying about Themselves, Their Peers, and the Pressures They Face* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1993).

[157]Ibid., 146-47.

[158]Ibid., 148.

satisfy the entrance criteria and serve as a place for implementing curriculum changes, mentorships, and continuous certification called for in Barna's proposal.

A Historical Call for Reform

The first 1600 years of theological education occurred in the church without assistance from separate training institutions, yet following Schleiermacher's lead theological education was sequestered to the academy. Recent calls for reform appeared during the 1970s and 1980s in response to the professionalization of theological education.[159] Because it extends beyond the scope of this research study, the literature review presents only three historical examples of reforming theological education between the mid-eighteenth century and the the twentieth century. These examples focus on restoring theological education to its local church context and shaped the CBTE model called for in the 1970s and 1980s.[160]

During the colonial period in North America, a reading divinity style of theological education developed. Reading divinity is better understood not as a single curriculum but rather as a collection of educational tasks capable of being performed by individuals and intended to ensure ecclesiastical guidance for ministerial candidates. During this period in which the churches collaborated as denominations, ministerial education played an especially prominent role in perpetuating a church's tradition and establishing its direction of development. Reading divinity was also a way of mediating between the doctrinal standards of particular communions and the increasing

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[159]González, *The History of Theological Education*. González views much of the tension between the church and the academy, fundamentalism and liberalism, and pietism and rationalism as a result of Friedrich Schleiermacher's influence in *A Brief Outline of Theological Studies*, leading toward a theological tug-of-war "between fundamentalists and liberals, in which they first reject critical studies, and latter gave them an absolute and final value. Thus, while the former canonized ignorance and promoted a sort of biblical imperialism, some among the latter canonized science and promoted studies and discussions that had little relevance for the life of the church and for its pastors." Ibid., loc. 2471, Kindle.

[160]Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017). Additional historical examples include Zwingli, Calvin, Spener, and Gano. Ibid., 10.

denominational pluralism of the colleges.[161]

Gilbert Tennant called for a reading divinity style of reform in his sermon, "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry."[162] Tennant's "Log Cabin College" movement began in 1727 and continued for fifteen years providing ministry training in an outside-the-establishment education model. Distinct from Schleiermacher's Scripture, church history, dogmatics, and practical theology scheme, this informal education served less like a comprehensive curriculum and more like a guided mentorship closely associated with the ministry. It also prepared potential ministers for ordination and provided mentors for theological and denominational matters.[163]

Reading divinity shifted theological education from theory to practice emphasizing spiritual formation as the result of training. The minister's character was deemed as important as his understanding. Tennent's model mirrored the biblical training found in the New Testament church. The less formal, hands-on approach served to balance the theory-based instruction of formal theological education.

In London, Charles Haddon Spurgeon worked to reform theological education

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[161]W. Clark Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal in American Protestant Ministerial Education, 1700-1808," *Theological Education* 20, no. 2 (1984): 93-95.

[162]Gilbert Tennent, "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry," in *Sermons That Shaped America: Reformed Preaching from 1630 to 2001*, ed. William S. Barker and Samuel T. Logan, Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2003), loc 1786-2124, Kindle.

[163]Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal." Gilpin makes three points about "reading divinity" to be examined, emphasized, and researched. (1) Reading divinity is better understood not as a single institution but rather as the common name for a collection of educational tasks capable of being performed by individual persons and intended to insure ecclesiastical guidance for ministerial candidates. (2) During this century in which the churches were consolidating, expanding, and approaching their modern form as denominations, ministerial education played an especially prominent role in perpetuating a church's tradition and establishing its direction of development. (3) Reading divinity was also a way of mediating between the doctrinal standards of particular communions and the increasing denominational pluralism of the colleges. Ibid., 93-95. Mohler and Hart state, "The forerunner of the seminary was the phenomenon of reading divinity, a form of theological education that prevailed in colonial America where college graduates intent upon ministry served as apprentices to senior clergy. Reading divinity not only included observation and participation in the daily parish ministry, but also included a more intensive study of the Bible and theology than obtained in the colleges." Mohler and Hart, *Theological Education*, 15.

in the 1860s with the establishment of the Pastor's College.[164] The College provided two years of theological education to aspiring pastors. Spurgeon wrote about the need for CBTE in the church in his *Autobiography*.

> It is a grand assistance to our College that it is connected with an active and vigorous Christian church. If union to such a church does not quicken the student's spiritual pulse, it is his own fault. It is a serious strain upon a man's spirituality to be dissociated, during his student-life, from actual Christian work, and from fellowship with more experienced believers. At the Pastors' College, our brethren can not only meet, as they do every day, for prayer by themselves, but they can unite daily in the prayer-meetings of the church, and can assist in earnest efforts of all sorts.Through living in the midst of a church which, despite its faults, is a truly loving, intensely zealous, working organization, they gain enlarged ideas, and form practical habits. Even to see church-management and church-work upon an extensive scale, and to share in the prayers and sympathies of a large community of Christian people, must be a stimulus to right-minded men.[165]

Michael Nichols described three principles of the Pastor's College: educational openness, financial support, and theological commitment.

> Educational openness: The College had no entrance examination, and it provided a general education as well as a specialization in theology. For men in their early twenties who had slender academic attainments and educational opportunities, this was an open door. The policy stood in direct contrast to more prestigious London colleges, such as the Baptist College at Regent's Park. Other Nonconformist colleges took advantage of the proximity of London University, and from the 1840s they entered students there for examinations. Spurgeon never adopted this method.
>
> Financial support: No student was debarred on the grounds of financial handicap . . . .In the early days, "God's supply" came from the Spurgeon family budget. From the early 1860s onward the college was administered by the Metropolitan Tabernacle's deacons, and its main source of income was offerings from church members and friends. There were no endowments and no list of subscribers. The needs were made known, and in earnest prayer the people looked to God to supply. The students received hospitality in the homes of Tabernacle members, and only where their families or friends could contribute anything to the cost of the course was money solicited.
>
> Theological commitment: The college was founded in stirring times. Traditional beliefs were being challenged by the emerging theories of evolution and biblical criticism. Spurgeon was antipathetic to emerging theological novelties. He also was utterly committed to the traditional Calvinistic interpretation of substitutionary atonement, biblical inspiration and authority, and eternal punishment. Although Spurgeon wanted his students to be alert, relevant, and lively in the context of late nineteenth-century life, he wanted them to be committed to Calvinistic orthodoxy

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[164]Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 104-8.

[165]Charles H. Spurgeon, *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography: The Full Harvest 1860-1892* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1973), 2:98-99.

and to be in the vanguard of the fight against modernism.[166]

Spurgeon was selective and critical in choosing students. The goal was identifying and training men gifted and called by God. It was a church-based institution headed by Spurgeon himself. Metropolitan Tabernacle's congregation voted to approve and fund the Pastor's College on July 1, 1861. The Pastor's College trained over 900 men in Spurgeon's lifetime including Archibald Brown, Spurgeon's successor at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.[167]

In Eastern Europe in the late-1930s, a third historic example of theological education reform can be found. Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Confessing Church trained ministry leaders while under the scrutiny of Nazi-controlled Germany.[168] Bonhoeffer trained students in a relational theological education out of conviction and necessity. All that is known about Bonhoeffer's training comes from first-hand student accounts, the publication of Bonhoeffer's two books written during this period of his life, *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*, and extensive collections of Bonhoeffer's personal letters, calendars, schedules, and notes.[169]

Among his lectures to students between April and October in 1935, Bonhoeffer taught on the ministry and congregation. The congregation held the power to call ministers and dismiss them. On calling a minister, Bonhoeffer wrote, "One receives the

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[166]Michael Kenneth Nichols, "Spurgeon's College," *Christian History* 10, no. 1 (February 1991). "In short, the college's admissions policy, broad curriculum, practical emphasis, and short course provided a unique contribution to contemporary theological training." Ibid., 40.

[167]Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 104-8. Newton adds, "His friend and biographer, G. Holden Pike stated that with the dozens of institutions Spurgeon formed, the college proved to be his favorite, and what Spurgeon called, 'his first-born and best beloved.' Spurgeon often wrote and told supporters that he had no intention of making preachers. Instead, through the training available at the college, he desired to assist those who were already preaching to be better preachers and servants to the church." Ibid., 104.

[168]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education at Finkenwalde, 1935-1937*, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works,* vol. 14 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education Underground: 1937-1940*, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works,* vol. 15 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

[169]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (London: SCM, 2012).

pastoral office in regular call by the church and its representatives and thus also from Christ." On dismissal of a minister, he wrote it could be done on three grounds: doctrine, conduct, and gifting, emphasizing the church's authority, "The church-community has a duty to dismiss a false doctrine, the right to dismiss on grounds of change, but can only ask to dismiss on grounds of capabilities."[170]

Itinerary records show that Bonhoeffer persisted in teaching seminary students despite persecution, even after twenty-seven of his students were arrested in November 1937 and after he was banned from Berlin and Brandenburg in January 1938. The seminary location moved to Sigurdshof in October 1939 after the Koslin location was forced to close.[171]

Bonhoeffer's five year seminary experiment (1935-1940) led Paul House, a theological educator at Beeson Divinity School, to rethink his pedagogical approach to seminary training. He wrote, "I believe that a biblical theology of pastoral formation makes face-to-face community-based seminary education a priority, not a preference."[172] Using Bonhoeffer's historical model, House called for reform. "It is likely that seminary education has entered a new phase in the United States and elsewhere . . . a phase that will focus on the form of theological education, what more industrially oriented persons call 'delivery systems.' He responds, "I believe that new forms of personal seminaries and related ministries will arise in response to impersonal approaches."[173] As presented in this research study, CBTE is a model of theological education responding to such historical calls for reform.

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[170]Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education at Finkenwalde*, loc. 7654-77, Kindle.

[171]Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education Underground*, loc. 15643-846, Kindle.

[172]Paul R. House, *Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision: A Case for Costly Discipleship and Life Together* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 15.

[173]Ibid., 28-29.

A Missional Call for Reform

If a way for North American institutions of theological education to reform exists, it may be learned from the simple, modest forms of theological education found in missional movements around the world.[174] Ralph Winter in his article, "The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church," in *Disciple Mentoring* pointed out the problem of institutions too big to fail. Citing this as a problem in Asia as well as North America, Winter writes, "We fight against mammoth cultural forces: the degree-mania of our time, . . . But the worst is what I would call institutionalization, which replaces the end with the means. . . . The biggest problem with the seminaries is that they don't want what is needed most. The seminaries think they can stay in business only if they have residential students. And staying in business comes first."[175]

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was a missional model of theological education with ample support in the literature base. Often viewed as the international counterpart to the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), TEE advocated a culturally situated and apprenticeship styled approaches to theological education.[176] Citing Hough and Cobb's *Christian Identity and Theological Education* and Stackhouse's *Apologia*, Robert Ferris considered TEE as an initial way forward, but even

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[174]Ralph D. Winter, "The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church," in *Disciple Mentoring: Theological Education by Extension*, ed. Sam Westman Burton (Pasadena: William Carey, 2000). Winter writes, "The major impediment which withdrew those schools from helping people into the ministry by extension was the fact that this pattern was not being followed in the United States." Ibid., 142. Mark L. Bailey, "The Foundation and Shape of Theological Education," in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017): 33-34.

[175]Winter, "The Largest Stumbling Block," 143-44.

[176]Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, *An Extension Seminary Primer* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1971). Winter, *Theological Education by Extension*. Robert W. Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education: Strategies for Change* (Wheaton, IL: Billy Graham Center, 1990). Ferris quotes the International Missionary Council conferences notes, Section VIII of the Madras Meetings that addressed, "The Indigenous Ministry of the Church, Both Ordained and Lay." Ibid., 9. It called for a new approach to theological education worldwide.

TEE lost its way.[177] Focused on reform, he writes, "The path to renewal of theological education does not lie in more detailed analysis of the tasks of a pastor or more careful preparation of clerical roles. Renewal—true renewal—must begin with a more biblical understanding of the church and leadership in the church."[178] Farris did not support advancing theological education in the direction Farley recommended. Rather, he called for a renewal of the relationship between the church and theological education.

Edgar Elliston suggested formal, nonformal, and informal models of education in *Developing Leaders at a Distance: Contextualized Leadership Development*.[179] Formal education was school-based, planned learning focused on transferring content and conferring degrees. Nonformal education was planned learning outside the classroom that is functional, practical, and hands-on. Informal education was practical, unplanned learning.[180] Theological education in North American excels in formal education, but lacks nonformal and informal aspects. Both nonformal and informal education can be personal, individualized, relational-oriented. Informal education strongly affects values and attitudes and can be accomplished with internships in some programs. Nonformal education organically occurs in the course of personal relationship and interaction.

Jonathan Chao called for reform in theological education because of the failure to sufficiently train indigenous developing world leaders in his contribution, "Education and Leadership," in *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on*

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[177]Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education*. "It is not inaccurate, therefore, to say that TEE had its origin in one seminary's quest for renewal of theological education." Ibid., 13. Hough and Cobb, *Christian Identity and Theological Education*. Stackhouse, *Apologia*.

[178]Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education*, 19. Robert W. Ferris, "The Role of Theology in Theological Education," in *With an Eye on The Future: Development and Mission in the 21st Century*, ed. Dwayne H. Elmer and Lois McKinney (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 2013), 101–11.

[179]Edgar J. Elliston, *Developing Leaders at a Distance: Contextualizing Leadership Development* (Pasadena: Fuller, 1997), 13-14, 101-3.

[180]Ibid.

the Lausanne Covenant.[181] Chao called for the de-westernisation of ministry training because imposing a western model on indigenous churches hindered the churches from developing their own leaders. An over-emphasis on evangelism and the misuse of Christian schools contributed to the failure to nurture solid Christian indigenous leaders.[182] Chao concluded, "A complete, integrated approach to the development of indigenous leadership within the overall context of the church and her ministry must be undertaken."[183] Chao's call to de-westernize theological education in the developing world corresponded to the need to reform theological education in North America.

To accomplish these reforms Chao recommended church-based reforms in theological education, training goals known as be-goals, know-goals, and do-goals based on the New Testament. He writes, "Spiritual leadership after the model of Jesus and Paul or Peter cannot be developed in isolation from the life situation of the living body of Christ . . . indigenous spiritual leadership must be developed within the life and ministry of the church."[184] Chao illustrates, "The be-goals, know-goals and do-goals set forth in the Bible cannot be developed outside the church ministry context. It is like swimming. One cannot become a good swimmer without getting into the water."[185] He, then, cites implications for reforming theological education along missional lines.

> Theological education should be integrated with the ministry of the church, both locally and nationally. Theological education should be conceptualized in terms of be-goals, know-goals, and do-goals as a whole. Third World theological education should develop along biblical and indigenous lines, freeing itself from western super-power imperialistic theological captivity. Third World theological education should develop a multi-level and multi-programme approach in order to meet the diversified needs of the church. Third World theological education should be

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[181]Jonathan Chao, "Education and Leadership," in *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, ed. Rene Padilla (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976), 191–204.

[182]Ibid., 195-97.

[183]Ibid., 198.

[184]Ibid., 201.

[185]Ibid., 202.

conducted within the context of the church and the local culture.[186]

Another missional call for the reform of theological education was the development of a new accreditation scheme for Evangelical Theological Schools in Asia in the mid-1970s. It sought to create an integrative approach to theological education focused on character formation. Wilson Chow defined it as "a holistic integrated approach to ministerial training, in terms of a concern not only with the academic but also with the spiritual and practical aspects of leadership formation."[187] Key to Chow's proposal was theological education's return to community such as the church.[188] Global calls for reform in theological education are similar to calls for change in North America. It proposes seminaries become spiritual communities by changing institutional structure, communal life, academic study, and field work.[189]

A Cultural Call for Reform

Cultural trends and economic pressure are necessitating reform in North American theological education. Similar to Bonhoeffer's shifting seminary strategy in Germany, the cultural revolution in North America is forcing theological education to adapt to the academic standards of higher education or to retreat to the oversight of the church. Economic trends are also forcing theological education institutions to rethink models of education delivery. Ted Ward cited three factors driving change in "Leaders among the People of God" including the changing nature of seminary students, the increasing costs of higher education, and the concerns and needs of local churches. Doubting a unified solution, Ward offers a two-tiered survival plan: "A more academic

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[186]Jonathan Chao, "Education and Leadership," 202-3.

[187]Chow, "An Integrated Approach to Theological Education," 49.

[188]Ibid., 49–62. "One of the problems that the seminary now faces is being out of touch with the churches. Field education is a good means whereby pastors in churches participate in the training of students through their supervision on the field." Ibid., 60.

[189]Ibid. "Unless there is a radical change, an abandonment of the residential seminary as a model of theological learning, there is little hope of providing sufficient spiritual training to students to equip them to be ready upon graduation to meet the challenges and requirements of the ministry." Ibid., 53.

and higher order of substantially longer programs to satisfy the needs of churches that believe they need leaders with doctoral-level theological education, and a lower tier of academia to serve the vast majority of the churches through a more functionally-oriented and shorter education."[190] Ward believed these social factors have gone largely unaddressed. Either tiered solution was in deference to the church. He urgently warned theological educators that churches may bypass their institutions altogether, returning to an apprenticeship model of theological education, especially if academic accreditation becomes unnecessary or impossible. He warned, "If the seminaries and theological schools do not find effective ways to provide help and extension ministries the emergence of church-based theological education may spell the end of an era for the so-called 'modern missionary movement' and its counterpart, domination of theological education by formal schools."[191] The sum of the social and economic influences is the necessity to reform theological education for philosophical and pragmatic reasons.

A philosophical decision. First, the cultural revolution was problematic, and may soon hinder, theological education institutions from operating freely according to convictional belief. This has to do with national or regional accreditation standards and oversight from the federal government's department of education. John Frame described this as the "academic captivity of theology" and "the culture of assessment." He offers the following six conclusions about oversight:

1. I believe that the assessment and accreditation of seminaries is the work of the church. Ultimately, it is the local church that must make these decisions, though the local church can be helped by larger associations such as denominations. It would not be wrong for a group of churches to set up an accrediting agency under their authority that would make preliminary judgments of seminaries for the churches' consideration.
2. The work of the seminary in preparing people for ministry cannot be precisely

[190]Ward, "Leaders among the People of God." Ward acknowledges the increased likelihood of church-based forms of theological education, especially in larger churches. He writes, "Using the internship model coupled with intensive small-group educational experiences, many a church will come to be its own source of leadership resources." Ibid., 66.

[191]Ibid., 64-74.

measured. The goals of a seminary are essentially spiritual. There are ways of achieving them: the means of grace. But whether these are producing the desired results is hard to tell and might not be evident at all until long after an alumnus has graduated.

3. There is nevertheless some rough criteria that churches often use in evaluating seminaries for their prospective ministers. I have listed some of these, and they should be the focal point of seminary assessment by the church. This requires no culture of assessment, no constant testing of everything, no reducing of all outcomes to something measurable. It simply requires seminaries to take these issues into consideration when they make decisions about faculty, curriculum, community, location, and so on.
4. In general, I think it is unwise for seminaries to take the trouble to seek accreditation from regional agencies, from ATS, or from both. The cost in money and time of the culture of assessment really detracts from the fundamental ministry of the school, even when the process requires no compromise with the school's confession. And the achievement of accreditation doesn't say anything meaningful about the seminary's value to the churches that couldn't be determined in other ways.
5. I do believe that some evangelical seminaries should be accredited by these agencies, so that their students can be more readily accepted into doctoral programs. Since RTS [Reformed Theological Seminary] has been regarded as a school that prepares many students for graduate programs, I would not recommend that RTS discontinue its accreditation. But it should resist and protest the extent of the demands of the accreditation agencies.
6. It might be that some churches, denominations, parachurch ministries, and so forth require candidates for positions in their agencies to have degrees from accredited seminaries. This is another reason for seminaries such as RTS to keep their accreditation, under protest. But those Christian organizations should become aware of issues such as those I have raised, and should rescind such requirements.[192]

Frame objected to academic accreditation because it cannot effectively assess church leadership preparation. Frame illustrates,

> If a person spends all day Googling a friend and digging up facts about him in a library, and never talks to the friend or spends time with him, that can affect the personal quality of the relationship. The same can be said similarly with God. Academic knowledge of God is not forbidden, but it is not sufficient to sustain a vital relationship with God. There must also be worship, prayer, trust, repentance, and faith, rejoicing together.[193]

Frame's solution was fewer academic learning outcomes and more emphasis on spiritual disciplines.

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[192]John M. Frame, "Seminaries and Academic Accreditation," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:91-93. John Frame is the retired J. D. Trimble Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida.

[193]John M. Frame, "The Academic Captivity of Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:64.

The future of theological education may be affected by a lack of federal financial aid programs, regulated accreditation standards from the department of education, and restricted free speech. These pose a real threat to theological education.[194] The rapid retreat of religious liberty in North America is beginning to cause alarm. Rob Dreher called for the creation of "a Christian academic counterculture" in *The Benedict Option*.[195] While Dreher's proposal is a call for classical Christian Schools on the elementary and secondary school levels, he foresees a need for reform at all levels of education, writing, "And they should not stop after twelfth grade—a Christian plan for higher education is also needed."[196] This cultural opposition will prompt the return of theological education, as well as Christian education in general, to the church.[197]

A pragmatic decision. Second, fiscal and recruitment realities are forcing reform in theological education. Some institutions may close or merge with other institutions because of the excessive cost of education and because church leaders have lost confidence in the effectiveness of the education.[198] For example, Carolyn Weese published a study on the ministry needs of the local church in the twenty-first century. She conducted 91 on-site and six phone interviews of pastors of large churches educated at one of seven seminaries (Alliance Theological Seminary, Asbury Theological Seminary, Beeson Divinity School, Bethel Theological Seminary, Denver Seminary, Seminary of the East, and Western Seminary) to discuss curriculum, pedagogy, and

[194]Judith S. Eaton, "Disruption in the U.S. Accreditation Space," *International Higher Education* (Winter 2017).

[195]Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Sentinel, 2017), 171.

[196]Dreher, *The Benedict Option*, 146.

[197]Ibid. Dreher argues, "School-church integration in a post-Christian age also has a practical benefit. Existing under the umbrella of a church offers legal protection not available to other Christian schools. Legal experts say that Christian schools facing antidiscrimination challenges in court have greater protection if they can demonstrate that they are clearly and meaningfully guided by established doctrines of a particular church and can demonstrate that they enforce these doctrines." Ibid., 162.

[198]Lovett, "Seminaries Reflect Struggles."

whether seminary graduates were prepared to lead the church of tomorrow.[199] After 97 two-hour interviews, Weese concludes, "Every pastor said that we must have seminaries, but that seminaries must do a more complete job of preparing men and women for ministry. They are convinced, that if we were to eliminate seminaries, the church may remain solid and on track through this generation, but with each succeeding generation the theology would become weaker, disjointed, confused, and degenerated into 'fluff and fuzz' religion."[200] The study's conclusion added, "If the seminaries do not take this seriously, and do not take significant steps to move closer to the emerging church, there will be more and more churches developing their own mini-seminaries, institutes, Bible colleges, etc. The pattern is already established. If the need is not met, the church will try to meet it."[201]

Ineffective theological education led to declining enrollment among ATS accredited institutions according to the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education.[202] After reviewing enrollment at 205 ATS schools, it concluded the following: Graduate-level theological education in North America peaked in 2004 and then began to decline, M.Div. degrees sustained major losses (7.5 percent since 2006), only 63 percent of theological education students were pursuing an M.Div. degree (down from 69 percent in 1992), caucasian student enrollment had declined 17 percent since peaking in 2005 while African American and Hispanic enrollment grew, and the findings were true of all

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[199]Carolyn Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow: A Study of Ministry Needs of the Local Church in the 21st Century* (Granada Hills, CA: Multi-Staff Ministries, 1993). A summary of "Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow" is provided in appendix C of J. Russell Crabtree, *The Fly in the Ointment: Why Denominations Aren't Helping Their Congregations and How They Can* (New York: Church, 2008), 167-74.

[200]Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow*, 40.

[201]Ibid. By using the term "the emerging church," Weese is referring to the developing church in North America, in general. She is not referring to the Emerging Church movement of the early 2000s. Ibid., 40-41. D. A. Carson, *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and Its Implications* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).

[202]Wheeler and Ruger, "Sobering Figures." Lovett, "Seminaries Reflect Struggles." Moore, "Student-Loan Debt and the Future of Seminaries."

religious groups.[203]

Pragmatic reasons for reforming theological education also included educational delivery systems.[204] Online education has made degree programs more accessible. Evaluation continues to assess the effectiveness of online education in applied learning environments like pastoral leadership in which affective and relational competencies are essential. The digital revolution has forced reform. With some exceptions, most theological education institutions have already modified degree programs to include online course offerings.[205]

A Call to Return Theological Education to the Church

Reform in theological education led to a return of theological education to the local church. Leon Pacala, as the executive director of ATS in 1989, acknowledged that the greatest transition in seminary education was the shift from the clerical paradigm to the community of faith paradigm.[206] A decade earlier, James Montgomery Boice called for a renewed relationship between the church and seminary.[207] In his book, *Calling Church and Seminary into the 21st Century*, Don Messer, then serving as the president of

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[203]Wheeler and Ruger, "Sobering Figures," 5-11.

[204]González, *The History of Theological Education*. "It may be useful to suggest that what is happening in our time is parallel to what took place in the sixteenth century, when the invention of the printing press multiplied the number of books and their accessibility to an ever wider public." Ibid., loc. 2648, Kindle.

[205]House, *Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision*. Beeson Divinity School would be an exception to this trend as described by Paul House. Ibid., 13-16.

[206]Timothy C. Morgan and Thomas S. Giles, "Re-Engineering the Seminary," *Christianity Today* 38, no. 12 (October 24, 1994): 74.

[207]Boice, "Church and Seminary." Boice recommended, "If seminary and church would wholeheartedly recognize and accept the dependence each has for the other, both would improve." The relationship must respect both institutions in that (1) The call to the ministry should, and most often does, come through the church, (2) The seminary needs the church to provide students with models to follow, (3) The seminary needs the church to provide the context in which the student can practice what he learns in the classroom, and (4) To survive the seminary needs the financial support of the church." Boice's appeal was voiced nearly forty years ago. Ibid., 14–15.

The Iliff School of Theology, echoed Boice's reciprocal relationship. "Theological schools are called to be servants of a servant God. A seminary that distances itself from the church is like a bishop demanding that an ordinand lie prostrate. A seminary caught up in its own hierarchical self-importance has forgotten to Whom it witnesses and for Whom it exists."[208] Sweeney and Fortosis called for a church and seminary partnership model that alleviates the tension in which, "seminaries are caught between the demands of academia and the values of the church."[209] Stanley Hauerwas argued that seminary curriculum must be restructured to be congregationally focused.[210] These names demonstrate that calls for returning theological education to the church come from both the mainline protestant and evangelical perspectives.

Church leaders and theological educators voiced the conviction that the local church must reassume its position as the God-ordained institution raising up and equipping church leaders. Mark Dever, the pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church, expressed his opinion in a 9Marks interview that seminaries are often used for the wrong purpose. "They're not made to make pastors. Churches make pastors."[211] Christopher Cone, a former professor at Southern California Seminary and Tyndale Theological Seminary, wrote, "The seminary is best characterized as a ministry of the church, to the church, and for the encouragement of the church in taking up the proper space in the

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[208]Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary*, 22.

[209]James E. Sweeney and Steve Fortosis, "Seminary and Church: Allies for Change," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 3 (1994): 74, 83.

[210]Stanley Hauerwas, "The Ministry of a Congregation: Rethinking Christian Ethics for a Church-Centered Seminary," in *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*, ed. Joseph C. Hough and Barbara G. Wheeler (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 119–36.

[211]Mark Dever, "Raising Up Pastors Is the Church's Work," n.d., accessed June 13, 2017, https://www.9marks.org/article/raising-pastors-churchs-work/. Dever defends the role of a seminary as long as it remains subservient to the local church. He answers,"I'm not opposed to seminaries, although they are unknown among Protestants before the eighteenth or nineteenth century. I'm simply saying that in the Bible, the local church—a community where people are known, their conversion is testified to, and their gifts are witnessed—is the appropriate place to make that kind of heavy statement about God's gifting and calling in somebody's life. Raising up leaders is part of the church's commission."

biblical education process." The issue, according to Cone, was submission to complementary authority. "By being accountable directly to a local body, the seminary can rightly be viewed by that church as a ministry of the church, and as inseparable from the normal functions of the church."[212] Albert Mohler, the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, acknowledged the need for all seminaries to submit the church. He wrote in Tabletalk Magazine, "A theological seminary, if it is to remain faithful, must be directly accountable to its churches. Lacking this accountability, the institution will inevitably drift toward heterodox teachings. A robust confessionalism is necessary, but the constant oversight of churches is of equal importance"[213] As Mohler cited, early forms of theological education were imbedded within congregations as a ministry of the church.

Regardless of theological perspective, the call for returning theological education to the church emerged from mainline protestants as well as evangelicals. For example, Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki argued for a renewed relationship between church and seminary to promote gender equality because "an implicit sexism has hindered this relationship between church and seminary."[214] She proposed the symbolism of family to govern the relationship in mutuality, friendship, and partnership. She wrote, "The

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[212]Christopher Cone, "Where Does the Seminary Fit in Relation to the Local Church," *Sharper Iron*, November 19, 2013, accessed September 2, 2017, https://sharperiron.org/article/where-does-seminary-fit-relation-to-local-church.

[213]Albert Mohler, "Training Pastors in Church," *Ligonier Ministries*, February 1, 2008, accessed August 12, 2017, http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/training-pastors-church/. Mohler affirms, "Count me as one seminary president who believes that the local church is even more important to the education of the pastor. The local church should see theological education as its own responsibility before it partners with a theological seminary for concentrated studies. The seminary can provide a depth and breadth of formal studies—all needed by the minister—but it cannot replace the local church as the context where ministry is learned most directly."

[214]Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, "Friends in the Family: Church, Seminary, and Theological Education," in *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*, ed. Joseph C. Hough and Barbara G. Wheeler (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 49. "The academy, with its tendency to abstractions and arrogance, can be kept humble and honest by the concrete particularity of Christianity in its presentness. The church, with its tendency to become immersed in the needs and concerns of the present, is called to the criticism of its wider heritage and future by the faithfulness of the academy." Ibid., 56.

seminary has 'come of age' and relates most effectively to the church not in hierarchy but in mutuality, as friends within a family," adding, "If 'family friendship' is a model for academy-church relations, the church will be a conversation partner in theological education, not only the subject of theological education."[215] Suchocki's solution was a field education program in which the seminary and church approach a partnership with a commitment to prayer for each other. The seminary should consider holding workshops for congregational committees in which the overall curriculum could be reviewed and the relation among the congregation, student, and course work could be discussed. The seminary and church should devise methods of mutual evolution, in which accomplishment could be measured by expectations.[216] Without evaluating Suchocki's theological position, the call for a renewed relationship between church and seminary among mainline protestants was clearly present in the literature base.

The movement toward a congregational paradigm for theological education was strong enough to cause established seminaries to reconnect with local churches through branch campuses, teaching sites, extension centers, internships, mentoring programs, and other creative arrangements.[217] Duke Divinity School, recognizing the church-seminary disconnect, was granted a $10 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to develop "A Program to Form a Learned Clergy." The strategies included developing partnerships with fifteen teaching congregations that connected the student and congregation to the formation of pastoral wisdom and imagination, and the opportunities of theological education, recruiting and supporting a new generation of M.Div. and doctoral students, developing faculty leaders who serve as catalysts for reshaping

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[215]Suchocki, "Friends in the Family," 54-55.

[216]Ibid., 58. "The seminary and church are not antagonists competing for value but are partners and friends in a family. Each has its distinctive tasks, but each has common concerns, one of which is the solid preparation of leadership within the church community." Ibid., 60.

[217]Andrew Thomas Hancock, "Pastoral Training Approaches in the Local Church: A Multi-Case Study" (EdD thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017).

conversation and curriculum courses, making the divinity school environment more conducive to conversation, community, and worship, and cultivating sustained learning among clergy, laity.[218]

The congregational paradigm has been studied since 2000 with the commission of the Transition into Ministry (TiM) study. TiM addressed the difficult task of transitioning competent seminary graduates into successful church ministries.[219] David Wood described the catalyst for such a study, "When the complexity of the transition pastors make is not noted and addressed, conversations typically end by making seminaries the target of heavy criticism for their tendency to turn out graduates who are well skilled in the cognitive disciplines (theory) but essentially clueless when it comes to the skills necessary for ministry (practice)."[220] Wood recommended an apprenticeship model including immersion in a congregation and in the pastoral life, integration into a community of practitioners, peer engagement through shared practice, a mutually appreciative encounter between laity and pastor, and ordered reading and reflection on

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[218]L. Gregory Jones and Susan Pendleton Jones, "Pivotal Leadership," *Christian Century*, September 12, 2001, 28. Jones and Jones identify the need for closer church and seminary relationships, "Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of this 'relay-race model,' theological educators have rather belatedly discovered that the model has broken down. The formation of ministerial students in congregations and in the church is no longer taking place. Seminaries must develop new connections with congregations, and see the task of formation and education for ministry as a complex partnership between seminaries and congregations—one that must draw clergy and laity, faculty and students, together on a more regular basis." Ibid., 27.

[219]David Gortner, *Clergy Leadership for the 21st Century: Are We Up to the Task?*, VTS White Paper, Transition into Ministry (Virginia Theological Seminary, January 2014), accessed September 4, 2017, http://into-action.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Report-4-Clergy-Leadership-for-the-21st-Century-Are-We-Up-to-the-Task.pdf. David J. Wood, "Transition into Ministry: Reconceived the Boundaries between Seminaries and Congregations," in *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry,* ed. Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008). Denominations represented in the Transition into Ministry program include the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Episcopal Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, the American Baptist Churches (USA), the Progressive National Baptist Convention, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Ibid., 293.

[220]Wood, "Transition into Ministry," 302.

texts with fellow practitioners.[221] Wood concluded with the necessity of church and seminary partnerships.

> The TiM program and its exploration of the relevance of apprenticeship to the education and formation of pastors has uncovered the existence of a field where collaboration between the work of seminaries and the life of congregations is crucial. These two domains need to explore more creatively how the boundary between them can become a place of learning to which each can contribute its own distinctive strengths and competencies . . . .Seasoned pastors and their congregations would need to begin to take greater ownership of their responsibility to be ports of entry for new pastors and would also need to grow in their capacity to serve as pedagogues of ministry, seeing this as an integral part of their service to the church.[222]

The TiM program revealed that seminaries are unable to adequately prepare students for the practice of ministry.[223] Seminaries needed creative and collaborative relationships with local churches to provide what is currently lacking in theological education.[224]

The nature and relationship of accountability between church and seminary was Donald Shriver's topic in a *Theological Education* journal article, "The Accountability of Theological Education to the Mission of the Church."[225] Shriver's article was significant because it coincided with the beginning of the CBTE movement in 1980. In a transcription of an original lecture, Shriver described the church-seminary relationship as a tuning fork, writing, "I ask you to consider the case for this proposition: Churches and theological schools will both be closer to revival the more seriously each

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[221]Wood, "Transition into Ministry," 293-302.

[222]Ibid., 302-3.

[223]Ibid. "As long as the seminary context is perceived as the sole, or even as the primary, domain for the learning of ministry, the forms and conditions essential to an education sufficient to the practice of ministry will remain elusive." Ibid., 302.

[224]Ibid. "It is not accidental that teaching hospitals are closely tied to medical schools, for both are recognized as domains of teaching and learning essential to the education and formation of physicians. Similarly, if the pathway of pastoral formation is to become as strong as the church needs it to be, a closer collaboration between seminaries and congregations will need to be cultivated around shared pedagogical commitments." Ibid., 304.

[225]Donald W. Shriver, Jr. "The Accountability of Theological Education to the Mission of the Church," *Theological Education* 17, no. 1 (1980): 59–73.

takes the other's primary commitment."[226] Shriver balanced church and seminary in a series of four analogies: The tower and the street (or reflection and action), the lamp and the window (or revelation and learning), the way and the waystations (or mobility and stability), the roles and the drama (or the jobs and the vocation). In conclusion to his lecture, Shriver historically tied the church and seminary relationship to the courageous work of Diedrich Bonhoeffer, previously presented in this literature review.

> Few graduates of a theological school, few ministers of the church, few theological teachers in the twentieth century have combined in their lives as many elements of the Christian mission to the world as did Bonhoeffer. . . . It is a privilege to have some part in their education and their mission. By the marvelous grace of God, both the seminary and the church have been given that privilege.[227]

Ted Ward and John Frame are worthy of considerable focus here because as independent voices they called for the return of theological education to the church and gained recognition because of their extensive writing on the subject.

Ted Ward

Ted Ward taught for three decades at Michigan State University holding professorships in curriculum and instruction, international education, and educational administration. After retiring, he taught at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School from 1985-1994 focusing on pastoral development in the church. His research and writing highlighted innovative, alternative models of theological education.[228]

In the foreword to Linda Cannell's *Leadership Education for the Church*, Ward agreed with the premise that the relationship between church and seminary has caused significant confusion in theological education, and the confusion led to the church being

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[226]Shriver, "The Accountability of Theological Education." "The poles of a tuning fork vibrate each other. They act as complementary opposites to each other and in this sense only are 'polar' opposites. I want to suggest to you four such opposites, each representing a pair of theologically-conditioned commitments, each relevant mutually to the service of seminary and church to the Christian mission to the world, and each applicable to the description of that mission on both sides of the institutional relation." Ibid., 61-62.

[227]Ibid., 72.

[228]Stephen T. Hoke and Linda Cannell, "Ted W. Ward," *Talbot School of Theology*, accessed September 4, 2017, http://www.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/protestant/ted_ward/.

underserved by the institutions charged with training its leaders.[229] Ward concluded, "Selecting and preparing leaders to enable the church to carry out its ministry, as established by Christ and the apostles, is a responsibility charged to the church. . . . Thus each theological school must accept its accountability to the church."[230] For Ward, life-on-life encounters and a communal experience achieved more effectively the desired outcomes of theological education because relational connection points occurred naturally in a local church context.[231]

Returning theological education to the church is returning theological education to a biblical form of mentoring and discipling. Ward associated CBTE with the apprenticeship Jesus demonstrated training the disciples. Ward writes, "The full humanity of Jesus suggests that without a deliberate inclusion of the behavior, attitudes, interpersonal skills and communication style of Jesus' pastoral education—indeed any Christian education is incomplete."[232] In short, the incarnation was necessary to theological education. Matthew 23 was Ward's central example of Jesus' teaching on leadership.

In a journal article, "Leaders Among the People of God," Ward asked whether theological education is for all of God's people or only for the leaders of God's people? The question reflected Ward's emphasis on the clergy-laity divide, "Is it heretical to ask if

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[229]Ted W. Ward, "The Anomaly of Theological Education: Institutions Serving an Institution," in *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 9, 11.

[230]Ibid., 12.

[231]Ibid., 9–17. "When teaching is scheduled, boxed, structured, 'presented,' and over organized, it is reduced to a thing. Teaching must struggle to free itself from such habits, customs, and limitations so that learning may occur. Learning at its finest, is a lively encounter with some intriguing aspects of life. Thus, learning is the extending of one's thoughts and understandings to encounter, discover, and blend one's past with the unfolding present, thus enabling an active involvement in the shaping of a creative future." Ibid., 16. Ted W. Ward and Linda M. Cannell, "Theological Education and the Church," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (999): 39-40.

[232]Ted W. Ward, "Developing Christ-like Leaders," *Common Ground Journal* 10, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 9.

God might be on the threshold of revealing to the church some fundamentally different way or ways of accomplishing the vital task of leadership development?"[233] Ward's question was posed in an unpublished paper in 1993 coinciding with the first generation of CBTE institutions.

Ward described the local church as a leading context. He warns that institutions separated from the church invariably drift doctrinally and organizationally over time.[234] The church lost its intimate oversight of the institution's mission, and the institution assumed its own deterministic life decreasing accountability to the church.[235] Seminaries function best when relating in a complementary way to the church. Ward seemed convinced of education in the family and community, and walking-talking-doing activities of experiential learning as in Deuteronomy 6.[236] He developed a social-cultural taxonomy including socialization, formation education, and nonformal education similar to Elliston's approach in *Developing Leaders at a Distance* previously presented as a missional call for reforming theological education.[237]

John Frame

John Frame is the retired J. D. Trimble Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. Before serving at RTS, he taught for twenty years at Westminster Theological Seminary. Frame is a church musician and ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America. Although a career

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[233]Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," 65.

[234]Mohler, “Training Pastors in Church.”

[235]Ibid., 69.

[236]Ibid., 70.

[237]Ibid., "The following taxonomy is useful for Christian educators especially as a reminder that the intent of Christian education is to develop the church as a particular kind of environment for whole-person development." Ibid., 71. Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2003). Edgar J. Elliston, *Developing Leaders at a Distance: Contextualizing Leadership Development* (Pasadena: Fuller, 1997).

educator in a denominational seminary, he was an early voice calling for theological education's return to the church.

In 1978, Frame published an article written in 1972, "Proposal for a New Seminary," calling for a revolutionary paradigm of theological education. The CBTE proposal was radical—so shocking that six Christian periodicals declined its publication. Six years passed before the *Journal of Pastoral Practice* printed Frame's article.[238] The proposal sharply called for an academic repentance, of sorts, leaving behind the accepted models of theological education and returning to a simple model of church-based education. Frame, in his own words, describes it.

> I propose first that we dump the academic model once and for all—degrees, accreditation, tenure, the works. This is not to say that classroom-type instruction is of no value in ministerial training; on the contrary, it is probably indispensable in some areas, e.g.biblical languages. Nor would I allege that the system of grades, hours and degrees measures nothing of importance to theological education. Obviously, other things being equal, a man with good grades in church history will be a better minister than one who failed the course.
>
> The trouble is, however, that 'other things' are never equal, and those 'other things' are the crucial things to be measured in a man's preparation for the teaching office. The academic machinery is simply incapable of measuring the things that really matter—a man's obedience to God's Word, his perseverance in prayer, his self control, his ability to rule without pride, the spiritual power of his preaching in the conversion of men and the edification of the church.[239]

Alternately, Frame describes what a new seminary should include.

> Let us consider a positive alternative. A church or denomination establishes a kind of 'Christian community' where teachers, ministerial candidates, and their families live together, eat together, work together; where they all really know each other; where their lives (their habits, their tempers, their talents, their loves, their hates, their struggles, their sanctity and lack of it) are known to all. The teacher and older students would thus be 'examples' to the newer and the newer would be under the scrutiny of the older. The community is not a monastic escape from the world; rather it is mobilized for the purpose of establishing and nurturing churches throughout its locality. Each teacher, student, wife and child is to be deeply involved in the work of developing churches, through visitation, neighborhood Bible studies, public meetings, street preaching, and then (as churches are established) through Sunday School teaching, preaching church youth work, church administration, etc.[240]

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[238]John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* (January 1, 1978): 10–17.

[239]Ibid., 10-17.

[240]Ibid., 15-16.

Frame added two postscripts (1979 and 2001) to the original "Proposal for a New Seminary," clarifying and tempering his original vision of CBTE. The 1979 Postscript clarified that Frame intended the new seminary model to be connected to a local church and not a parachurch organization, and the communal aspect of training could be achieved through regular interaction between pastors and students without actually living together. A two-tiered approach to education, one for ministry and one for scholarship, would be located in the church as a ministry training center.[241] The 2001 postscript to "Proposal for a New Seminary" came after twenty years of reflection. Frame acknowledged the local church as the central point of the proposal, and to his amazement, several churches within the Presbyterian Church in America founded seminaries in response to his article.[242]

Elsewhere, Frame argued that a new model of theological education was necessary because of the demise of systematic theology. Young evangelical students struggle to study systematic theology because it has been replaced by a study of theology in a modern, liberal, academic form. A normal form of systematic theology appeals first to Scripture then applies to the needs of the people. This is largely absent in mainline protestant seminaries.[243]

In another article, Frame listed what seminaries can do without including comprehensive Hebrew and Greek courses, term papers, exams, some academic degrees,

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[241]John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," in *The Academic Captivity of Theology* (Lakeland, FL: Whitefield, 2012), 67-69.

[242]Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," in *The Academic Captivity of Theology*. "Today, there are a number of attempts to get beyond the academic model of theological education. Quite a number of churches have their own seminaries today. In my own Presbyterian Church in America, there is Knox Seminary, and seminaries associated with Spanish River Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The latter two sometimes offer courses taught by professors from Reformed Theological Seminary. These make a serious attempt to integrate practical and theological training." Ibid., 70.

[243]John M. Frame, "The Demise of Systematic Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:94–100. Frame concludes, "Theological study, on the contrary, needs to become less indebted to the modern academic model and to develop a model of study and teaching that is true to its own nature as biblical thought." Ibid., 100.

and a doctored faculty. Academic accreditation standards are unnecessary because seminaries train ministers, not academics. Frame writes, "The purpose of a seminary course should be to give students the information they need to prepare for ministry, and to prepare for the testing that they will receive in a church context."[244] He continued, "Academic degrees are not needed in the church. The church alone is empowered to determine the quality of a candidate's preparation for church office. Anything else is a possible source of the wrong kind of pride. I encourage divestment of degree terminology from seminaries."[245] Theological education was best accomplished in the church. Frame concludes, "In my view, training for ministry is the work of the church, and so only the church can finally accredit a program of training."[246] Accomplishing Frame's proposal required traditional seminaries and CBTE institutions to rethink accreditation criteria and reconsider the culture of assessment.

Frame shared several personal misgivings, in retrospect, about his teaching in theological education including: (1) This sort of pedagogy was only marginally valuable for preparing students for ministry. (2) When facts were taught to the overseer-candidates a community where the life, not just the ideas, of the candidate can be observed, scrutinized, corrected was needed. (3) Scripture nowhere made research a requirement for officers in the church. (4) Partnerships between seminary and church sought to create an environment in which ministerial candidates grew in comprehensive ways.[247]

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[244]John M. Frame, "What Seminaries Can Do Without," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings*, 3:150.

[245]Ibid., 151.

[246]Ibid., 156.

[247]John M. Frame, "A Few Things I have Learned from My Years in Ministry," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings*, 2:106-7.

A History of Church-Based Theological Education

Beginning in the 1980s, studies investigating theological education raised concerns about the ministry readiness of seminary graduates. David Kelsey dated the 1980s as the first meaningful period of debate in theological education since Richard Niebuhr's *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* published in 1956.[248] Harry Poe wrote of similar misgivings in *Theological Education* in 1996, "The almost universal complaint, however, came in the area of preparation for the practice of ministry. Graduates of seminaries felt unprepared for the challenges of ministry, while the churches felt that seminaries did not turn out people ready for ministry." Poe's findings parallel those cited in Weese's research on the demonstrable need for leadership education.[249] The perception persisted that seminaries graduate students unprepared for leadership in the church.[250]

Because of these misgivings in theological education, the literature base was replete with examples of alternate models. Alternatives include liberation and justice models, spiritual formation models, action-reflection models, non-formal models, contextualizing models, and mission models.[251]

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[248]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 1. *Readiness for Ministry: Criteria* (Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, 1975). "Readiness for Ministry" study by the Lilly Foundation. Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education*. Robert Lincoln Kelly, *Theological Education in America: A Study of One Hundred Sixty-One Theological Schools in the United States and Canada* (New York: Doran, 1924). Mark A. May and William Adams Brown, *The Education of American Ministers* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1934). H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson, *The Advancement of Theological Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957).

[249]Harry L. Poe, "The Revolution in Ministry Training," *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (1996): 23. Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow*, 27-28. Wheeler and Ruger, "Sobering Figures."

[250]Josh Good et al., “A Five-Year B.A./M.Div? How 19 Schools Are Rethinking Pastoral Preparation” (Webinar, www.InTrust.org, November 2, 2016), https://webinars.intrust.org/products/a-five-year-bamdiv-how-19-schools-are-rethinking-pastoral-preparation. During the question and answer, it was asked, "What are the realities of the job market after degree completion?" David Dockery answered that 23-year-olds may still not be ready to lead a congregation. Clem Boyd, “B.A. + M.Div. Moves Students into Ministry More Quickly,” *Cedarville Magazine*, 2016.

[251]Walter Brueggemann, "Passion and Perspective: Two Dimensions of Education in the Bible," *Theology Today* 42, no. 2 (July 1985): 172–80. Thomas C. Oden and Don S. Browning, *Care of Souls in the Classic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984). Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley, eds., *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education* (Louisville:

The considerable growth of proposed alternate models and the willingness to try new approaches in missional settings led Wilson Chow to publish "An Integrated Approach to Theological Education." He proposed a holistic integrated approach to theological education that includes academic, spiritual, and practical leadership formation. Chow describes it, "Seminaries should be different from schools of religious studies patterned after the university model, . . . There must be a functional integration between learning by precepts and learning by experience, between being and doing."[252] Because theological education involves "both 'being' and 'doing' aspects, theological training should be people-centered and task-oriented."[253] Citing Frame's "Proposal for a New Seminary" and Chao's "Proposal for a Spiritual Community," Chow recommended reforming theological education's structure, communal life, academic study, and field work.[254] Fieldwork would play a crucial role connecting pastors and churches "whereby pastors in churches participate in the training of students through their supervision on the field."[255] The timing of Chow's integrative approach was significant. Published in 1982, it was concurrent with the initial efforts to establish theological education within churches in North America.

Westminster John Knox, 1991). F. Ross Kinsler, "Extension: An Alternative Model for Theological Education," in *Learning in Context: The Search for Innovative Patterns in Theological Education* (Bromley, VT: Theological Education Fund, 1973), 30–31. Stackhouse, *Apologia*. Hough and Wheeler, *Beyond Clericalism*.

[252]Chow, "An Integrated Approach," 51.

[253]Ibid., 50.

[254]Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary." Jonathan Chao, "Crucial Issues in Leadership Training: A Chinese Perspective," in *Mission Focus: Current Issues* (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1980), 379–408.

[255]Chow, "An Integrated Approach," 49–62. Chow also writes, "This needs understanding and support on the part of the pastors, and the director of field education shoulders this important responsibility of standing between the seminary and church, for the practical work of the students as well as for their placement after graduation." Ibid., 60.

A Definition of CBTE

Jeff Reed, Founder and CEO of BILD International, proposed his organization and curriculum in *Church-based Leadership Training Manual* and *Formal Program Training Manual*, as a hub for the future of CBTE. While much of what Reed cited was helpful, the shift toward CBTE began at least a decade before BILD International. However, Reed recognized shifts in theological education and proposed a definition and description of CBTE that contributed to the literature base. He writes, "Western, evangelical seminaries must shift to a new paradigm if they expect to be relevant in the twenty-first century."[256] Those shifts include the following:

1. A shift from traditional, academic-based accrediting systems to church-based assessment procedures, which accommodate formal, non-formal, and informal forms of theological preparation.
2. A shift in emphasis from the residential, for-service model to a church-based, in-service model of ministry preparation.
3. A shift of the foundational training back to local churches, with seminaries assuming a resource role to the churches.
4. A shift of the primary ministry context of professors back to local churches, becoming resource scholars and mentors for training proven and gifted leaders in churches.
5. A shift from centralized staff to a decentralized staff, moving them back into strategic local churches around the country.
6. A shift away from costly institutional overhead by selling unnecessary properties related to large in-residence programs and focusing on serving as resource centers to area churches.
7. A shift from a fragmented curriculum based on Schleiermacher's four-fold model, to a model more consistent with the unfolding agenda of the Scriptures and current needs of the churches.
8. Specifically, a shift away from a curriculum based on systematic theology to a curriculum based on biblical theology and theology in culture, relevant to the belief framework of a given culture.
9. A shift from an academic, testing course design to a wisdom, problem-posing course design model.[257]

Reed defined CBTE as either "a seminary inside the four walls of a church building while continuing all of the formal and institutional aspects of a traditional seminary" or

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[256]Jeff Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education: Creating A New Paradigm" (paper presented at the North American Professors of Christian Education, Dallas: 1992), 6.

[257]Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education," 6-7.

"building a training strategy that grows out of the life of local churches and takes place in the context of laboring to establish local churches."[258] While Reed prefered the latter definition, he acknowledged that both as models of CBTE.

BILD International developed a CBTE network with the following strategies: (1) Regional resource hubs in the United States and around the world based in key churches or a localized community of churches, (2) Teams of church-based gifted leaders who share a common vision and understanding of theological education, (3) A core curriculum designed to facilitate ordered learning at the foundational level, (4) A prudent stewardship strategy for sharing costs, (5) A publishing house that publishes works that emerge from local churches that are deep in truth and sound doctrine, and (6) A church-based assessment and recognition system.[259]

Linda Cannell recognized that CBTE institutions were emerging as "concrete initiatives and ideas that allow more productive connections between the church and the theological school."[260] Citing personal conversations with Ted Ward, Cannell wrote in *Theological Education Matters*, "As church-based efforts continue to mature and as their leaders discover criteria and principles that will guide their practice, they could effectively replace existing seminary models."[261] Cannell saw theological education as a broad category, one in which CBTE partially satisfied the need. She proposed that both the apprenticeship of the scholar or the professional development of the leader can be a goal of CBTE. Churches can grow CBTE programs fostering relationships. Responsible education initiatives in the local congregation would stimulate adults to reflect on the life of faith about real-world issues. When questions emerge that require specialized input, one or more scholars could be invited into the process—not to give the right answer but

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[258]Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education," 8-9.

[259]Ibid., 9-10.

[260]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 266.

[261]Ibid., 267.

to introduce knowledge, ideas, and new questions into the process. When scholars emerged with particular abilities and interests, the church should support their apprenticeship to a community of scholars.[262]

The literature base still lacked a clear definition of CBTE with a separate identity from extension centers, teaching sites, and branch campuses. This research study filled that gap by reporting the educational philosophy, church, proximity, and academic standards of existing CBTE institutions.

A History of CBTE (1980-2017)

The CBTE movement began in the early 1980s in response to growing calls to reform theological education and calls to return theological education to the church. Except for a few church-based seminaries founded in previous decades in connection with the Fundamentalist movement, the majority of CBTE institutions came into existence in the past forty years.

James Montgomery Boice published an article in *Christianity Today* in 1979 called, "Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship."[263] Boice believed that both church and seminary would improve if each would "wholeheartedly recognize and accept the dependence each other has for the other."[264] A new relationship was needed because the call to ministry came from the local church, seminaries needed the church to provide ministry models students can follow, the church was the context in which classroom learning can be practiced, and seminaries' survival depended on financial support from churches.[265]

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[262]Cannell, *Theological Education Matters*, 268.

[263]Boice, "Church and Seminary."

[264]Ibid., 14.

[265]John Dart, "The Value of a Theological Education: Is It Worth It? – Religion Online," *Christian Century*, n.d., accessed November 7, 2017, http://www.religion-online.org/article/the-value-of-a-theological-education-is-it-worth-it/.

Perhaps the most recognizable CBTE institution has been The Master's Seminary, a ministry of Grace Community Church in Los Angeles, California. In 1977 Talbot Theological Seminary established an extension campus at Grace Community Church. Nearly 100 Grace Community Church members were enrolled as students on Talbot's campus located forty miles away. Sam Ericsson, a pastor at Grace Church and liaison to Talbot explained the philosophy motivating the extension campus, "We want to integrate seminary students into the life of the church. It's one thing to get head knowledge at seminary, but we feel that it is critical to get practical pastoral experience."[266] In 1986 Grace Community Church established its own institution, The Master's Seminary. Nathan Busenitz, Professor of Historical Theology at the Master's Seminary, wrote of the purpose and benefits of CBTE in an article published by 9Marks.

> TMS enjoys a number of benefits because of its close-knit relationship with Grace Community Church. For starters, the church serves as a "living lab" in which students can observe how expository preaching works itself out in everyday practice. Moreover, students are immediately presented with a variety of ministry and service opportunities—avenues through which they can directly apply what they are learning in the classroom. Because a number of classes are taught by Grace Church pastors, students have continual access to professors with real-world experience. In a sense, it's like a medical school that is based at a hospital; the students are constantly being exposed to the very thing they are training to do.
>
> The philosophy that undergirds The Master's Seminary is one of import to the future of evangelicalism—namely, that pastoral leadership training and local church ministry should go hand in hand. Whether this takes place on the same campus or through some other means, pastors and professors must each resolve to bridge the gaps between church and classroom.[267]

Since the establishment of The Master's Seminary, other local churches have established institutions providing graduate-level theological education on the church's campus and as part of the church's ministry. Investigation for this research study identified twenty-four institutions fitting the CBTE model.[268] These institutions are

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[266]David Singer, "Seminary Goes to Church: An Alternative Approach," *Christianity Today*, February 10, 1978, 16.

[267]Nathan Busenitz, "The Church as Classroom: The History of Master's Seminary," *9Marks*, February 26, 2010, accessed September 5, 2017, https://www.9marks.org/article/church-classroom-history-masters-seminary/.

[268]CBTE institutions identified in this research study include: Apex School of Theology,

committed to the local church and theological education as a responsibility of the local church in training church leaders. As an example, Tyndale Theological Seminary's mission statement reads, "The mission of *Tyndale Theological Seminary & Biblical Institute*, as an arm of Tyndale Bible Church, is to prepare godly believers for the ministry of exegetical and expository teaching of the word of God for effective and spiritually mature leadership and service worldwide."[269] Tyndale Theological Seminary was established in 1988. Similarly, Bethlehem College and Seminary, a ministry of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota and established in 2009, promotes the local church context as one of its core values, publishing on its website:

> As a church-based institution, all programs of Bethlehem College & Seminary are woven into the life and ministry of Bethlehem Baptist Church. From participation in corporate worship to active involvement in church small groups and ministries, our students will deepen and stretch their faith by treasuring Christ together with the congregation. In addition, our faculty members self-consciously bring the vision, values, and theology of Bethlehem Baptist Church to bear on all of our course readings, lectures, and discussions."[270]

Identifying with a local church remains the hallmark of CBTE institutions.

As the literature review has demonstrated, the CBTE model of theological education has been a sustained response to the calls to reform theological education and return theological education to the church. Previous research has been conducted on the relationship between churches and seminaries. For example, research exists to validate the trend of CBTE including strategic partnerships between churches and seminaries for

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Bethlehem College and Seminary, Birmingham Theological Seminary, Cascade School of Theology, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Chafer Theological Seminary, Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Faith Bible Seminary, Geneva Reformed Seminary, International Baptist College and Seminary, Knox Theological Seminary, Metro Atlanta Seminary, Rockbridge Seminary, Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary, Shepherds Theological Seminary, Southern California Seminary, The Antioch School, The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary, The Expositors Seminary, The Master's Seminary, Tyndale Theological Seminary, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary, and Whitefield Theological Seminary.

[269]"About Us: Tyndale Theological Seminary and Biblical Institute," *Tyndale.edu*, last modified September 5, 2017, https://www.tyndale.edu/about/. Cone, "Where Does the Seminary Fit in Relation to the Local Church."

[270]"Core Values | Bethlehem College and Seminary," n.d., accessed September 5, 2017, https://bcsmn.edu/about/core-values/.

pastoral training, case studies on individual church and seminary partnerships, and leadership styles in church-based pastoral training.[271] The relationship between theological education models and assessment criteria within the church-based leadership training has been studied, as well as the leadership readiness of pastors with various relationships with theological institutions and local churches.[272]

After forty years of reforming theological education and returning it to the local church, a growing number of CBTE institutions are now established and further research was needed to understand the academic standards of the CBTE movement collectively. These church-based seminaries have developed degree programs, acquired regional or national accreditation, populated alumni associations, and gained a measure of name recognition. All of these developments gave an opportunity for empirical inquiry.

While some research existed focusing on corollary aspects associated with CBTE, what continued to lack in the literature base was empirical research reviewing the history of CBTE and assessing the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE institutions.[273] What remains to be explored and reported

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[271]Matthew A. Rogers, "Holistic Pastoral Training: Strategic Partnership between the Seminary and the Local Church in the United States" (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/1771283468/abstract/75F195FCA82A463CPQ/3. Aaron Francis Filippone, "Servant Leadership Development in Church-Based Pastoral Training Programs: A Multiple Case Study" (EdD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/1849030781/abstract/B9822B69358F4731PQ/1. Carl Arthur Moeller, "Church and Seminary Partnerships: A Case Study of the Formation of Mountain View Seminary from the Partnership of Mountain View Community Church and Bayside Baptist Theological Seminary" (PhD diss., The University of Utah, 2003), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/305298176/abstract/FA968C074F7843A7PQ/1.

[272]Thomas Lee Kiedis, "A Comparative Analysis of Leadership Development Models in Post-Baccalaureate Theological Education" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), accessed May 30, 2017, http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/205394512/abstract/AF43CFF6981F4142PQ/27. Jack Gregory Lewis, "The Involvement and Impact of the Local Church in the Professional Socialization of Pastors" (PhD diss., Gonzaga University, 2000), accessed June 15, 2017, http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/304651618/abstract/23CCAD8C37AD4B2APQ/1. Hancock, "Pastoral Training Approaches Church."

[273]Sweeney and Fortosis, "Seminary and Church." As of 1994, Sweeney and Fortosis confess, "To our knowledge, to date no church-based seminary program is officially accredited." Ibid., 78. However, this is no longer the case. As of 2017, The Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Transnational

was the development of CBTE views on traditional forms of national, regional, and ATS accreditation, the validity of non-traditional, praxis-based programs, and the prospect of a church-based self-assessment. Little empirical research had been done to determine the views of CBTE institutions on these issues specifically and academic standards generally. This research study was intended to gather the opinions of leading CBTE institutions and administrators, identifying common themes from CBTE institutions that otherwise would not be reported.

Conclusion

This literature review presented the CBTE movement as described from 1980 to 2017. It has considered questions and drawn implications from the history of theological education and the nature of the relationship between church and seminary. Responding to the theological, historical, missional, and cultural calls to reform theological education has led to a reconsideration of the relationship between church and seminary. CBTE represents a movement of theological education established on the complementary relationship between church and seminary.

In chapter 3, a methodology is presented for exploring the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE institutions. The phenomenological research design gathered data among qualifying institutions through interviews and document analysis in order to define and explain the CBTE model and movement.

Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS), Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (ARTS), and Distance Education Accreditation Commission (DEAC) have accredited CBTE institutions.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Leaders of church-based theological education (CBTE) institutions know the benefits and challenges to delivering theological education under a church's influence and on a church's property.[1] As demonstrated in the literature review there was insufficient research regarding the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE institutions. It was the goal of this research study to investigate these three interconnected themes among CBTE institutions. This chapter describes the methods and procedures used in this research study including research purpose, research questions, design overview, population, delimitations, instrumentation, and validity and reliability.

Research Purpose

The objective of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to explore the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE.[2] For this research study, educational philosophy was defined as a classical, vocational, confessional, or missional model.[3] Church proximity was defined as under a church's

[1]While diverse approaches to CBTE exist in North America, for the purpose of this research study, CBTE is defined in the literature review as a graduate level institution of theological education functioning under a church's influence and located on a church's property.

[2]John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), Kindle. "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a *case description* and *case themes*." Ibid., loc. 2088, Kindle.

[3]Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 208–17. See comparison chart including nine dimensions of the four types of educational philosophy on p. 217. Ibid., 271. George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in*

influence and on a church's property. Academic standards was tentatively defined as submission to accreditation standards or academic recognition among similar institutions.

Research Questions

This qualitative phenomenological research study answered the following central research questions supported by several sub-questions:

Central Questions

1. What educational philosophy underpinned the church-based theological education model?
2. How did close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in church-based theological education?
3. What was the state and significance of academic standards in church-based theological education?[4]

Research Design Overview

Qualitative research was useful "for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."[5] Good qualitative research design is grounded in the literature, consistent with existing knowledge, internally

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Christian Perspective, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2006), loc. 3714-4030, Kindle.

[4]The state and significance of academic standards in CBTE was explored using the following sub-questions that shaped the interview protocol used in the semi-structured interviews: (1) What steps had the church-based theological education institution taken to develop academic standards? (2) How did a local church setting influence academic standards in church-based theological education? (3) What distinctions existed between church-based theological education and traditional theological education that informed the academic standards of the church-based theological education model? (4) What more could be done to create high academic standards in church-based theological education? (5) What role, if any, did regional or national accreditation hold in academic standards in church-based theological education? (6) What was the potential, if any, for local churches to create a self-assessment agency for church-based theological education?

[5]John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008), 4. "The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data." Ibid., 4.

consistent, and practically feasible.[6] This type of exploratory inquiry is useful when "the topic is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample or group of people, and existing theories do not apply with a particular sample or group under study."[7] Qualitative research allowed an inductive inquiry that acknowledges the topic's complexity by building common themes from personal experiences.[8] Data collection emerged from document analysis, an initial questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews.

The following reasons support the choice of a qualitative research design as the best approach for investigating the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE. First, since most CBTE institutions were first-generation, access to founding administrators and original faculty was possible. Second, the researcher's personal participation in CBTE as an alumnus and as a trustee of a CBTE institution allowed unique access for data collection. Third, informal connections among church and faculty relationships allowed for generalized themes to emerge.

This research study used a phenomenological research design. A phenomenological research study "describes the common meaning of experiences of a phenomenon (or topic or concept) for several individuals. In this phenomenological study, the researcher reduces the experiences to a central meaning or the 'essence' of the experience."[9] This type of research methodology is built on philosophical perspectives including a pre-nineteenth century Greek understanding of philosophy as a search for wisdom, suspension of judgment without presuppositions, the intentionality of

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[6]Bonnie L. Yegidis, Robert W. Weinbach, and B. M. Morrison-Rodriquez, *Research Methods for Social Workers*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2017), 123.

[7]J. M. Morse, "Approaches to Qualitative-Quantitative Methodological Triangulation," *Nursing Research* 40, no. 1 (April 1991): 120–23, cited in Creswell, *Research Design*, 18.

[8]Creswell, *Research Design*. "Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up, by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information." Ibid., 175.

[9]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 5231, Kindle.

consciousness, and the reality of objects through experience.[10] The researcher relied on "intuition, imagination, and universal structures" to describe the experience while using systematic methods of inquiry.[11]

The CBTE movement was explained using methods in keeping with a phenomenological research design. First, the goal was to collect data to understand the shared experiences and common views about CBTE.[12] In keeping with the transcendental approach, I bracketed out my own experience as much as possible.[13] Second, semi-structured interviews gathered the majority of the data. Other secondary forms of data collection included document analysis and some observation.

Data analysis followed Moustakas' methodology.[14] After interviews were transcribed, significant terms, quotes, and themes were highlighted. This approach is called horizonalization, which reports an understanding of the participant's experiences and creates clusters of meaning from these statements.[15] Next, textual description were

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[10]David Stewart and Algis Mickunas, *Exploring Phenomenology: A Guide to the Field and Its Literature*, 2nd ed. (Athens: Ohio University, 1990). In as much as there is a distinction between hermeneutical phenomenology and transcendental phenomenology, this research study will use the transcendental approach. Transcendental phenomenology, according to Husserl and Moustakas, requires the researcher to set aside prejudgments regarding the phenomenon being investigated.

[11]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 5257, Kindle. Edmund Husserl and Dermot Moran, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (New York: Routledge, 2012). Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1970) found in Clark Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1994).

[12]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. The interview protocol in appendix Three follows Moustakas's technique of asking two broad, general questions: (1) What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? and (2) What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? followed by additional open-ended questions. Ibid., loc. 1764, Kindle.

[13]Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research*. Epoche is defined as "setting aside prejudgments and opening the research interview with an unbiased receptive presence." Ibid., 180.

[14]Ibid., 181-82.

[15]Ibid., According to Moustakas, horizonalization is "the second step in the phenomenological data analysis, in which the researcher lists every significant statement relevant to the topic and gives it equal value." Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 5231, Kindle.

written from the data reporting the participants' experience and, then, a structural description reporting the context and setting around their experience. Finally, an essential description was written to describe the phenomenon as a whole.

Interviews included administrators from CBTE institutions in the following positions: president, chief academic officer, academic dean, or an equivalent position. Generally, a single interview per institution was gathered. However, in eleven of the institutions where access was higher, data was gathered from an additional interview with a founding president, pastor, or administrator. Interviews were conducted in a one-on-one setting via Zoom video or phone conference. Interviews were scheduled for specific times suitable to the interviewee. Interviews lasted approximately one hour. All interviews were captured and/or recorded for the purpose of transcription. Access to the population was gained through direct contact via personal, professional, and ministry networks.[16]

Research Population

The research population includes CBTE institutions in North America that confer graduate-level degrees. For the purpose of this research study, CBTE institutions were defined as under a church's influence and on a church's property. A commitment to being a church-based institution was stated in documentation or demonstrated in educational philosophy. For example, Bethlehem College and Seminary described itself as an institution "grounded in the local church" and listed this description as a core value on its website.[17]

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[16]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 2993, Kindle.

[17]Bethlehem College and Seminary, "Core Values," accessed September 5, 2017, https://bcsmn.edu/about/core-values/. "As a church-based institution, all programs of Bethlehem College & Seminary are woven into the life and ministry of Bethlehem Baptist Church. From participation in corporate worship to active involvement in church small groups and ministries, our students will deepen and stretch their faith by treasuring Christ together with the congregation. In addition, our faculty members self-consciously bring the vision, values, and theology of Bethlehem Baptist Church to bear on all of our course readings, lectures, and discussions."

Sample

Since the definition of a CBTE institution, for the purpose of this research study, included only schools functioning under a church's influence and located on a church's property, the research sample was narrowed to qualifying institutions. The research study included all twenty-four qualifying institutions.

Purposive Sampling

Since the intention of this phenomenological research study was to gain access to all CBTE institutions, participants were selected in accordance with phenomenological research strategies. A purposive sampling was utilized to define the population.[18] The goal of purposive sampling was to select institutions that "will yield the most relevant and plentiful data."[19] Therefore, the population represented the qualifying institutions to assist in understanding the research purpose and answering the research questions. These institutions were purposefully selected for this reason.

While it was intended to gain access to as many institutions as possible, a minimum number of ten participating institutions were required by the dissertation committee to qualify as a phenomenological study. Twenty-four CBTE institutions qualifed, according to the stated criteria, as presented in Table 1.

Expert Panel

An expert panel consisted of individuals with significant knowledge of theological education in general and CBTE in particular. To determine candidates for the expert panel, an appeal to participate was made to individuals meeting at least two of the follow three selection criterion: (1) an academic expert in the field of theological education, (2) a practitioner with experience in theological education in the church, and

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[18]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Purposeful sampling is defined: "It means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study." Ibid., loc. 5546, Kindle.

[19]Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York: Guilford, 2010), 88.

(3) a published author within the theological education field.

Individuals serving on the expert panel adhered to conservative, evangelical Christian beliefs. The panel was asked to review the interview protocol and to offer suggested changes and additional questions, as well as identify institutions fitting the CBTE model. Data, compiled from the expert panel, was reviewed with data from the literature review, and synthesized to create a interview protocol to yield the clearest and most accurate interview data.

Table 1. CBTE institution population

CBTE Institution	*Established*	*Location*	*Associated Church*
Apex School of Theology	1995	Durham, NC	Apex First Baptist Church
Bethlehem College and Seminary	1998	Minneapolis, MN	Bethlehem Baptist Church
Birmingham Theological Seminary	1972	Birmingham, AL	Briarwood Presbyterian Church
Cascade School of Theology	2017	Snohomish, WA	Restoration Road Church
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	1956	North Plymouth, MN	Fourth Baptist Church
Chafer Theological Seminary	1992	Albuquerque, NM	Hoffmantown Church
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	2005	Owensboro, KY	Grace Reformed Baptist Church
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	1976	Allen Park, MI	Inter-City Baptist Church
Faith Bible Seminary	2007	Lafayette, IN	Faith Church
Geneva Reformed Seminary	1982	Greenville, SC	Faith Free Presbyterian Church
International Baptist College and Seminary	1981	Chandler, AZ	Tri-City Baptist Church
Knox Theological Seminary	1989	Fort Lauderdale, FL	Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Metro Atlanta Seminary	2009	Lawrenceville, GA	Perimeter Church Covenant Presbyterian Church

Table 1 continued

CBTE Institution	*Established*	*Location*	*Associated Church*
Rockbridge Seminary	2004	Springfield, MO	Second Baptist Church Saddleback Community Church
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	1995	Englewood, CO	Englewood Bible Church
Shepherds Theological Seminary	2002	Cary, NC	Colonial Baptist Church
Southern California Seminary	1997	El Cajon, CA	Shadow Mountain Community Church
The Antioch School	2006	Ames, IA	CityChurch of Ames, IA
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	2004	Vallejo, CA	Community Bible Church
The Expositor's Seminary	2005	Jupiter, FL	Grace Immanuel Bible Church
The Master's Seminary	1986	Los Angeles, CA	Grace Community Church
Tyndale Theological Seminary	1988	Hurst, TX	Tyndale Bible Church
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	1996	Virginia Beach, VA	Colonial Baptist Church
Whitefield Theological Seminary	1980	Lakeland, FL	Christ Presbyterian Church

Research Delimitations

This qualitative phenomenological research study necessitated delimitations to achieve its stated purpose. The following were the research delimitations:

1. This research was delimited to investigating theological education in evangelical institutions as defined theologically by the National Association of Evangelicals and historically by David Bebbington's key aspects of evangelicalism.[20]

[20]"NAE LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition" (National Association of Evangelicals, October 15, 2015), https://www.nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/. Stated on the NAE website, "Evangelicals are a common subject of research, but often the outcomes of that research vary due to differences in the methods used to identify evangelicals. In response to that challenge the NAE and LifeWay Research developed a tool to provide a consistent standard for identification of evangelical

2. This research was delimited to institutions offering graduate level degrees.

3. This research was delimited to theological education institutions in North America.

4. This research was delimited to the history of CBTE institutions between 1980 and 2017.

5. This research was delimited to theological education institutions associated with a single local church.

Instrumentation

This research study gathered data by means of document analysis and semi-structured interviews. Prior to initiating the research, the proposed interview protocol, data collection, and analysis methods was submitted to the ethics committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for approval.

Phase 1: Preparation

Preparation for this qualitative phenomenological research study included soliciting participation from qualifying CBTE institutions identified in the population. Depending on the institution's governance structure, interviewees included one (or more than one) of the following positions: president, chief academic officer, director of institutional effectiveness, or an equivalent position. The following preparatory steps were included before initiating the research study:

1. Gained permission from the SBTS ethics committee to conduct the research.

2. Selected CBTE institutions using purposive, criteria-based sampling.

3. Contacted selected CBTE administrators by letter, email, and telephone to gain permission to study their institution.

4. Established protocols for interviews and data analysis.[21]

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belief." David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1989), 2-19.

[21]Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008). Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research*. An expert panel reviewed and established the interview protocol. Three pilot tests were conducted using the interview protocol prior to conducting thirty-five research interviews.

5. Scheduled interviews with participating CBTE institutions.
6. Gained permission for and access to all necessary documents for review.
7. Obtained all interview permission forms prior to research including a dissertation study participation form.

Phase 2: Data Collection

Interviews were utilized to gather research data in as much as they record individual perspectives and achieved the general goal of qualitative inquiry to understand the interviewee's point of view, to interpret the meaning, and explain it apart from scientific explanations. In accordance with the exploratory nature of this research study, interview questions were semi-structured following Kvale and Brinkmann's design.[22]

Two instruments were used to gather data. First, a preliminary questionnaire suggested by Brian Edgar was completed by each interviewee prior to the interview.[23] The preliminary questionnaire was designed to determine the educational philosophy of each CBTE institution categorized as a classical, vocational, confession, missional, or other model of theological education. The questionnaire was comprised of four questions with five multiple choice answers corresponding to the four stated educational philosophy positions as well as a self-defined and open-ended answer. The questionnaire was distributed and recorded via a google form.

Second, an interview protocol was developed from the research questions, as well as from the literature review reflecting the calls to reform theological education and return it to the local church. The interview protocol was submitted to an expert panel for

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[22]Kvale and Brinkmann, *InterViews*. Kvale and Brinkmann describe a semi-structured life world interview as "a planned and flexible interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena." 327.

[23]The preliminary questionnaire was modified from Brian Edgar's article, "The Theology of Theological Education," and identified educational philosophy based on a classical, vocational, confessional, or missional model. Permission to change and use the preliminary questionnaire was granted by Brian Edgar on February 7, 2018. Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 208–17. A copy of the preliminary questionnaire can be found in appendix 6.

review and pilot tested twice before conducting research interviews.[24] Interview data was gathered following Kvale and Brinkmann's seven stages of an interview inquiry including thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting.[25] Interviews were captured visually and record audibly via Zoom video conferencing. Audio-only interviews were offered in circumstances in which video conference was not available, video conference was not preferable to the interviewee, or video conference caused distress to the interviewee's participation. All interviews were recorded for transcription.

Documents for each CBTE institution were reviewed prior to the interviews. Information was widely available in each institution's academic catalog, website, and social media. Additionally, the researcher requested access to any other documentation relevant to CBTE.

Data collection was coded for analysis in phase three of the research study. Observation data and document data was used to triangulate data obtained through the interviews.[26]

Phase 3: Data Analysis

The research data was reviewed using interpretational analysis. Interpretational analysis is "a systematic set of procedures to code and classify qualitative data to ensure that important constructs, themes, and patterns emerge."[27] Interviews were transcribed, then data was coded and organized for interpretational analysis. Coding "involves

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[24]Kvale and Brinkmann, *InterViews*. Kvale and Brinkmann define it as "an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena." 3.

[25]Ibid., 102, Box 6.2.

[26]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. "Triangulation: Researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence for validating the accuracy of their study." Ibid., loc. 5600, Kindle.

[27]M. D. Gall, Joyce P. Gall, and Walter R. Borg, *Applying Educational Research: How to Read, Do, and Use Research to Solve Problems of Practice*, 6th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2009), 315.

aggregating the text or visual data into smaller categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code."[28] Data coding and analysis was based on the frequency of values that arise in the interviews. Dedoose, an online application designed specifically for coding and reporting qualitative research, was used.[29]

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of this qualitative phenomenological research study were achieved by following Creswell's methodology for validity and reliability. Validity strategies include triangulating data, member checking, using rich, thick description, clarifying the researcher's bias, presenting negative or discrepant information, spending prolonged time in the field, peer debriefing, and an external audit. Reliability procedures include checking transcripts, consistent code definitions and meanings, and cross-checking codes.[30] Following Creswell's suggestions, this research study utilized the following strategies to ensure the validity and reliability of its findings:

1. Prior to the research study, research bias was clarified by disclosing the researcher's background and assumptions that impact the inquiry.[31]
2. Data was triangulated by using multiple and different resources, methods,

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[28]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, loc. 3530, Kindle.

[29]Information about Dedoose may be found at dedoose.com.

[30]Creswell, *Research Design*, 190-92. "Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects." Ibid., 190.

[31]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. "In this clarification, the researcher comments on past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study." Ibid., loc. 4662, Kindle. As stated in the Research Concern in chapter 1, principle to the research concern is the researcher's own relationship to CBTE. While pastoring a church in Virginia this researcher attended Virginia Beach Theological Seminary (VBTS) in Virginia Beach, Virginia receiving a M.Div. degree in 2007 after 96 hours of course work over five years of academic training (2002-2007). While a student, VBTS achieved academic accreditation. Currently, the researcher serves on the Board of Trustees of VBTS and desires to advocate the CBTE model.

investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence.[32]

3. The findings were member checked to ensure validity and reliability.[33]

Conclusion

A report of the qualitative phenomenological research findings are presented in chapter four with the goal of determining the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE. Chapter 4 provides a description of each church and seminary relationship that emerges from the data analysis. Individual reports were followed by a cross-case analysis describing the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards among CBTE institutions.

[32]Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, loc. 4637, Kindle. In particular, the researcher will compare the educational philosophy and academic standards as stated in the interviews with the school's institutional objectives, academic catalogue, and promotional material.

[33]Ibid., loc. 4687, Kindle.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings by explaining the research protocols and by presenting the research population by institution. It also answers the research questions related to educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in church-based theological education (CBTE).

Since the objective of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to explore the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE, the following central research questions drove the research inquiry:

1. What educational philosophy underpinned the church-based theological education model?
2. How did close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in church-based theological education?
3. What was the state and significance of academic standards in church-based theological education?

To answer the central research questions, an interview protocol was developed in consultation with an expert panel. Institutions were selected based on the institution's qualifications outlined in the study's delimitations, and interviewees were invited based on their current or historical position in the institution's administration. This chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of the strengths and weakness of the study's methodological design.

Compilation Protocol

A three-phase process was used to gather and analyze the data related to CBTE institutions. First, institutions were selected using purposive sampling. Second, relevant data were collected from each institution by means of a preliminary questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Third, the data were analyzed by content analysis using descriptors, codes, and weighting of excerpts and reported through interpretational analysis in this chapter.

Phase 1: Selection of Institutions

The first phase involved identifying the theological education institutions associated with a single local church. These institutions qualified for the study under the following delimitations: (1) theologically and historically evangelical institutions, (2) offering graduate-level degrees, (3) located in North America, (4) beginning or operating between 1980 and 2017, and (5) associated with a single local church. Jeff Reed's two-part definition of CBTE was used as a starting point.[34] Reed categorized CBTE institutions as either church-housed or church-based. For clarity, the CBTE institutions in this study functioned under a church's authority and on a church's property and could be viewed as either church-housed or church-based under Reed's distinctions.

Because the study included the entire population, limited sampling techniques were necessary to narrow the population or define a sample group. Purposive sampling selected institutions that would "yield the most relevant and plentiful data."[35] Initially, 20 CBTE institutions were targeted for participation. During the data gathering phase, 5 previously unknown institutions were added to the study and 1 institution was dropped because it ceased operations. The additional 5 institutions were identified and included

[34]Reed defined church-housed, "Bringing theological education, which is essentially based in an institutional or organizational model, inside the four walls of a church building," and he defined church-based, "Building a training strategy that grows out of the life of local churches and takes place in the context of laboring to establish local churches." Jeff Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education: Creating A New Paradigm" (presented at the North American Professors of Christian Education, Dallas: 1992), 8-9.

[35]Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York: Guilford, 2010), 88.

using snowball sampling. Twenty-four total institutions were selected and participated in the research study. These 24 institutions represented the total population of qualifying CBTE institutions.

Phase 2: Gathering of Data

The second compilation phase gathered data with the goal of understanding the shared experiences and common views about educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards among CBTE institutions. Data gathering included a preliminary questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and detailed document analysis of each institution's website, academic catalog, promotional publications, and social media including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Thirty-five total interviews were conducted with one interview in 13 institutions and two interviews in 11 institutions where a founding pastor, president, or administrator was accessible. Interviewees were selected based on current position in the institution's administration or historical position in the founding administration. This served the research well by studying the institutions structurally in their current and historical state. Twenty-one of the 24 CBTE institutions were founded since 1980.[36]

Position titles varied by institution because CBTE administrators frequently serve in dual faculty and administrative roles due to the small size of the institution. Interviewee positions included: president, executive vice president, vice president of academics, academic dean, chief academic officer, dean of faculty, provost, and pastor. Founding presidents, pastors, and administrators were interviewed when possible. When a founding president, pastor, or administrator was available, two interviews were conducted in a single institution to gain both present and past perspectives. Of the 24 institutions, 11 included an historical interview from a founding pastor, president, or

[36]Two institutions founded prior to 1980 are Central Baptist Theological Seminary, established in 1956 and Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, established in 1976. Both institutions were founded in connection with historic Fundamentalism. Birmingham Theological Seminary was founded as an independent Presbyterian seminary in 1972.

administrator.

Each interviewee completed a preliminary questionnaire prior to the interview expressing personal philosophical views concerning theological education. Educational philosophies were classified as classical, vocational, confessional, missional, or other.[37]

A review of the literature led to an initial set of questions based on the three central research questions regarding educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards. An expert panel was assembled to review the interview protocol, narrowing the questions and offering suggested changes. The expert panel consisted of seven scholars or practitioners in theological education.[38] Expert panelists, adhering to orthodox, evangelical Christian beliefs, reviewed the interview protocol and identified potential institutions fitting the CBTE model.

The interview protocol guided each initial interview following a semi-structured format.[39] When a second, historical interview was conducted, the interview protocol was modified to minimize redundancy and to capture the original sense of the institution's educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards.

The research interviews were conducted over a thirteen-week period beginning on March 2, 2018 and ending on May 30, 2018. A total of 35 interviews were conducted from 24 institutions following Kvale and Brinkmann's stages of interview inquiry. Each interview was conducted, transcribed, analyzed, verified, and reported.[40] Interviews were

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[37]The preliminary questionnaire was comprised of four questions with five multiple choice answers corresponding to the four stated educational philosophy positions as well as a self-defined and open-ended answer option. It was sent and submitted as a google form. It was adapted from Brian Edgar's article, "The Theology of Theological Education." Permission to modify and use the questionnaire was granted by Dr. Edgar on February 7, 2018. Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 208–17. See appendix 3.

[38]Appendix lists the expert panel members, including the criteria for their inclusion. A panelist was required to meet two or more of the following criterion: (1) an academic expert in the field of theological education, (2) a practitioner with experience in theological education in the church, and (3) a published author within theological education. A copy of the expert panel email request can be found in appendix 4.

[39]Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008), 327.

[40]Kvale and Brinkmann, *InterViews*, 102, Box 6.2.

conducted and recorded using Zoom video or audio conferencing. Interview questions were provided in advance of the interview allowing time for review to increase the quality of responses. Each interview lasted between 50 to 70 minutes including initial interaction to build rapport, affirmation of the participation agreement, completion of all three phases of the interview protocol, discussion of follow-up details, and prayer. Copies of the invitation to participate letter, interview protocol, email, and reminder email can be found in the appendices.

Subsequent to the interview, a written transcript was provided to each interviewee for member checking. A ten-day window allowed the interviewees to make changes, corrections, additions, or deletions. When changes were requested, an edited copy of the transcript was provided to the interviewee with each change indicated in red for emphasis. After the ten-day period, interview transcripts were considered complete and on the record suitable for reporting in this research study. Of the 35 total interviews, 21 transcripts were edited by member checking. Fourteen transcripts were accepted as complete as presented.

Phase 3: Analysis of Data

The preliminary questionnaire report and transcribed interviews were gathered for interpretational analysis.[41] As structured by Creswell in *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, the qualitative data was coded, winnowed, and interpreted.[42]

Binders were used to compile separately interview transcripts, academic catalogs, and miscellaneous document analysis findings. From the data, an institutional profile was reported for each institution including biographical information on the

[41]M. D. Gall, Joyce P. Gall, and Walter R. Borg, *Applying Educational Research: How to Read, Do, and Use Research to Solve Problems of Practice*, 6th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2009). Interpretational analysis is "a systematic set of procedures to code and classify qualitative data to ensure that important constructs, themes, and patterns emerge." Ibid., 315.

[42]John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), 184-87.

institution and interviewee(s), relationship to the associated church, and documentation of the CBTE model.

Research Population

The research population included all graduate-level CBTE institutions in the North America. These institutions operate under a church's influence and on a church's property. Each institution's commitment to the CBTE model was stated in the documentation, reported in an interview, or demonstrated by the educational philosophy.

As presented in chapter 3, a minimum number of 10 participating institutions with 2 interviews per institution was required to yield significant findings and qualify as a phenomenological research study. The entire population participated in the research study by completing the preliminary questionnaire, submitting documentation, and participating in a semi-structured interview(s). The total population, as represented in table 2, included 24 institutions and 35 interviews—11 of which were second, historical interviews with a founding pastor, president, or administrator.

Table 2. CBTE institutions and interviewees

CBTE Institution	*Established*	*Location*	*Interviewee*	*Associated Church*
Apex School of Theology	1995	Durham, NC	J. E. Perkins, Sr.	Apex First Baptist Church
Bethlehem College and Seminary	1998	Minneapolis, MN	Brian Tabb Tom Steller	Bethlehem Baptist Church
Birmingham Theological Seminary	1972	Birmingham, AL	Thaddeus J. James, Jr. Howard A. Eyrich	Briarwood Presbyterian Church
Cascade School of Theology	2017	Snohomish, WA	Andrew Pack	Restoration Road Church
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	1956	North Plymouth, MN	Brett Williams Jon Pratt	Fourth Baptist Church
Chafer Theological Seminary	1992	Albuquerque, NM	Andrew Woods	Hoffmantown Church

Table 2 continued

CBTE Institution	*Established*	*Location*	*Interviewee*	*Associated Church*
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	2005	Owensboro, KY	Sam Waldron	Grace Reformed Baptist Church
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	1976	Allen Park, MI	Benjamine G. Edwards David M. Doran	Inter-City Baptist Church
Faith Bible Seminary	2007	Lafayette, IN	Brent Aucoin	Faith Church
Geneva Reformed Seminary	1982	Greenville, SC	Mark Allison Alan Cairns	Faith Free Presbyterian Church
International Baptist College and Seminary	1981	Chandler, AZ	David Shumate	Tri-City Baptist Church
Knox Theological Seminary	1989	Fort Lauderdale, FL	Samuel Lamerson Scott Manor	Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Metro Atlanta Seminary	2009	Lawrenceville, GA	Dennis G. Bennett	Perimeter Church Covenant Presbyterian Church
Rockbridge Seminary	2004	Springfield, MO	Daryl R. Eldridge Mark Simpson	Second Baptist Church Saddleback Community Church
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	1995	Englewood, CO	Michael Thompson	Englewood Bible Church
Shepherds Theological Seminary	2002	Cary, NC	Larry Pettegrew Stephen Davey	Colonial Baptist Church
Southern California Seminary	1997	El Cajon, CA	Gino Pasquariello	Shadow Mountain Community Church
The Antioch School	2006	Ames, IA	Caleb Keller Randy Beckett	CityChurch of Ames, IA
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	2004	Vallejo, CA	Todd Tristan Bolton	Community Bible Church
The Expositor's Seminary	2005	Jupiter, FL	George Zemek Jerry Wragg	Grace Immanuel Bible Church
The Master's Seminary	1986	Los Angeles, CA	Irv Busenitz	Grace Community Church

Table 2 continued

CBTE Institution	*Established*	*Location*	*Interviewee*	*Associated Church*
Tyndale Theological Seminary	1988	Hurst, TX	Josh Bailey	Tyndale Bible Church
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	1996	Virginia Beach, VA	Eric Lehner Daniel Davey	Colonial Baptist Church
Whitefield Theological Seminary	1980	Lakeland, FL	Kenneth G. Talbot	Christ Presbyterian Church

Summary of Research Findings

The research findings are presented in two categories: individualized institutional findings and research inquiry findings. The individualized institutional findings are descriptive profiles listing the participants institution-by-institution for the benefit of identification as well as recognition of the group as a whole. The profile includes a description of the institution and interviewee, a description of the relationship to the associated church, and specific documentation of the institution as a CBTE model of theological education. The descriptive profiles were necessary to increase institutional recognition and awareness, even among similar CBTE institutions.

The research inquiry findings aggregated data from the entire population related to the three central research questions. Educational philosophy is reported as a classical, vocational, confessional, or missional model. Church proximity is reported reflecting the closeness of the relationship between church and institution. Academic standards are reported by degree programs, educational delivery method, and accreditation status.

Individualized Institutional Findings

The twenty-four CBTE institutions included in this research study were reported in individualized institutional findings. These findings are descriptive profiles

reporting the interviewee(s), a description of the relationship to the associated church, and specific documentation of the institution's use of the CBTE model. The profiles were also intended to increase institutional awareness.

Apex School of Theology. Located on a new, stand-alone facility in Durham, North Carolina, Apex School of Theology developed into a fully accredited theological educational institution in its first twenty-three years of operation. The school is non-denominational. Students come from at least eight denominational backgrounds. Methodists, Pentecostals, United Church of Christ, and Baptist are represented among the faculty and administration. Growth in student population is attributed to flexible educational delivery methods and filling a niche by making education more affordable than larger denominational schools.

ASOT began in the historically African-American Apex First Baptist Church. J. E. Perkins, Sr., interviewed for this research study, served as Senior Pastor of Apex First Baptist Church for forty-one years and founded ASOT within the church. Even though ASOT outgrew its physical presence on the church's campus, it continues to enjoy a strong relationship with the church. Perkins described the relationship: "They consider themselves to be a part of the school and the school considers them a part of us. That is our home because that is our history. We started in Apex First Baptist Church." ASOT's educational philosophy is steeped in local church application. Faculty shapes the curriculum around a Christian model of agape love, emphasizing a Christian spirit of love and academic excellence.

Although ASOT exists at a stand-alone location, it is a diverse school facilitating online and on-campus classes rooted firmly in the local church. For example, The Summit Church of Durham, NC hosts the ASOT graduation at its Briar Creek campus annually without charge. ASOT had fifteen approved teaching sites in local churches who desire to train leaders in the context of the local church. Each site was

required to have a director, who often was a pastor serving on staff at the church. Forty percent of degree programs can be taken on site, while the remaining 60 percent must be done online or on ASOT's main campus. In 2018 ASOT closed its Columbus, Georgia, teaching site because of significant problem with academic integrity.[43]

Bethlehem College and Seminary. Founded through the ministry of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Bethlehem College and Seminary as an apprenticeship program in the mid-1980s with pastors John Piper and Tom Steller. In 1998 the apprenticeship program developed into a two year, fifty-credit-hour program called the Bethlehem Institute. Institute courses were formally recognized by Bethel Seminary and other institutions. Credits were accepted and transferred into M.Div. degree programs. In 2009 BCS was established as a seminary, began offering M.Div. degrees, and initiated an accreditation process with Association of Biblical Higher Education. Brian Tabb, the Academic Dean at BCS, and Tom Steller, the founding Academic Dean, granted interviews for this research study.

Graduate programs at BCS are intentionally small. The M.Div. degree is a four-year residential program limited to a cohort of 15 to 18 students per year. Ninety percent of classes are taken within the same cohort with a few electives. Graduate students are required to become members of Bethlehem Baptist Church for the first two years of the program.

BCS is a leading example of the CBTE model. Steller advocated, "The advantage from the beginning that we saw in doing it in the local church context is that we could press home to our students that it is for the church. It is to teach the people of God and inspire them to the mission of Jesus. That really was the driving force." The BCS website answers the question, what better place to prepare for vocational eldership

[43]Apex School of Theology, "Front page," accessed September 17, 2018, https://apexsot.edu. It is uncertain if ASOT will use distance education sites in the future. For this reason ASOT distance education sites have been excluded from table 5.

than in the life of a local church? "Think of it as at-the-church training for pastoral ministry, missionary service, and future academic ministry and elder-level leadership."[44] BCS lists "grounded in the local church" as a core value, writing, "As a church-based institution, all programs of Bethlehem College and Seminary are woven into the life and ministry of Bethlehem Baptist Church."[45] Steller shared a story of God's protection early in BCS's history. The seminary pursued a lease to move classes a mile and a half away from the church. At the last moment, the deal fell through. Now that failure is viewed as a providential gift of God's grace and valued as preserving the needed close proximity between students and pastors. Steller commented, "The church building is where our students are rubbing shoulders all the time with church people during the week. . . . We just love the rubbing of shoulders and elbows. That has been an important part of proximity, I think."

Birmingham Theological Seminary. One of the earliest church-based institutions was Birmingham Theological Seminary, which began as the Birmingham Extension Seminary for Theological Education at Edgewood Presbyterian Church in Homewood, Alabama. In 1980, BTS was moved to the campus of Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama, a Presbyterian Church of America congregation. The seminary functions non-denominationally. Thaddeus J. James, Jr., the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Howard Eyrich, President Emeritus and Director of Doctoral Ministry Program, gave interviews for the research study.

BTS offers fall and spring semester classes in the morning or evening to accommodate students working full-time. Distance education is provided via recorded lectures and directed studies. The goal is to provide high-quality theological education at minimal cost. Professors are required to adhere to the Westminster, London, or

[44]Bethlehem College and Seminary, "Seminary," accessed July 26, 2018, https://bcsmn.edu/seminary/.

[45]Bethlehem College and Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2016-2017*, 7.

Heidelberg confessions of faith. While a majority are PCA affiliated, BTS focuses on teaching the reformed faith and accepts students from a wide range of denominational backgrounds. BTS is a founding member of the Association of Reformed Theological Schools (ARTS).

BTS is formally connected with Briarwood Presbyterian Church. The seminary offices and classrooms are located within the church building. BTS is governed by its own board of directors while being aligned under the board directed ministry of Briarwood and the session of Briarwood. The church gives financially to the seminary, budgets the president's salary, and includes seminary employees in its benefit group. Eyrich described the collegial spirit, "When you're an institution associated with the church it's different than with a denomination because you are considered on pastoral staff . . . I had pastoral responsibilities along with my academic responsibilities." With the exception of the president and vice president, all BTS teaching positions are filled by adjunct ministry leaders.

Cascade School of Theology. Starting as a replant, Cascade School of Theology began in 2017 to provide CBTE in the Northwest region of the United States. Resources from Cascade Bible College, a church-based school from the mid-1970s, were given to the Three Strand Church Network. The North American Baptist Northwest Association provided initial funding, and Sioux Falls Seminary oversaw the academics. Mr. Andrew Pack shared the future vision of CST during an interview for this research study. Pack serves as director of The Three Strands Church Network and lay elder at Restoration Road Church.

CST offers graduate-level theological education under the Kairos Project at Sioux Fall Seminary. This allows graduates to get an ATS accredited degree benefiting from a competency-based curriculum and a strongly mentor-directed program. Students at CST work through the program with three mentors: (1) a pastoral mentor overseeing

practical ministry experience, (2) a personal mentor responsible for soul care, and (3) a faculty mentor assuring academic progress.

CST espouses the church-based model as an institutional distinctive on its website. "We believe theological training belongs in the local church. Cascade is a collective of churches and organizations seeking to make evangelical education and biblical training available to as many men and women in our churches as possible."[46] When asked about the philosophy behind CST's commitment to being church-based, Pack cited Dietrich Bonhoeffer's work in Finkenwälde and John's Frame article, "Proposal for a New Seminary," both of which are cited in this study's literature review. To describe the relationship between church and seminary, Pack referred to it as an eclipse, saying, "With the church's involvement we are trying to create that eclipse intentionally as often as we can. We really need the church to support the student that is going to serve in the church." CST offices and primary cohort are hosted by Restoration Road Church.

Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Since its founding 1956, Central Baptist Theological Seminary has always existed on the campus of Fourth Baptist Church, even through the relocation of the church and seminary in 1998 from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to North Plymouth, Minnesota. It grew out of the Northern Baptist Association and currently has no formal denominational ties. Brett Williams, the seminary's provost, and Jon Pratt, the seminary's academic dean, gave interviews for this research study.

The complementary relationship between CBTS and Fourth Baptist Church is described as a formal and strategic relationship. The doctrinal statements are compatible, but not identical. Without contradicting, the seminary's doctrinal statement is more

[46]Cascade School of Theology, "Who We Are," accessed July 26, 2018, https://cstnw.org/whoweare/.

specific and detailed than the church's. Both institutions emphasize Baptist distinctives, dispensationalism, cessationism, and separatism. Historically, the senior pastor of Fourth Baptist Church has served as president of CBTS. Kevin Bauder and Sam Horn were the only exceptions to this while serving as seminary president consecutively from 2007 to 2013. The seminary returned to the pastor-president with Matt Morrell's installation as president in 2015.

The institution and church remain institutionally separated for legal and accreditation purposes. However, seminary trustees include church members and outside members. Four or five church administrative deacons are appointed to CBTS board of trustees. CBTS generally has a majority of non-church related trustees, although this is not required.

For sixty years, CBTS has been committed to a ninety-six hour M.Div. degree program. The local church is central to its theological training. Pratt commented, "We really believe that the local church is the place where those things are going to be best hammered out and learned." CBTS is committed to on-campus residential, modular, and synchronistic distance education.[47] A class called "Knowing and Loving God" has been added to the curriculum focusing on spiritual formation.

Chafer Theological Seminary. Chafer Theological Seminary was established in 1992. The seminary's namesake is Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founding president of Dallas Theological Seminary. Since many of CTS's administration, faculty, and supporters share history with DTS, the seminary aligns with a Chaferian understanding of systematic theology in a church-based model. Andy Woods serves as president of CTS while also pastoring Sugar Land Bible Church in Houston, Texas. He offered perspective on the institution's purpose.

[47]Synchronistic distance education provides a live classroom experience by means of digital technology. Students interact with the professor and class in real time.

Presently, CTS is located at Hoffmantown Church of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Residential courses are taught at Hoffmantown. An annual conference is hosted there. However, CTS's vision of church-based education is broader than a single location. The seminary's motto is "delivering theological education from anywhere to anywhere." The goal is to situate the student in the life of the local church under the authority of an overseeing pastor. At several points, Woods emphasized the danger of detaching theological education from the church by removing the student from church accountability.

CTS's emphasizes the primacy of the local church and the priority of the leading pastor. Woods described the pastor's role in educational philosophy, "Nothing is really going on outside of his immediate jurisdiction as the shepherd over the flock. He is aware, or has the tools to be aware, of what the person from his church is learning from our institution. Then he signs off on it. That is, kind of, our way of putting power back in the hands of the local church." Distance education is utilized as a means to keep students situated in their local church achieving CTS's local church emphasis. The seminary promotes a Church-Partnership Model on their website.[48] Students from supporting church partners can attend CTS tuition-free. The program encourages students to stay in their hometown and serve in their local church. CTS has not sought academic accreditation, choosing to rely on feedback from churches where CTS graduates serve.

Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary. In 2005 the institution was founded at Heritage Baptist Church as Midwest Center of Theological Studies. It was relocated in 2013 to Grace Reformed Baptist Church in Owensboro, Kentucky. The church is affiliated with the Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America (ARBCA). The institution's name changed to Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary the following year.

[48]Chafer Theological Seminary, "Church Partnership Model," accessed July 26, 2018, https://www.chafer.edu/churches.

Sam Waldron serves as academic dean and professor of systematic theology.

The seminary functions as a ministry of the Grace Reformed Baptist Church currently. It is seeking independent 501c-3 status, and it functions under the direction of an eleven member board, comprised only in part by leaders of the church. The seminary's second core value emphasizes its local church and distance education commitments. "Each local church ought to involve itself in the equipping of men for pastoral ministry. The local church is best positioned to recognize, develop, assess, and confirm the spiritual giftedness of men aspiring to that office."[49]

The educational philosophy and institutional value statement adhere strictly to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith.[50] Professors are required to be full subscriptionists; students are not. A distinction is made between subscription and submission to the institution's doctrinal statement. Waldron published *A Modern Exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confession* in 1989 and a revised edition in 1995.[51]

CBTS functions largely as a distance education institution. Only 10 to 15 percent of students are residential students. Distance education is done by correspondence courses that begin at any time. Residential semester-long courses are live streamed via Zoom for distance education students.

The seminary's mission statement cites a focus on rigorous academic training and extensive pastoral mentoring, forming the motto "informed scholarship with a pastoral heart." Mentors are not formally assigned, and pastoral mentoring guidelines are published on the seminary's website.[52] Two hundred hours of pastoral mentoring and practical experience are required. The mentoring guidelines include quarterly meetings

[49]Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, 4.

[50]"1689 Baptist Confession," *Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America*, accessed August 31, 2018, http://arbca.com/1689-confession.

[51]Sam E. Waldron, *A Modern Exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith*, 5th ed. (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2016).

[52]Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary, "Mentoring Guidelines and Resources," accessed July 26, 2018, https://cbtseminary.org/student-resources/pastoral-mentoring/.

for spiritual maturity and character, regular preaching, teaching, and evangelism, and other responsibilities such as planning services, counseling, weddings, funeral, ordinances, visitation, hospitality, and meetings.

Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary. As its first core value stated in its academic catalog, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary emphasizes serving the local church. "DBTS is a ministry of Inter-City Baptist Church. The church does not serve the seminary, but the seminary the church. This is appropriate because the church is at the center of God's activity in this dispensation. The seminary assists the church in fulfilling its mission of training faithful men who are able to teach others."[53] The seminary began in 1976 under the authority of the Inter-City Baptist Church in Allen Park, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit.

Two interviewees participated in this research study. Both serve in dual roles in the church and seminary. Ben Edwards is the discipleship pastor at Inter-City and the academic dean at DBTS. David Doran has led Inter-City as senior pastor and DBTS as president and professor of theology for three decades. The integrated nature of their roles demonstrates the integration of the church and seminary. In fact, all professors are church members at Inter-City Baptist, serving and teaching in the local church context.

DBTS is committed to the CBTE model of theological education. It is rooted in a fundamental Baptist identity and devoted to dispensational theology. The seminary was described as an extension, mission, or perpetual vision of the church. Although their doctrinal statements are not identical, it is a matter of form and timing, rather than substance. DBTS has bypassed accreditation, not for convictional reasons, but for pragmatic ones. Doran provided three reasons for remaining unaccredited: (1) avoiding the financial cost, (2) maintaining an integrated governing structure with the church leadership, and (3) concern for the future dependence and oversight of an external body.

[53]Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, "Core Values," 10.

DBTS strives to achieve a single purpose, as Doran, pointed out, "We exist as a ministerial training institution connected with a local church and serving like-minded churches." While students are not required to join Inter-City, they are required to attend sister churches, many of which are church plants led by DBTS graduates.

Faith Bible Seminary. The educational mission of Faith Bible Seminary comes from Faith Church's commitment to making disciples. The seminary began in 2008 as a ministry of Faith Church in Lafayette, Indiana.[54] Faith Church is an independent Baptist Church associated with the General Association of Regular Baptist Church (GARBC). FBS functions as a non-denominational institution. Dr. Brent Aucoin shared an interview for this research study. He serves in dual roles as the church's pastor of soul care ministries and as the seminary's president. Aucoin splits his time between these responsibilities. The church and seminary jointly provide for his full-time salary.

Under "About Faith Bible Seminary" in the academic catalog it reads, "The congregation of FC wanted to begin Faith Bible Seminary (FBS) in order to address some growing concerns with the current seminary model. There were three particular needs that the congregation desired to address: cost, time, and ministry experience."[55]

Financial concerns are addressed by offering free tuition while limiting the number of students to a small cohort. Seminary expenses are largely absorbed by the church. Student expenses are provided by the overseeing church. There is an annual fee to provide accountability to the students. Aucoin explained the rationale, "The model is to get practical ministry experience with traditional academic excellence and graduate debt free with three years of ministry experience upon graduation." FBS offers two degrees. The M.Div. is primarily made up of residential classes supplemented by modular and independent study classes. The M.A. in Biblical Counseling (MABC) is sixty percent

[54]Faith Bible Seminary, "About," accessed July 26, 2018, https://www.faithlafayette.org/seminary/about/history.

[55]Faith Bible Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017*, 1.

online and forty percent modular classes. Classes primarily meet on Thursdays.

The concern for time and ministry experience are satisfied by the pastoral internship requirement. Students can receive academic training from FBS if a local church provides the paid internship allowing the student full-time focus on academics and church ministry. Participating churches submit an application and doctrinal statement, and agree to a general set of guidelines for the program. Faith Church funds ten pastoral internships for seminary students. Each student is assigned a pastor at Faith Church for the duration of the program. The internship allows the local church to direct most of the education through practical ministry experience.

Geneva Reformed Seminary. Founded by the Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland, Geneva Reformed Seminary began offering pastoral training course in association with the Theological Hall in Belfast in 1982.[56] When the North American churches formed their own denomination, the Free Presbyterian Church in North America in 2005, the seminary became its own entity, and the name became Geneva Reformed Seminary. The denomination, churches, and seminary remain in close fellowship with the parent denomination in Northern Ireland. Mark Allison serves as the seminary's president. Alan Cairns served as the founding pastor and president until his retirement to Northern Ireland. Cairns continues to lecture at GRS.

GRS is located on the campus of Faith Free Presbyterian Church in Greenville, South Carolina. The church started the seminary, and the majority of its funding comes from denominational church tithes. The church and school share facilities as a family. The seminary building houses the church office. Elders meet in the library. The presbytery appoints a seminary committee, made up of elders and ministers to govern GRS. Faculty members are part-time and paid by their churches.

[56]The term "Theological Hall" was a traditional name for Presbyterian theological training schools in Great Britain and Ireland.

The seminary adheres to an amended form of the 1647 Westminster Confession with additions and deletions regarding pneumatology.[57] The denomination and seminary can be described as reformed, protestant, separatistic, and evangelistic. Being theologically faithful is their educational philosophy according to Cairns.

Central to GRS's theological education is a concern for the student's spiritual formation. Cairns emphasized during an interview the revivalist spirit needed in theological education, saying, "My emphasis is on doing God's work in God's way, which will always bind the gospel minister to praying and preaching in the power of the Spirit."

GRS students are included in the church's ministry, preaching and leading prayer meeting. A Twitter post from January 22, 2014 promoted student involvement, "Seminary students will conduct prayer meeting tonight at Faith Free Presbyterian Church," with a link to the church's website and Facebook page.[58] Students seeking ordination in the Faith Free Presbyterian denomination are required to participate in an intentional nine-month internship.

International Baptist College and Seminary. International Baptist College and Seminary is an independent fundamental Bible college and seminary in Chandler, Arizona. The college began in 1981; the seminary started in its present alignment in 2011. IBCS launched with a desire to embed mentoring as an essential component of theological education and to offer theological education in the Southwestern region of the United States. Interviewed for this research study was David Shumate who leads the seminary as the graduate academic officer.

IBCS functions specifically as a ministry of Tri-City Baptist Church. The seminary's mission statement builds on the church relationship, "The seminary advances

[57]An amended 1647 Westminster Confession of Faith used by the Free Presbyterian Church of America can be accessed at http://www.fpcna.org/fpcna_about_wcf.asp. See Geneva Reformed Seminary's subordinate statement under Doctrinal Statement at https://www.grsonline.org/main.php?pid=29.

[58]Geneva Reformed Seminary, Twitter Post, January 22, 2014 (4:56 p.m.), accessed July 26, 2018, https://twitter.com/grsonline/status/426126335472574464.

the mission of Tri-City Baptist Church and International Baptist College by engaging present and future Christian leaders in advanced theological preparation."[59] The seminary serves the church in a complementary role as Shumate expressed, "Since the Lord ordained the church, other institutions exist in a support role. I believe that the seminary functions in a support capacity." IBCS is prominently located on the front webpage of the church along with Tri-City Christian Academy. The web domain is tricityministries.org and includes the church, schools, and seminary.[60]

The seminary offers M.A., M.Div., and D.Min. degrees. The M.Div. degree is the cornerstone program. Shumate views theological education as the means of ministerial training. The seminary exercises greater flexibility in its educational delivery methods compared to the college. Class sequence and schedule are aligned as a joint program with Maranatha Baptist University in Watertown, Wisconsin. Only synchronistic distance education classes are currently offered.

Knox Theological Seminary. Knox Theological Seminary is "an independent evangelical seminary, within the Reformed tradition, and home to students from a broad range of denominational backgrounds," according to its website.[61] In 1989 Knox was founded by D. James Kennedy under the guidance of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The seminary is still located on the campus of Coral Ridge. The two institutions remain intertwined, but separated institutionally church in 2013. Four of the seminary's eleven board members are church elders. The church and seminary align theologically under the Westminster Confession. Scott Manor, the vice president of academic affairs, and Sam Lamerson, the seminary's president and the church's former children's minister, shared perspectives on CBTE in interviews.

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[59]International Baptist College and Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, 11.

[60]Tri-City Baptist Church, accessed July 26, 2018, https://tricityministries.org.

[61]Knox Theological Seminary, "About—Affiliation," accessed July 26, 2018, https://knoxseminary.edu/about/knox-history-and-affiliation/.

Similar to other CBTE institutions, Knox appeals to a regional constituency in South Florida including Broward, Palm Beach, and Miami-Dade counties. A majority of Knox students take online and modular classes. On-campus, semester-long classes are offered during the day and at night. Knox makes a conscientious effort to create parity between in-class and online classes. Members of Coral Ridge receive a fifty percent tuition discount. Affiliated churches can join the Church Partnership Plan by paying 50 percent of a student's tuition. Knox will drop 25 percent leaving the student twenty-five percent as the student's liability.[62]

In recent years, Knox has chosen a less academic and more praxis-based approach to education. This is reflected in faculty hires, according to Manor: "We actually chose to go with the more church-minded faculty member because that reflects the commitments of the school." Being church-based expresses the seminary's commitment to the church, making education cost-effective for the seminary and the students and enabling institutional flexibility to anticipate and facilitate future church needs. Manor summarized, "By virtue of that relationship between the church, the student, and the seminary, we are also able to learn what those needs of the church are in a more organic way," adding that this "outward facing seminary model" must be woven back into the church through its students.

Sam Lamerson personally embodies Knox's history and links the church and seminary together. Lamerson was Knox's first graduate. He served as children's pastor under Kennedy for fourteen years, served as interim pulpit supply at Coral Ridge for two and a half years after Kennedy's death and again for five months after the departure of a subsequent pastor. Expressed in both interviews was the difficulty and danger leadership

[62]"The Church Partnership Program (CPP) is a special endowment program utilized to partner with your home church and is offered in lieu of other financial aid or scholarships from the Seminary. Students approved to participate in CPP are eligible to receive a CPP tuition scholarship from the Seminary matching the church's gift up to 1/3 of tuition." Knox Theological Seminary, "Church Partnership Program Guidelines," accessed July 27, 2018, https://www.knoxseminary.edu/wp-content/uploads/Church_Partnership_2017-2018.pdf.

transition inherently brings to CBTE institutions and the churches that oversee them.

Metro Atlanta Seminary. Dennis G. Bennett provided information on Metro Atlanta Seminary, a church-based institution under the direction of the Atlanta presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America. Bennett serves as dean of academics. He previously served in theological education administration in South Africa, focusing on curriculum design. The seminary's mission is "to create and mentor students to become Christ-centered so that they will become leaders in the church, fulfilling the Great Commandment and Great Commission."[63]

Because MAS serves a presbytery, it has no central location. Classes are held at Perimeter Church and St. Paul's Presbyterian Church separated by fifty miles and representing north and south of Atlanta. Future plans include a Gainesville site east of the city. Randy Schlichting, President of MAS, is also pastor of shepherding at Perimeter Church.

Because of its commitment to a mentoring model of education, MAS does not offer online or distance education. Bennett said, "One thing we want to do, again being local, is keep everything in the local area." Library services are accessedline or via software. Students can gain access to theological libraries at Emory University, Reformed Theological Seminary, and Columbia Theological Seminary.

Responding to a question related to church proximity, Bennett advocated, "When you've got students coming in from outside they have no home church anymore. The home church is far away. They don't have the opportunities to put into practice what they're learning. This allows them to stay where they are, to be part of the church that they're already members in."

Distinctive to MAS is their emphasis on mentoring as the signature teaching philosophy. Classes are intentionally small and interactive and built around reading,

[63]Metro Atlanta Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, 4.

discussion, projects, and papers. Writing projects and papers take the form of Bible studies and sermons as opposed academic papers and journals.[64] Each student works with a mentor who shepherds them in areas of theology, languages, and practical ministry. The mentor's goal to shape the student's heart, helping them overcome issues that cause many to stumble in vocational ministry.

The degree program's curriculum design is structured in three spheres of learning: (1) the student learning in the classroom, (2) the student learning in the church and in the world, and (3) the student learning from a mentor. The B.Th. and M.Div. programs require flexibility. The in-class component includes thirty-six credits covering Bible, systematic and historical theology, and theology in practice. The practicum component includes thirty-six credits converted into 360 hours either in a pastoral track or a workplace track. The mentoring component includes twelve hours focused on coaching for spiritual growth, developing of a life plan, and evaluating of the student's readiness for ministry. The classroom, practicum, and mentoring combine to complete a degree a degree program.

Rockbridge Seminary. Rockbridge Seminary is an online institution with offices housed at Second Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri. It started in 2004. The seminary is missionally aligned with the Purpose Driven Church Network and Saddleback Church in Southern California, This is an informal but strategic affiliation. Graduation services are held at Saddleback Church's Lake Forest campus scheduled around the Purpose Driven Church Conference. The seminary's relationship to Saddleback Church and Second Baptist Church is informal and strategic. Neither church governs the seminary. However, both view Rockbridge as an extension of their own ministry, speaking into its mission and vision through dually connected board members,

[64]The shift away from academic writing in theological education is advocated by John Frame. John M. Frame, "What Seminaries Can Do Without," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 3:145–56.

advisory board members, and faculty. Over eighty-five current and former staff members of Saddleback Church have received theological training through Rockbridge Seminary.

Mark Simpson serves as the chief academic officer and director of the D.Min. program, and Daryl R. Eldridge leads as the president and co-founder. Both provided interviews related to educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards.

Rockbridge Seminary focuses on thirty-five ministry competencies that are uniquely tied to the Purpose Driven Church philosophy. Ministry competency categories include worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism. Students are taught and evaluated on seven competencies under each purpose. The thirty-five total competencies represent the top skills needed for effective ministry.[65] Course curriculum is designed around these competencies as a church-driven curriculum, competency-based curriculum, and a mentor-guided curriculum.

Rockbridge Seminary's church-based approach is combined with the versatility of online education. The website states the mission, "to emphasize local church ministry, making the design around church purposes rather than by categories of knowledge a more natural learning environment."[66] Committing to church-based training and online learning allows Rockbridge Seminary to train leaders for the local church while in the local church.

Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary. Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary offers undergraduate and graduate Bible degrees for vocational ministry. Their mission is "to equip students in the study of the Bible that will lead their generation into the future changing the way they think, live and serve, to change their

[65]Rockbridge Seminary, "Competency-Guided," accessed July 27, 2018, https://www.rockbridge.edu/learning-approach/competency-guided/.

[66]Rockbridge Seminary, "Ministry Focused Design," accessed July 27, 2018 , https://www.rockbridge.edu/learning-approach/ministry-focused/.

world for Jesus Christ."[67] RMBCS is located in Englewood, Colorado. It reconstituted under its current name in 1995 following the merger of Colorado Christian College and Tandem College. Michael Thompson serves as academic dean and professor of Old Testament. He was formerly the executive vice president at Chafer Theological Seminary.

RMBCS has been associated with Englewood Bible Church since 2004. As stated in the academic catalog, "Our curriculum is designed so that the student puts knowledge into action in the context of the local church."[68] Stephen R. Lewis expanded the seminary's programs to include a Th.M. program and an M.A. in Biblical Studies program. Earl D. Radmacher joined the school as chancellor in 2010, donating his entire library after his death.

The seminary occupies an entire floor of Englewood Bible Church's educational building. Although the relationship between the church and seminary was formed as a matter of function and convenience, the relationship grew closer after Lewis mentored the pastor of Englewood, eventually becoming a supported missionary of the church.

Shepherds Theological Seminary. Shepherds Theological Seminary began out of a desire to train local church leaders in exegetical theology, systematic and historical theology, and pastoral theology. The seminary's website describes the seminary as "birthed in the local church in 2002" and as "a seminary in the local church, for the local church."[69] STS provides residential classes on the church campus of Colonial Baptist Church in Cary, North Carolina as well as three teaching sites at churches in Laramie, Wyoming; Bryan, Texas; and Singapore. Larry Pettegrew, the provost and dean,

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[67]Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2016-2018*, 3.

[68]Ibid., 4.

[69]Shepherds Theological Seminary, "History," accessed July 27, 2018, https://shepherds.edu/?page_id=15259#History. Shepherds Theological Seminary, "About Shepherds," accessed July 27, 2018, https://shepherds.edu/?page_id=15259.

and Stephen Davey, the founding pastor of Colonial Baptist Church and founding president of STS, interviewed for this research study.

Colonial Baptist Church is an independent Baptist Church with a hybrid ecclesiology similar to a Bible church. STS is non-denominational but guided by the same theological commitments and ministry philosophy as Colonial Baptist Church. The church and seminary share a symbiotic relationship, according to Davey. This is in line with the academic catalog that marks the CBTE model as a distinctive. "Student education is enhanced by the intimate connection to a vibrant local church . . . allowing students to apply their studies in the laboratory of local church life and ministry."[70]

Both Pettegrew and Davey cited historical examples that informed the purpose of STS. Pettegrew referenced the Log College when pastors were trained in apprenticeships. Davey referenced Spurgeon's College as a warning for structuring STS with the foresight to outlive its first generation leaders. These historic model was outlined in the literature review of this research study in chapter 2 under the heading "Historical Calls for Returning Theological Education to the Church."

Primarily, it is the doctrine and hermeneutical perspective that unites Colonial and STS. Pettegrew commented, "It is essential for us to maintain our doctrinal statement in connection with our host church, which has that same doctrinal statement." Davey spoke of the mandate to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20) and educate leaders (2 Tim 2:2), saying, "With the ascending level of authority or responsibility comes, then, the responsibility to train them." These biblical mandates belong to the local church.

Pettegrew captured the culture of CBTE institutions in a single statement, "In seminaries like ours, there is sort of a 'churchliness' that pervades the seminary because of its close tie. Every day the students see pastors. They see the church in operation . . . .That is probably intangible, but it is really important." This is a pronounced feeling

[70]Shepherds Theological Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, 2.

among CBTE institutions.

Southern California Seminary. The history of Southern California Seminary was woven out of the merger of three institutions. Linda Vista Baptist Bible College and Seminary, Southern California Bible College, and San Diego College and Seminary consolidated in 1997 and were named Southern California Seminary in 2005. Both the website and purpose statement describe SCS as "a ministry of Shadow Mountain Community Church, under the leadership of David Jeremiah."[71] Gino Pasquariello interviewed for this research study. Pasquariello leads SCS as provost overseeing both the academic and administrative functions of the seminary.

Among its institutional distinctives, SCS focus on literal grammatical-historical hermeneutic, a theologically dispensational framework, and a church-centered approach to education. In describing the close proximity between Shadow Mountain Community Church and SCS, Pasquariello used the analogy of complementary marriage.

> There has to be an understanding and a trust that the church operates like a church and the seminary operates like a seminary, which has to be an institution of higher learning, and that it is the biblical mission that joins them. It is like a marriage; it is like a husband and a wife. What joins them is the vow, the wife and the husband are still separate individuals. One can go to work; one can stay home. In other words, they still are separate, but they are one. So they still have separate unique identity. One is the husband; one is the wife. One is the church; one is the seminary. So they are separate yet they are also one. They are married. They are one family. They are a unit. They are one, but they are two. That is how I see it working. And I think that therein lies the challenge.

Responding to additional questions about the CBTE model of theological education, Pasquariello said, "The present and future viability of seminaries require it. I think it is going to become less and less possible to be a stand-alone, completely stand-alone, form of higher education because it is a smaller pool of people who want to spend time, energy, and money to complete an M.Div. degree." Declining interest in the M.Div. degree apparently comes from the M.Div. being viewed as a less vocationally attractive

[71]Southern California Seminary, "About Southern California Seminary," accessed July 27, 2018, https://www.socalsem.edu/about/.

degree, the growing need for a stronger donor base, and culturally provocative response to an orthodox biblical perspective on social issues.

The Antioch School. Closely associated with BILD International is The Antioch School.[72] BILD International has been promoting CBTE globally for forty years. The Antioch School is best understood as an application of BILD's educational curriculum and philosophy in church-based training environments offering accredited degrees. Randy Beckett, serving as academic dean, and Caleb Keller, serving as program trainer and facilitator, gave interviews. Both leaders have personally been educated under BILD and The Antioch School's philosophy of theological education.

The City Church of Ames and Des Moines, Iowa serves as the flagship location for The Antioch School, although Antioch's reach is national and BILD's influence is international. City Church is a replanted congregation with roots in a Baptist tradition. It meets in multiple house churches. Eight years ago it restructured as a house church network led by an apostolic team refocused for local, national, and global impact.

The Antioch School uses a cohort model of CBTE. Certified leaders are trained to use the BILD curriculum and serve as a liaison between the host church and The Antioch School. Two strategic emphases were stressed by Keller and Beckett. First, the Socratic method of instruction. In keeping with a non-formal apprenticeship model, the Socratic teaching style replaces traditional lecture-based instruction. Drawing from Acts 20, the dialogical educational approach is valued particularly in systematic theology as convictions form through a developing biblical theology rather than a front-loaded systematic theology curriculum.

Second, Antioch uses a Paul-Timothy style training, applying 2 Timothy 2:2. Applied to students: "Like a Timothy, they are an apprentice coming alongside other

[72]BILD International describes itself as, "a training system and the leader of a global network of leaders working together to see the Church spontaneously expand by returning to the model of planting and establishing churches found in the New Testament." BILD International, "About BILD International," accessed August 31, 2018, https://www.bild.org.

leaders that actively engaged in it." Beckett distinguished Antioch's model from other churches that launch seminaries as ministries saying, "It is different than what we call a church housed theological education where the training may be in connection with a church but it is essentially bringing the systems and processes of a formal institution into the location of a church." This was also described as 'in-service' training rather than 'for-service' education. The whole educational process at Antioch is intended to develop knowledge, ministry skill, and character.

The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary. Pastor Steve Fernandez founded The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary in 2004 out of his pastoral ministry at Community Bible Church in Vallejo, California. The church and seminary are non-denominational but baptistic in practice, reformed in soteriology, and dispensational in eschatology. Todd Bolton, a TCBS graduate, current assistant dean, and professor of biblical languages, was interviewed for this research study.

TCBS elects not to be accredited, stating in their academic catalog, "The Cornerstone Seminary, like the local church, looks to the integrity of its God-given, biblically-qualified leaders and professors to ensure its faithfulness, fruitfulness and impact."[73] TCBS is also committed to residential theological education. By conviction, they do not offer distance education classes.

Community Bible Church both hosts and supports TCBS financially. The relationship between church and seminary is informal but strategic. Community Bible Church serves as a model for training men to replicate in churches after graduation. Their Affiliate Ministries is a listing of supporting churches often led by TCBS alumni or faculty.[74]

A unique focus of TCBS's theological education is its reliance on a pastors-as-

[73]The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2016-2017*, 5.

[74]The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary, "Affiliate Ministries," accessed July 27, 2018, http://www.tcbs.org/affiliate-ministries/.

professors model. These are pastors who train pastors. "When it comes to training, like produces like. Only pastors can fully train other pastors." This creates natural mentoring relationships. Bolton explained, "We believe in the value of a kind of mentorship, personal instruction from a pastor, and on-site instruction." Most adjunct professors are serving as pastors of Affiliate Ministries listed on the TCBS website. The pastor-as-professor approach allows the seminary to achieve its goal of producing expositors who shepherd. By education and observation, students learn to exposit the Scriptures academically and shepherd the church practically.

The Expositor's Seminary. A multisite model of CBTE is an apt description of The Expositor's Seminary. Beginning with a group of Master's Seminary graduates serving churches in Florida, TES started at Grace Immanuel Bible Church in Jupiter, Florida in 2005. TES has ten church-based campuses.[75] Jerry Wragg carefully described the integrated relationships. "We do not see The Expository Seminary as attached to the church or as on the campus of the church. We see it as a ministry of the church. The campuses are denominationally diverse including two Southern Baptist churches, one Independent Baptist Church, and seven Bible Churches." George Zemek, the academic dean, and Jerry Wragg, the pastor of Grace Immanuel and chairman of the TES Board of Directors, interviewed for this research study.

The educational philosophy at TES is built on scholarship, mentorship, apprenticeship, and fellowship. These four pillars sustain a residency modeled theological education patterned after a medical residency. The local church provides hands-on training. According to Zemek and Wragg, the congregational environment allows for the combination of two significant components often lacking in traditional seminaries: (1) a

[75]TES distance education sites include Faith Community Church (Atlanta, GA), Maranatha Bible Church (Grand Rapids, MI), Founders Baptist Church (Houston, TX), Grace Community Church (Huntsville, AL), Grace Community Church (Jacksonville, FL), Grace Immanuel Bible Church (Jupiter, FL), Mission Road Bible Church (Kansas City, KS), Timberlake Baptist Church (Lynchburg, VA), Twin City Bible Church (Winston-Salem, NC), and Grace Bible Church (Phoenix, AZ).

hands-on personal residency and mentorship in the life of the local church and (2) pastors in the classroom trained to handle formal, academic education. At Grace Immanuel, the original church-based location, theological education is thoroughly integrated, 2 Timothy 2:2 is an educational mandate that the congregation takes seriously, and students are assigned one-on-one mentors among the pastoral staff and elders.

TES is committed to a synchronistic educational delivery model to enhance real-time classroom experience via Zoom video conferencing. Personal relationships between students and mentors and among students is highly valued and encouraged. After graduation, TES remains in contact with graduates through its Shepherd's Fraternal, a monthly video conference for enrichment and accountability. The senior pastors of the TES's ten church-based sites gather as trustees for quarterly video conference meetings and annually during a major summit to discuss academics and institutional planning.

The Master's Seminary. Transporting dozens of seminary students from Grace Community Church to Talbot Theological Seminary in the 1970s prompted the establishment of a Talbot extension campus at Grace Community Church in 1977. Continued student growth led to the founding of The Master's Seminary in 1986 under the leadership of John MacArthur. It began with ninety-five students and four faculty members. Irv Busenitz provided an interview for this research study. Buzenitz served as the founding academic dean, and subsequently, vice president of academic administration at TMS. Throughout his tenure, Buzenitz served as an elder at Grace Community Church.

TMS operates under an independent board with representation from two Grace Community Church elders. TMS remains accountable to the church. Buzenitz explained, "It is written into our bylaws that they [Grace Community Church elders] can shut down the seminary at any time if the seminary fails to live up to its doctrinal statement."[76] Now,

[76]The WASC Senior College and University Commission imposed the sanction of probation on The Master's University and Seminary during its meeting on June 27-29, 2018 after an accreditation visit on March 27-29, 2018. Probation issues included board independence, personnel and management practices, operational integrity, and leadership. TMUS has two years to address the Commission's concerns. WASC Senior College and University Commission, "The Master's University and Seminary

TMS offers residential, semester-long classes as well as synchronistic distance education classes at seven teaching sites.[77] M.Div. degrees are earned at extension sites with credits divided into thirds: one-third online, one-third live, and one-third taught by a TMS graduate at the teaching site.

TMS and Grace Church exhibit a commitment to CBTE as stated on its website:

> Our conviction that men should be trained for ministry in the context of the local church is shown through our relationship with Grace Community Church and the churches who host our distance locations. This level of life-on-life discipleship is not replicable without the role of the local church.[78]

In a recent publication, *Entrusted and Entrusting*, distributed to TMS supporters, the seminary identified itself as a CBTE institution.

> For Paul and Timothy, and for countless others in church history, pastoral training took place in direct connection with the local church. That is why there has always been a vital and fruitful partnership between The Master's Seminary and Grace Community Church. Our students are able to see local church ministry in action, not just on Sundays, but each day they come to the church campus for seminary classes.[79]

This statement is supported historically by the examples of The Ephesian Church, The School of Antioch, John Calvin's Geneva Academy, and Spurgeon's Pastor's College. TMS further promotes, "We are proud to stand in the legacy of faithful men who trained pastors in direct connection with the local church."[80] As the brochure cites and this research study attests, only twenty-four institutions in North America function with the

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Action Letter," July 18, 2018, accessed August 30, 2018, https://www.wscuc.org/institutions/masters-university-and-seminary. Brennon Dixson, "Master's University on Probation," *Santa Clarita Valley Signal*, August 16, 2018, accessed August 31, 2018, https://signalscv.com/2018/08/masters-university-on-probation/.

[77]TMS distance education sites include including Immanuel Bible Church (Springfield, VA), Grace Church of the Valley (Kingsburg, CA), NorthCreek Church (Walnut Creek, CA), Countryside Bible Church (Dallas, TX), Faith Bible Church (Spokane, WA), Anchorage Grace Church (Anchorage, AK), and Grace Bible Church (Bozeman, MT).

[78]The Master's Seminary, "Distinctives," accessed July 27, 2018, https://www.tms.edu/about/distinctives/.

[79]Development Office Publication, "Entrusted & Entrusting" (The Master's Seminary, December 2017), 1.

[80]"Entrusted & Entrusting," 15.

CBTE model.

Tyndale Theological Seminary and Biblical Institute. Beginning as an extension center for Dallas Theological Seminary, Tyndale Theological Seminary and Biblical Institute is non-denominational, finding its roots in the Bible church movement. In 1988, Tyndale became an independent church-based institution. Its namesake is William Tyndale, the sixteenth-century reformer. Like Tyndale, the seminary exists to get the Bible in the hands of the common people. Josh Bailey provided an interview. As a graduate of TTS, he now serves as vice president of academics, overseeing adjunct faculty, course development, and teaching.

TTS's accountability rests in the local church. First, its relationship to Tyndale Bible Church is reflected in the seminary's mission statement. "The mission of Tyndale Theological Seminary and Biblical Institute, as an arm of Tyndale Bible Church, is to prepare godly believers for the ministry of exegetical and expository teaching of the Word of God for effective and spiritually mature leadership and service worldwide."[81] Bailey serves as an elder at Tyndale Bible Church in addition to his seminary responsibilities.

The church and seminary are intimately connected, sharing the same meeting space. The seminary has chosen not to pursue accreditation, which allows it to share governance with the church. The elders of Tyndale Bible Church serve as the seminary's board. The church and seminary budgets are also unified.

TTS has worked to develop academic standards without accreditation oversight by developing consistent syllabi, consulting with like-minded institutions, and remaining committed to their doctrinal statement. Faculty must affirm the seminary's doctrinal statement twice a year. Graduate students must adhere fully to the doctrinal statement upon graduation. Doctoral students must agree with the doctrinal statement upon entrance

[81]Tyndale Theological Seminary and Biblical Institute, *Academic Catalog 2018*, 4.

into the D.Min. program. Final evaluation belongs to the local church, according to Bailey, who said, "I think the ultimate accreditation is the local church."[82]

Ninety percent of TTS's students are distance education students. They participate in a cloud campus, are assigned an advising professor per course, and work in one-on-one relationships until the course is completed. Distance education is also promoted through learning centers with church-based locations in ten national and international locations.[83] Churches that partner with TTS financially can offer cloud campuses classes for minimal cost.

Virginia Beach Theological Seminary. Originating with a local church vision to start an educational institution matching the theological and philosophical perspective of the church, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary was launched by Colonial Baptist Church in 1996 with the motto "sharpening servants for global ministry."[84]

Originally named Central Baptist Theological Seminary, VBTS launched as an East campus of CBTS of Minneapolis, Minnesota. CBTS provided partial funding for three years and a full-time professor. The name was changed to VBTS in 2013 to identify with a regional constituency. Eric Lehner, the academic dean since 2008, and Daniel Davey, the founding president and former pastor of Colonial Baptist Church contributed interviews to the research study.

VBTS is committed to educating students in the biblical languages, dispensational theology, and the ability to communicate. Permeating the educational philosophy is a grace philosophy of ministry. Davey commented, "From that theology of

[82]Bailey also noted, "The connection between the local church and the seminary, especially in the unaccredited situation, is even more important because of the accountability that the local church can provide."

[83]TTS distance education sites include Cornerstone Bible Church (Lubbock, TX), New Hope Baptist Church (Parrish, FL), Heritage Bible Church (Remington, IN), Oak Tree Community Church (South Bend, IN), Jefferstown Bible Church (Louisville, KY), Bible Fellowship Church (Pass Christian, MS), Grace Baptist Church (Mason, OH), Valley Korean Bible Church (Northridge, CA), Grace Community Bible Church (Yaounde, Cameroon), and Peniel Bible Fellowship Church (Mwanza, Tanzania).

[84]Virginia Beach Theological Seminary, *Academic Catalog 2017-2018*, 1.

grace comes our purpose, our essentials, and our strategies." Lehner acknowledged similarly, "It's helpful to remember that not every element of preparing effective leaders in ministry is an academic element." Created from this reality is an emphasis on grace that undergirds both church and seminary. Education becomes academically, personally, and corporately driven as grace manifests in personal and institutional relationships. The church-seminary relationship was described as church-integrated, an organic function with the church taking the lead.

VBTS faculty members are required to be members of Colonial Baptist Church and participate in its teaching ministry. The church influences the seminary by shaping its educational philosophy, creating accountability with the seminary's immediate constituency, and validating the seminary's outcomes. VBTS effectiveness is measured by fulfilling its mission statement and the ministry of its graduates, according to Lehner and Davey respectively.

Whitefield Theological Seminary. Whitefield Theological Seminary, located in Lakeland, Florida, began as an early adopter of distance education in 1980, which was described as "almost a heresy" in Presbyterianism at the time. Kenneth G. Talbot has served as the founder and president of Whitefield since its beginning thirty-eight years ago. The seminary is named after the eighteenth-century revivalist, George Whitefield, and intends to fulfill Whitefield's vision of training men for the ministry with a vision for the reformation.

Whitefield is associated with Christ Presbyterian Church of Lakeland, Florida. The church meets at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Talbot serves as the presiding pastor in the church in addition to his leadership at the seminary. Four seminary students serve as deacons and are being groomed to lead Christ Presbyterian Church as elders. Whitefield is linked to the church's website. The church and seminary share the Westminster Confession of Faith as it was adopted in Scotland in 1647. Students who are

members and tithers to Christ Presbyterian receive free tuition for all degree programs at Whitefield, although it is not publicized as a means of incentivizing either the academic programs at Whitefield or the membership of Christ Presbyterian.

While the seminary uses a directed study education model and the church does not have a permanent location, Talbot affirmed, "Our goal is for you to be a part of a church. We want to work closely with that church . . . everything we do is church-oriented."[85] Talbot spoke more of the denomination's influence over the seminary as oversight, direction, and accountability. The distance learning delivery relies strongly on the mentorship program in which students report their church activity monthly and pastors report on the student's church involvement biannually. Nine benefits of this embedded approach are presented in the seminary's academic catalog.[86]

Research Inquiry Findings

Three central research questions guided the exploratory phenomenological study. Along with a set of sub-questions regarding academic standards, the central questions investigated the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic

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[85]Christ Presbyterian Church meets temporarily on the campus of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Christ Presbyterian Church, "Times and locations," accessed August 31, 2018, http://church.reformed.info/location-and-time/.

[86]Whitefield Theological Seminary's directed study program benefits the student, pastor, and church in the following ways: (1) It allows a student who is training for the ministry the opportunity to fulfill his academic studies at his own pace, without uprooting his family and disrupting his home. (2) It provides an opportunity for the local church to receive immediate benefit from the student's knowledge gained through his studies, as he instructs others and makes practical application of that knowledge in the local church. (3) It allows the church to keep the student local, so that he can help produce other disciples while training for the pastorate. Thus, a vacuum is avoided, and the core of the church is left intact as a source for future expansion. (4) It allows a student to receive continual 'hands on' practical experience in the Gospel ministry, under the direction of the pastor and church session/consistory or committee on oversight. (5) It gives a student an opportunity to cultivate a pastor's heart, as he prepares to shepherd the flock of God. (6) In some cases, where the local church supports the student financially in return for his assisting the pastor with daily ministerial duties, his duties may grow into a full-time position especially beneficial to the congregation, since the student already knows the needs of the church. (7) It provides many opportunities for the student to develop his speaking gifts via teaching and preaching in his church. (8) It enables the student to be properly evaluated as to his ministerial gifts by the session and congregation, especially in light of meeting their spiritual needs. (9) It offers the possibility of the church establishing a new mission work in the surrounding community through the efforts of the student-pastor. The list of benefits could go on! Throughout the history of the church, many pastors have been trained in the tradition of directed study, which emulates the system used by the Lord Jesus Christ in training His Apostles, who in turn trained others, one-to-one. Whitefield Theological Seminary, *Academic Catalog*, 8th ed. 6-7.

standards in CBTE institutions. An interview protocol was developed with the guidance of an expert panel reflecting the central research questions.

Analysis of the data resulted in 7 descriptors set for each interview.[87] Interview transcriptions were marked with twelve codes resulting in 1,118 coded excerpts from 35 interviews.[88]

Educational philosophy. Education philosophy in theological education was difficult to define because of the broad scope of perspectives on theology as a discipline and theological education as pedagogy. As presented in the literature review, David Kelsey offered two metaphors for theological education. Athens represented classical education and Berlin the reflective practitioner model.[89] Robert Banks offered a third approach of Jerusalem as a missional model.[90] Brian Edgar offered a fourth, confessional approach identified as Geneva.[91]

In this research study, educational philosophy among CBTE institutions was classified using a preliminary questionnaire completed by all thirty-five interviewees. The findings were not intended to represent quantitative results from the CBTE institutions. Instead, the responses simply reflect the perceptions of leading administrators in CBTE institutions about educational philosophy in theological education. The questions and corresponding responses were used by permission from Brian Edgar's article, "The

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[87]Descriptors for the data analysis included position as current administrator or founding pastor, president, or administrator, gender as male or female, year of establishment, occupation, church denomination, seminary denomination, and state location.

[88]Codes for the data analysis included academic standards, accreditation, CBTE comments, CBTE dangers, church funding, church proximity, doctrinal statement, educational philosophy, factual information, historical background, mentorship/discipleship, and participation agreement. Church funding, church proximity, and doctrinal statement were weighted with 1 as the lowest level and 3 or 5 depending on category as the highest level.

[89]David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011).

[90]Robert J. Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

[91]Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 212-14.

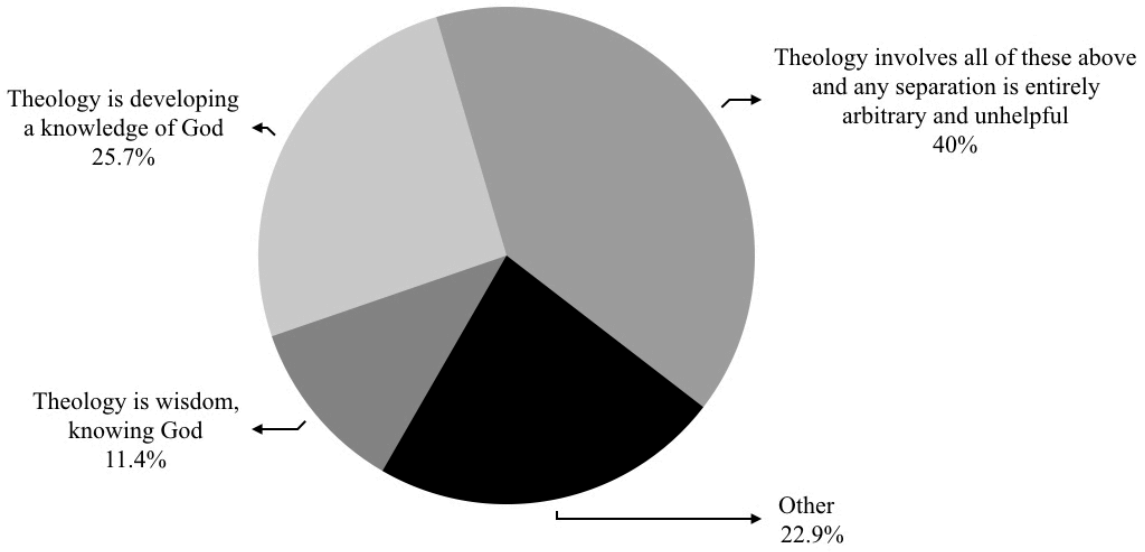
Theology of Theological Education" and represent the four views of educational philosophy used in this research study.[92]

The questionnaire offered 6 multiple choice answers to each question. The first 4 answers correspond to the 4 approaches to theological education. The fifth answer presented an "all of the above" or "none of the above" approach leaving the 4 educational philosophies equally important and indistinguishable. Answer 6 was a fill-in-the-blank answer identified as "other." Figures 1 to 5 represent the percentage responses including all "Other" respondent answers.

Question 1: Theology can be described in many ways. Which one of these statements would you place first in your prioritized list of what it involves?
Multiple choice answer key: 1. Theology is wisdom, knowing God 2. Theology is a tool, a way of thinking about the world 3. Theology is developing a knowledge of God 4. Theology is missiology 5. Theology involves all of these above and any separation is entirely arbitrary and unhelpful 6. Other

Figure 1. Preliminary questionnaire on educational philosophy question 1

[92]While educational philosophy is a broad topic with various pedagogical categories, it was narrowly defined for this research study as the classical, vocational, confessional, and missional models of theological educational philosophy presented by Edgar. Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 215-17.



Other responses:
Theology as the study of God encompasses all of the above in unity. Compartmentalizing theology then sets one above the other and then becomes a matter of preference and not the whole council of God.
A biblical theology is exegetically derived, systematicaly expressed, and personally applied, first to oneself and then to others via ministry.
All life must start with knowing God. It is only when we have this clear that we can begin to do all the rest.
Theology is the study of God's person, purpose, works and will as He has revealed them in His infallible Word.
Theology is a way of understanding and talking God and God's purposes.
Bringing God's revealed truth to bear on the issues of our time.
Theology is the study of God through His Word in order to grow in holiness.
Theology is the formal study of God, of his nature and being; of his manifestation in three Persons; of his attributes and character; of his relationship to every area of life, faith, and practice, and of ministry to mankind. Since you did not say "systematics", I will not address that aspect of theology.

Figure 1 continued

As part of participating in the research study, the thirty-five interviewees were required to complete a preliminary questionnaire on educational philosophy prior to the interview. In question 1, interviewees were asked to prioritize a list of four descriptions of theology. These descriptions of theology were written in educational and philosophical

terms in order to determine what made theological education theological.[93] The findings show that educational philosophy among CBTE institutions and administrators includes all four definitions of theology with a varying degree of emphasis. Even responses marked other included the classical (Athens), vocational (Berlin), confessional (Geneva), or missional (Jerusalem) descriptions of theology at least twice.[94]

Question 2:
Since theological education involves a number of dimensions,
which of these do you think best describes its goal for students?

Multiple choice answer key:
1. Personal, spiritual, moral growth and transformation of life and character
2. Vocational, ministry training to strengthen the church
3. Growth in the knowledge of God and the ability to think theologically
4. Enhancement of missiological knowledge and abilities
5. This is another false forced choice; it must be all of them
6. Other

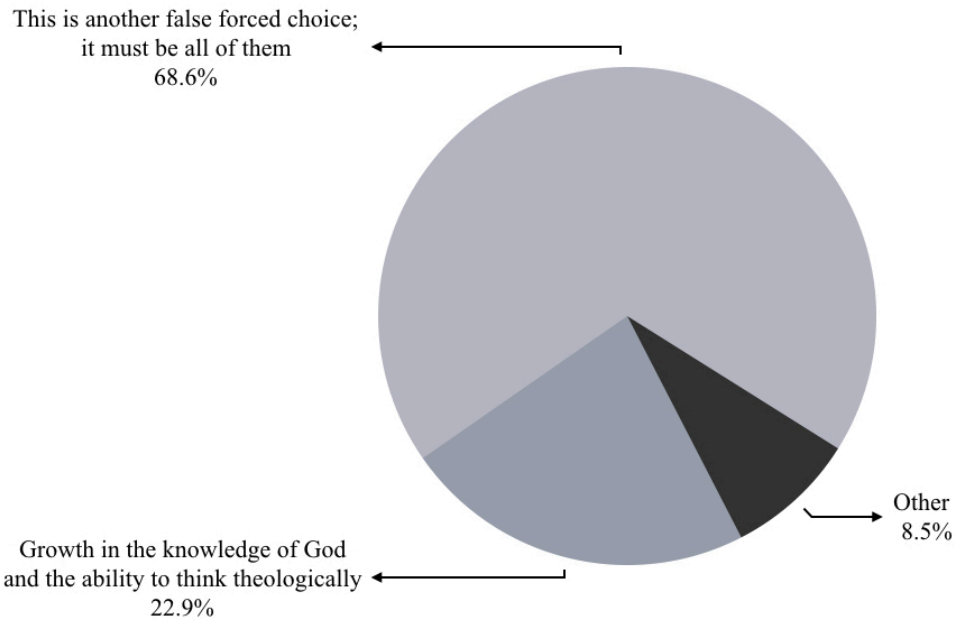


Figure 2. Preliminary questionnaire on educational philosophy question 2

[93]Edgar points out in his preceding article that the nature of theological education necessarily includes seven dimensions including theology, content, purpose, method, ethos, context, and the people involved. Ibid., 208–9.

[94]See figure 1 for answers to question 1 with percentage responses to the multiple choice answer key 1 through 6. All responses marked as answer 6 (other) are listed in figure 1 under other responses.

Other responses:
Again, we want our students to learn to begin everything with what they know about God. The church suffers most today because it does not have a clear understanding of God, the Trinity. Look how we start evangelism, we start with the belief we have to get people lost (Gen.3) when they have no idea what sin is. Evangelism must start with Gen.1 so people understand why sin is personal to God and is the reason we are lost.
Development in knowledge, character, and skill for any type of contribution to the church
Theological education focuses primarily on point 3 in order to accomplish point 1, though it would include points 2 and 4

Figure 2 continued

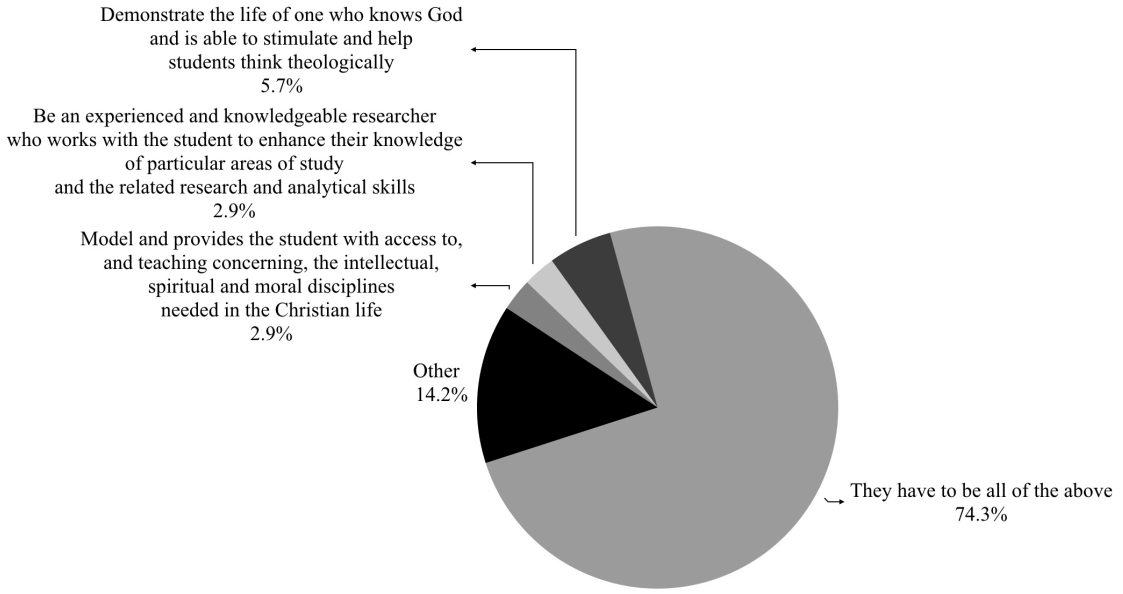
In question 2 of the preliminary questionnaire, interviewees were asked to identify the goal of theological education as delimited to the four broad categories used in this research study classifying educational philosophy. Among the respondents, 68.6 percent chose the inclusive answer that theological education must aim to achieve all four approaches to theological education: Classical (Athens), vocational (Berlin), confessional (Geneva), and missional (Jerusalem). Of the three 'other' responses, two were inclusive of all four approaches to educational philosophy in theological education. One respondent wrote, "Theological education focuses primarily on point 3 [confessional (Geneva)] in order to accomplish point 1 [classical (Athens)], though it would include points 2 [vocational (Berlin)] and 4 [missional (Jerusalem)]." This shows that among administrators of CBTE institutions all four educational philosophy categories are viewed as necessary aims for the task of theological education.[95]

[95]See figure 2 for answers to question 2 with percentage responses to the multiple choice answer key 1 through 6. All responses marked as answer 6 (other) are listed in figure 2 under other responses.

Question 3:
Which of the following statements best describes the role of the teacher in theological education?

Multiple choice answer key:

1. Model and provide the student with access to, and teaching concerning, the intellectual, spiritual and moral disciplines needed in the Christian life
2. Be an experienced and knowledgeable researcher who works with the student to enhance their knowledge of particular areas of study and the related research and analytical skills
3. Demonstrate the life of one who knows God and is able to stimulate and help students think theologically
4. Be an experienced practitioner who is able to share in and actively help students develop their gifts for ministry and mission
5. They have to be all of the above
6. Other



Other responses:

Be an experienced and knowledgeable researcher who works with the student to enhance their knowledge of particular areas of study and the related research and analytical skills.

If we are going to be the model, it must be as one demonstrating our knowledge and love for God fleshed out in the way we live.

Ideally, all of the above, but I fear few can meet such a standard. Thus I could not make it a rule that a teacher "has to be" all of the above.

Guide students into the ability to think theologically and behave accordingly.

I'd say that all but an experienced practitioner are important.

Figure 3. Preliminary questionnaire on educational philosophy question 3

Consistent with the findings in question 1 and 2, CBTE administrators chose an "all of the above" view of the role of professor. Of the respondents, 74.3 percent upheld the view that spiritual formation, vocational training, confessional faith, and missional advancement are educational responsibilities. In other words, the teacher must embody all four approaches to theological education in themselves personally and in the classroom pedagogically. These responses place the educational burden on the teacher to be a provider, professor, priest, and practitioner of the theological education, making it understandable why dual seminary-church positions are viewed as favorable in CBTE institutions.[96] Collectively in responses marked "other", comprehensive roles were espoused like "an experienced and knowledgeable researcher," "one demonstrating our knowledge and love for God fleshed out in the way we live," "guide students into the ability to think theologically and behave accordingly," and "an experienced practitioner." One "other" response addressed the overwhelming burden an all-inclusive approach placed on the instructor, "Ideally, all of the above, but I fear few can meet such a standard. Thus I could not make it a rule that a teacher 'has to be' all of the above." Leaders in CBTE institutions consider educational philosophy to be necessarily holistic in theological education.[97]

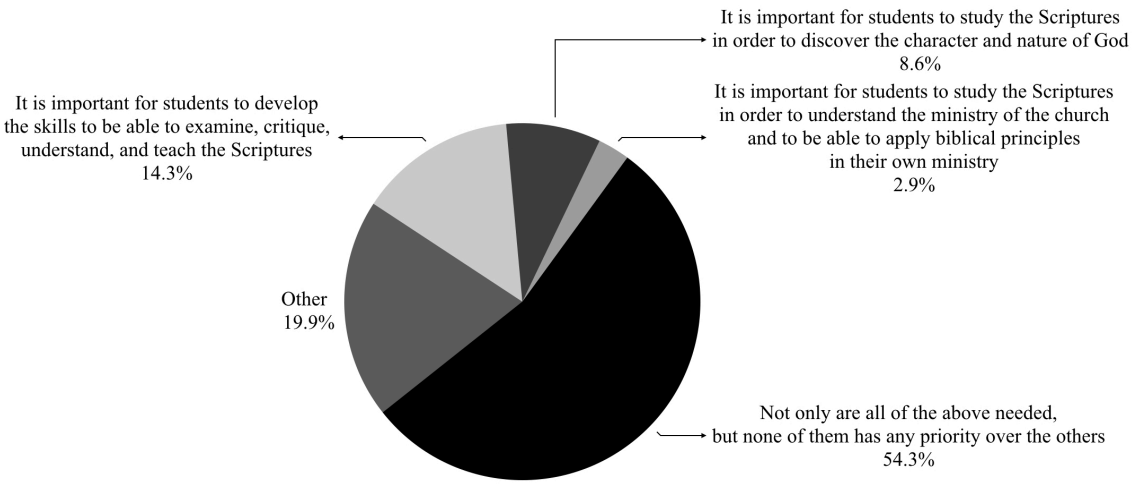
[96]Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 217.

[97]See figure 3 for answers to question 3 with percentage responses to the multiple choice answer key 1 through 6. All responses marked as answer 6 (other) are listed in figure 3 under other responses.

Question 4:
Which of the following statements would you rate as the most important result of theological education?

Multiple choice answer key:

1. It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to be personally transformed
2. It is important for students to develop the skills to be able to examine, critique, understand, and teach the Scriptures
3. It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to discover the character and nature of God
4. It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to understand the ministry of the church and to be able to apply biblical principles in their own ministry
5. Not only are all of the above needed, but none of them has any priority over the others
6. Other



Other responses:

I agree with the last statement with the exception that the personal transformation must happen first or there will be struggle with the others.

The first two options would be my answer to the most important results.

Really a combination of three and four, in my mind. Know God and know what He is doing between first and second comings of Christ.

Figure 4. Preliminary questionnaire on educational philosophy question 4

In my view, CBTE is significant because it involves an academic side, but also just as weighty is the ecclesiological side of things. Both are very personal! Truly Scriptures are transformational (2 Tim. 3:17), but they must be presented in the very way Paul wrote to Titus about "teach what accords with sound doctrine." So it is imperative (in my view) that theological studies take place within the framework of the local church. Each student must see the significance of elders selection, elders teaching, church members "becoming sound in the faith", and how such "training" enables the church "to say 'no' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age." Such teaching and training must be seen by the students if the local church is to properly perpetuate grace. We are seeking to build people of grace and thereby, grace churches. This concept needs both sound teaching (classroom excellence) and a visible paradigm. Just as a surgeon would not be allowed to operate on a patient in need without a history of being guided by a skillful mentor, so the effectiveness of our grace churches will not properly perpetuate unless the same idea is modeled. Academics alone cannot produce a skillful elder, nor will a local church produce a skillful elder without being taught - including theology, biblical languages, etc. In Paul's words, "He (the elder) must hold firm to the trustworthy word as has been taught." These go hand-in-hand.
All of the above are needed, but I consider that a genuine experience of the Holy Spirit using His Word to transform the student more and more into the image of Chrst must have priority. Without this any knowledge or skills gained are doomed to be barren exercises that are likely to cause harm to the student and especially to those to whom he may seek to minister.
The development of the next generation of competent leaders for God's church
I would agree with the 4th choice, except that in number 2 it sounds like one is critiquing the Scriptures.

Figure 4 continued

Consistent with the three prior questions in the preliminary questionnaire, respondents to question 4 opted for an "all of the above" answer. 54.3 percent selected "all of the above" as a multiple choice answer. The seven responses marked "other" included varying combinations of the classical, vocational, confessional, and missional approaches to educational philosophy. The findings show a resistance to narrowing educational philosophy when it comes to the task of theological education. While it extended beyond the scope of this research study, it may be that the holistic nature of theology (and theology's personal and ecclesiastical implications) expand theological education's desired results.[98]

[98]See figure 4 for answers to question 4 with percentage responses to the multiple choice answer key 1 through 6. All responses marked as answer 6 (other) are listed in figure 4 under other responses.

Because educational philosophy, in general, is an omnibus pedagogical category, it was narrowed to four specific theological education categories found in the literature review. Four metaphors represented the four categories for theological education including Athens, Berlin, Geneva, and Jerusalem respectively. Athens representing the classical model of theological education focused on developing virtues and transforming the individual through character formation. The student develops a disposition including the spirit, character, and mind. Education provides indirect assistance through intellectual and moral discipline while the educator serves as a model of the process.

Berlin represents the vocational model of theological education intended to strengthen the church by training its leaders to be practical thinkers and reflective practitioners. Education becomes a mentorship as the student assists the educator developing similar abilities while working alongside the professor in an apprenticeship.

Geneva represents the confessional model often associated with seminary education. A coherent believing community commits to knowing God objectively through learning and subjectively through union with God. Educators teach a system of traditions intended to be exemplified in the student's life. Theological education is an initiation into the tradition, beliefs, vocation, and ministry to be faithfully followed.

Jerusalem represents the missional model in which theological education is focused on global disciple-making as the central pedagogical task. Second Timothy 2:2 becomes the mission as students are discipled to make more disciples. Educators share truth and life with the students, and the classroom is often the place of practice.

Figure 5 shows the combined responses of CBTE institutions on educational philosophy. Overwhelmingly, CBTE administrators agreed that all four metaphors for theological education are equally important and necessary to educational philosophy.

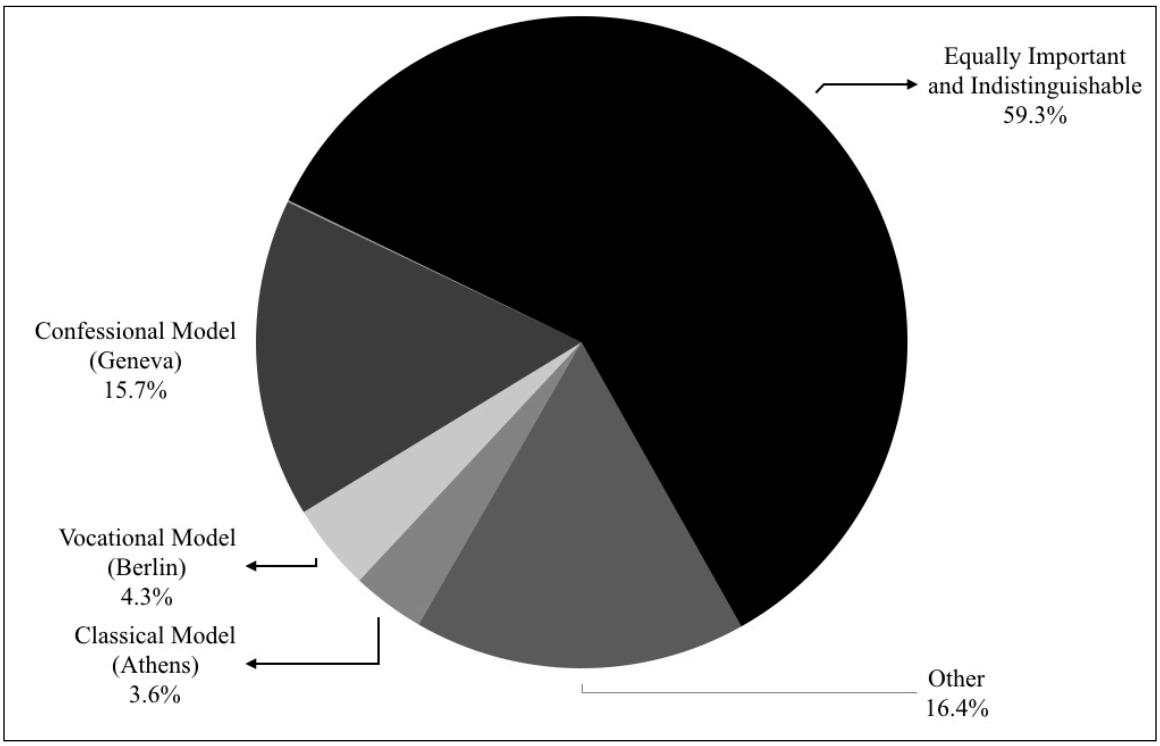


Figure 5. Educational philosophy in CBTE institutions

Church proximity. The relationship between the local church and the CBTE institution has been described as church proximity in this research study. As a constituent part of the study's research questions and a category of questions in the interview protocol, church proximity was defined as functioning under a church's influence and located on a church's property. This definition was consistent in the research population with slight accommodations to two institutions with unique circumstances.

The two exceptions to the church proximity definition were Whitefield Theological Seminary and Apex School of Theology. Whitefield owns its building but remains connected to Christ Presbyterian Church, which meets in borrowed space. Additionally, Presbyterian church polity recognizes a shared authority between the church session and the local church influencing the CBTE institution equally. ASOT outgrew its campus twice: originally the church campus of Apex First Baptist Church and secondly the Parkwood Shopping Center in Durham, NC. ASOT currently owns its own

facility yet maintains a strong historical tie to Apex First Baptist Church.[99] CBTE from 1980 to 2017 shows institutional drift away from the local church in both influence and location. This is further discussed in chapter 5 under threats to CBTE institutions.

The central research question related to church proximity was "how does close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in CBTE?" The answer was determined by interview questions focused on doctrinal statements, financial funding and support, and the institutional relationship.

Questions regarding doctrinal statements sought to determine the theological commitment of both the local church and the CBTE institution. As noted in table 2, the church was often denominationally identified while the associated CBTE institution was non-denominational. The content analysis logged ninety-seven interview excerpts coded "doctrinal statement." Each statement was attributed a whole number score of 1 to 3 with 1 representing the lowest possible score and 3 representing the highest possible score.[100] Factors determining the weight of each excerpt included comparison of the church's and the institution's doctrinal statement as to the exact replication or compatibility between them, the method of affirmation to the doctrinal statement required of faculty, the acknowledgment of the doctrinal statement by students, and the doctrinal statement's overall influence on the institution's academic pursuits. The overall rating among all CBTE institutions was a 2.26 out of 3 level of joint commitment and compatibility to a doctrinal statement.

Questions specific to church funding probed the church-institution relationship as measured by financial support. The widest margin of diversity among the three church proximity factors in CBTE institutions was represented here. Institutions in the research

[99]Apex School of Theology, "History," accessed July 23, 2018, https://apexsot.edu/about/.

[100]The coding criterion for the doctrinal statement factor in church proximity can be found in appendix 12.

study included those receiving no direct financial support from the host church and institutions with entire operational budgets incorporated into the church's unified budget. Fifty-one interview excerpts were coded as "church funding" with a weight scale between 1 and 5 with 1 representing the lowest level of support and 5 representing the highest level.[101] The wider possible scale related to church funding reflected the increased number of specific financial support mechanisms. Factors influencing the weight choice of each excerpt included the following forms of support: finances given as a specified part of the church's budget, designated church offerings, overlapping donor pools, unified health and retirement benefit groups, shared physical plant costs, shared technological costs, shared human resources such as pastoral staff who teach specific classes, and specifically funded positions as part of the church's financial commitment. The overall rating among all CBTE institutions was 3.44 out of a possible 5 point scale of the local church's financial support of the associated CBTE institution.

The institutional relationship between church and seminary was measured by a third set of questions related to the functional relationship between the two institutions.[102] The institutional relationship was rated with a 1 to 3 weight scale with 1 representing a minimal amount of closeness and 3 representing a maximum amount of closeness between the church and institution.[103] Constituent factors included governance structure, shared facilities, scheduling of events, the involvement of the congregation, and the nature of the church-institution relationship as described as formal, informal, convenient or strategic. One-hundred and fifty interview excerpts from 35 interviews were coded "institutional relationship." Among all CBTE institutions, institutional relationship scored

[101]The coding criterion for the church funding factor in church proximity can be found in appendix 12.

[102]The relationship between a local church and a CBTE institutions was described as a complementary relationship in chap. 1.

[103]The coding criterion for the institutional relationship factor in church proximity can be found in appendix 12.

a 2.39 out of 3.

The content analysis revealed a significant trend between two descriptors. This research study differentiated between CBTE institution administrators and founding CBTE institution presidents, pastors, or administrators.[104] On institutional relationship CBTE administrators collectively scored 2.28. Founding administrators scored 2.44. Both the doctrinal statement and church funding remained essentially identical with a .03 and .08 separation respectively. The content analysis showed that while the church and CBTE institution remain doctrinally and financially tied, they seemed to be viewed as distinct institutions and less connected after the first leadership transition.

Table 3. Church proximity by institution

CBTE Institution	*Doctrinal Statement*	*Church Funding*	*Institutional Relationship*	*Total Score*
Apex School of Theology	1.00	1.80 (3.00)	1.50	4.30
Bethlehem College and Seminary	2.75	2.40 (4.00)	2.52	7.67
Birmingham Theological Seminary	1.34	2.70 (4.50)	3.35	6.84
Cascade School of Theology	2.40	1.20 (2.00)	2.80	6.40
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	2.00	1.32 (2.20)	2.14	5.46
Chafer Theological Seminary	3.00	0.90 (1.50)	2.00	5.90
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	2.67	2.25 (3.75)	2.00	6.92
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	2.42	3.00 (5.00)	2.78	8.20
Faith Bible Seminary	2.50	2.60 (4.33)	3.00	8.10

[104]The distinction between current CBTE administrations and founding CBTE administrations was a significant point of validity for the timing of the research study. The CBTE movement spans 1980-2017, which as stated in chapter three, "Generally, I intended to complete a single interview per institution; however, in cases where access was higher, I gathered as much data as possible, especially if access to a founding president and/or pastor was possible." Among the thirty-five total interviews conducted for this research study, twenty-four were current administrators and 11 were founding administrators. This allowed for a description distinction in the content analysis leading to measurable trends.

Table 3 continued

CBTE Institution	*Doctrinal Statement*	*Church Funding*	*Institutional Relationship*	*Total Score*
Geneva Reformed Seminary	2.72	2.85 (4.75)	1.30	6.87
International Baptist College and Seminary	2.00	2.40 (4.00)	3.00	7.40
Knox Theological Seminary	1.43	1.20 (2.00)	1.84	4.47
Metro Atlanta Seminary	1.50	1.80 (3.00)	2.25	5.55
Rockbridge Seminary	1.50	1.80 (3.00)	1.71	5.01
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	1.00	1.20 (2.00)	1.00	3.20
Shepherds Theological Seminary	3.00	3.00 (5.00)	2.78	8.50
Southern California Seminary	3.00	2.10 (3.50)	2.50	7.60
The Antioch School	1.00	2.40 (4.00)	2.00	5.40
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	2.00	3.00 (5.00)	2.75	7.75
The Expositor's Seminary	2.42	2.55 (4.25)	3.00	7.97
The Master's Seminary	3.00	1.50 (2.50)	3.00	7.50
Tyndale Theological Seminary	2.86	2.40 (4.00)	3.00	8.26
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	3.00	3.00 (5.00)	2.84	8.84
Whitefield Theological Seminary	2.20	1.20 (2.00)	1.00	4.40

Note: Each coded statement included in the research findings related to doctrinal statement, church funding, and institutional relationship was weighted to determine the close proximity between the institution and the church. The doctrinal statement and institutional relationship were rated on a 1 to 3 point scale with 1 representing the furthest and 3 represented the closest proximity. Church funding was rated with a 1 to 5 point scale with 1 representing the furthest and 5 representing the closest proximity because an increased number of factors allowed for greater specificity in the proximity. In table 6 the 5 point scale under Church funding has been converted to a 3-point scale to yield a total score equally valuing the doctrinal statement, church funding, and institutional relationship. See appendix 12 for factors considered in determine the rating scale

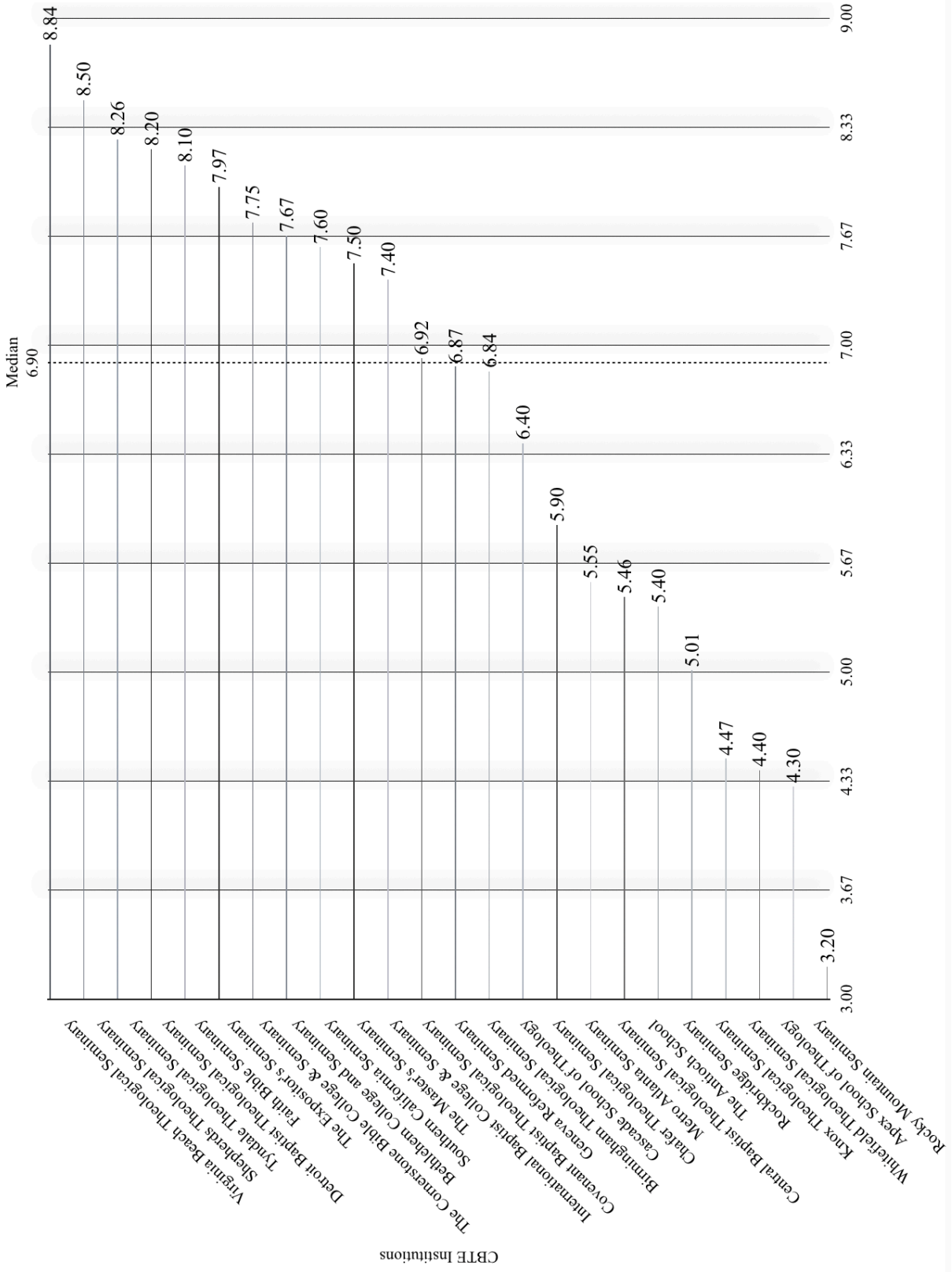


Figure 6. CBTE institution church proximity rankings

Academic standards. Since the delimitations of this research study addressed graduate-level programs, table 4 reflects only graduate-level degree programs offered by CBTE institutions. In several cases, CBTE institutions offer undergraduate theological education; however, undergraduate degrees were not taken into consideration or reported.

Degree programs in CBTE institutions were found to be consistent with traditional seminary degree programs. The M.Div. degree was the central program offered in CBTE institutions. Table 4 shows similar degree program offerings among CBTE institutions including M.A., M.Div., Th.M., and D.Min. degree programs. As noted in table 5, CBTE institutions are comparable in their academic accreditation to traditional seminary education in North America.

Table 4. CBTE degree programs by institution

CBTE Institution	*M.A.*	*M.Div.*	*Th.M.*	*D.Min.*	*Other*
Apex School of Theology	✓	✓		✓	M.C.E.
Bethlehem College and Seminary		✓	✓		
Birmingham Theological Seminary	✓	✓		✓	
Cascade School of Theology	✓	✓			
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Chafer Theological Seminary			✓		M.B.S.
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	✓				
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary		✓	✓		
Faith Bible Seminary	✓	✓			
Geneva Reformed Seminary		✓			M.R.E.
International Baptist College and Seminary	✓	✓		✓	M.C.E.
Knox Theological Seminary	✓	✓		✓	
Metro Atlanta Seminary		✓			
Rockbridge Seminary		✓		✓	M.Min.
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	✓	✓			
Shepherds Theological Seminary	✓	✓			M.T.S.

Table 4 continued

CBTE Institution	*M.A.*	*M.Div.*	*Th.M.*	*D.Min.*	*Other*
Southern California Seminary	✓	✓	✓	✓	
The Antioch School				✓	M.Min., M.Th.
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary		✓			
The Expositor's Seminary		✓			
The Master's Seminary		✓	✓	✓	Ph.D.
Tyndale Theological Seminary	✓	✓	✓	✓	M.M.S., Ph.D
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary		✓	✓	✓	M.B.S.
Whitefield Theological Seminary	✓	✓	✓	✓	M.Min.

Note: Degree programs included in table 3 include Master of Arts, Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry, and other degrees. Other degree programs include Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Biblical Studies, Master of Christian Education, Master of Messianic Studies, Master of Ministry, Master of Religious Education, Master of Theological Studies, and Master of Theology

CBTE institutions represented all levels of academic accreditation. Since 21 of the 24 CBTE institutions were founded after 1980, the accreditation process has been formative in the development of academic standards in each institution.[105] The Association of Theological Schools, the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, the Association of Biblical Higher Education, the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries, and the Distance Education Accrediting Commission have granted accreditation status to CBTE institutions.

The six CBTE institutions electing not to pursue academic accreditation at this time include Chafer Theological Seminary, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary, The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary, The Expositor's Seminary, and Tyndale Theological Seminary. Responding to interview questions, the rationale for opting out of accreditation included financial cost,

[105]The three CBTE institutions founded prior to 1980 were Birmingham Theological Seminary (Birmingham, Alabama), Central Baptist Theological Seminary (North Plymouth, MN), and Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary (Allen Park, MI).

philosophical conviction, suspicion of oversight or loss of institutional control, and the lack of measurable benefit to student population and academic credibility.

The majority view on academic accreditation among CBTE institutions was positive, as reflected in the fact that 18 of the 24 institutions have earned accreditation status. Responses indicated that accreditation was viewed as a helpful tool, a needed threshold of academic standards, and a necessary means for offering distance education, rigorous academic assessment, peer-reviewed accountability, credibility with prospective students, reciprocity among similar institutions, and aid to students seeking advanced education.

When asked about the potential of an institutional assessment by the local churches, the difficulty of this proposal was immediately raised. Some administrators acknowledged never considering the church's role in assessment. Others viewed assessment as solely an academic practice. Because of a lack of qualified academic personnel, the church was viewed ill-equipped to offer any assessment. Discussion of a consortium of CBTE institutions and a set of best practices commonly held among churches committed to the CBTE model opened the door for further research.

Table 5. Academic accreditation by institution

CBTE Institution	*Est.*	*None*	*ATS*	*TRACS*	*ABHE*	*ARTS*	*DEAC*	*Regional*
Apex School of Theology	1995			✓				
Bethlehem College and Seminary	1998				✓			
Birmingham Theological Seminary	1972					✓		
Cascade School of Theology	2017		✓[106]					

[106]Cascade Theological Seminary is not an accredited or degree granting institution at this time. Degree programs are granted and accredited by Sioux Falls Seminary under the Kairos program. Sioux Falls College, "Kairos Program," accessed July 24, 2018, https://sfseminary.edu/prospective-students/programs/kairos/.

Table 5 continued

CBTE Institution	*Est.*	*None*	*ATS*	*TRACS*	*ABHE*	*ARTS*	*DEAC*	*Regional*
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	1956		✓	✓				
Chafer Theological Seminary	1992	✓						
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	2005					✓		
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	1976	✓						
Faith Bible Seminary	2007				✓			
Geneva Reformed Seminary	1982					✓		
International Baptist College and Seminary	1981			✓				
Knox Theological Seminary	1989		✓					
Metro Atlanta Seminary	2009					✓		
Rockbridge Seminary	2004						✓	
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	1995	✓						
Shepherds Theological Seminary	2002		✓					
Southern California Seminary	1997			✓				
The Antioch School	2006						✓	
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	2004	✓						
The Expositor's Seminary	2005	✓						
The Master's Seminary	1986		✓					✓
Tyndale Theological Seminary	1988	✓						
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	1996			✓				
Whitefield Theological Seminary	1980					✓		
Total		6	5	5	2	5	2	1

Note: Accreditation associations in Table 4 include The Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS), The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), The Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (ARTS), Distance Education Accreditation Commission (DEAC), and Regional Accreditation[107]

[107]Additional information on the cited accreditation associations can be found online at the following locations: The Association of Theological Schools (https://www.ats.edu), Transnational

Views of online education were inconsistent among CBTE institutions. As presented in table 6 on teaching locations, 16 of the 24 institutions use distance education in some form. Several institutions were philosophically committed to in-classroom instruction as necessary to theological education. Others were firm in the opinion that in-classroom only instruction would not survive without supplementing or modifying the educational delivery method.

Among the 16 institutions using distance education programs, a wide variety of methods were offered including correspondence course, one-on-one independent or directed studies, online a-synchronistic classes, and online synchronistic classes. Rockbridge Seminary and Whitefield Theological Seminary are fully online models of CBTE. Other institutions offer only select programs for online education or a particular number of online hours attributable toward degree programs. CBTE institutions with teaching sites offer creative blends of educational delivery methods. For example, The Master's Seminary divides the M.Div. program into thirds at extension sites. One-third of hours are delivered online; one-third of hours are taught via a live synchronistic, two-way classroom; and one-third of hours are taught by pastors of the local church extension center who is also a TMS graduate.

Table 6. CBTE distance education and teaching sites

CBTE Institution	*Main Campus*	*Distance Education*	*Additional Teaching sites*
Apex School of Theology	Apex School of Theology (Durham, NC)	✓	
Bethlehem College and Seminary	Bethlehem Baptist Church (Minneapolis, MN)		
Birmingham Theological Seminary	Briarwood Presbyterian Church (Birmingham, AL)	✓	

Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (http://www.tracs.org), The Association of Biblical Higher Education (https://www.abhe.org), The Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (http://artseminaries.org), and Distance Education Accreditation Commission (https://www.deac.org).

Table 6 continued

CBTE Institution	*Main Campus*	*Distance Education*	*Additional Teaching sites*
Cascade School of Theology	Restoration Road Church (Snohomish, WA)		
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	Fourth Baptist Church (North Plymouth, MA)	✓	
Chafer Theological Seminary	Hoffmantown Church (Albuquerque, NM)	✓	
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	Grace Reformed Baptist Church (Owensboro, KY)	✓	
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	Inter-City Baptist Church (Allen Park, MI)		Lebanon Baptist Church (Roswell, GA)
Faith Bible Seminary	Faith Church (Lafayette, IN)	✓	
Geneva Reformed Seminary	Faith Free Presbyterian Church (Greenville, SC)	✓	
International Baptist College and Seminary	Tri-City Baptist Church (Chandler, AZ)	✓	
Knox Theological Seminary	Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	✓	
Metro Atlanta Seminary	Perimeter Church (Johns Creek, GA) St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (Atlanta, GA)		
Rockbridge Seminary	Second Baptist Church (Springfield, MO)	✓	
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	Englewood Bible Church (Englewood, CO)		
Shepherds Theological Seminary	Colonial Baptist Church (Cary, NC)		Laramie Valley Chapel (Laramie, WY) Emmanuel Baptist Church (Bryant, TX)
Southern California Seminary	Shadow Mountain Community Church (El Cajon, CA)		
The Antioch School	The City Church (Ames, Iowa)	✓	
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	Community Bible Church (Vallejo, CA)		

Table 6 continued

CBTE Institution	*Main Campus*	*Distance Education*	*Additional Teaching sites*
The Expositor's Seminary	Grace Immanuel Bible Church (Jupiter, FL)	✓	Faith Community Church (Atlanta, GA) Founders Baptist Church (Houston, TX) Grace Bible Church (Phoenix, AZ) Grace Community Church (Huntsville, AL) Grace Community Church (Jacksonville, FL) Maranatha Bible Church (Grand Rapids, MI) Mission Road Bible Church (Kansas City, KS) Timberlake Baptist Church (Lynchburg, VA) Twin City Bible Church (Winston-Salem, NC)
The Master's Seminary	Grace Community Church (Los Angeles, CA)	✓	Immanuel Bible Church (Springfield, VA) Grace Church of the Valley (Kingsburg, CA) NorthCreek Church (Walnut Creek, CA) Countryside Bible Church (Dallas, TX) Faith Bible Church (Spokane, WA) Anchorage Grace Church (Anchorage, AK) Grace Bible Church (Bozeman, MT)

Table 6 continued

CBTE Institution	*Main Campus*	*Distance Education*	*Additional Teaching sites*
Tyndale Theological Seminary	Tyndale Bible Church (Hurst, TX)	✓	Cornerstone Bible Church (Lubbock, TX) New Hope Baptist Church (Parrish, FL) Heritage Bible Church (Remington, IN) Oak Tree Community Church (South Bend, IN) Jefferstown Bible Church (Louisville, KY) Bible Fellowship Church (Pass Christian, MS) Grace Baptist Church (Mason, OH) Valley Korean Bible Church (Northridge, CA) Grace Community Bible Church (Yaounde, Cameroon) Peniel Bible Fellowship Church (Mwanza, Tanzania)
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	Colonial Baptist Church (Virginia Beach, VA)	✓	
Whitefield Theological Seminary	Whitefield Theological Seminary (Lakeland, FL)	✓	

Accreditation played a significant part in achieving and maintaining academic standards in CBTE institutions. When asked about future steps to strengthen academic standards, administrators responded freely with a host of initiatives related to curriculum design, faculty development, library services, and student mentorship.

Analysis of Research Methodology

Analysis of methodology in qualitative research must account for research bias. As disclosed in chapter 1, as a graduate and a trustee of a CBTE institution, the research reflects an acceptance of the CBTE model as a valid and credible form of theological education. As a result, this research study included a natural predisposition to

interpret results through personal familiarity and educational experience. To mitigate the acknowledged bias, detailed and careful reporting of the data was maintained through each research phase. Honesty was valued while conducting the research as well as analyzing the data results. A conscientious choice was made to report the research findings accurately.[108] The findings of the research methodology have been factually reported in this chapter.

Strengths of the Research Methodology

The initial strength of the research design was the exploratory investigation of CBTE institutions, a group of graduate-level theological education institutions functioning under a church's influence and on a church's property. Thirty-five interviews included all 24 CBTE institutions in the study. All interviewees held senior-level administrative responsibilities and leadership influence related to the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards within their institution.

Another strength of the research methodology was its focus on a forty-year history of the CBTE model from 1980 to 2017. This period was substantiated in the literature review as significant. Only 3 out of 24 CBTE institutions were founded prior to 1980. Also, the time of the research study allowed access to 11 founding pastors and/or administrators from the 24 CBTE institutions providing an originally sourced perspective on the institution's purpose and history.

The primary strength of the research methodology was the population's definition and access to the population. While an original threshold of 10 institutions was set as the minimum and necessary participation number, the results presented in this chapter reflect the views of all 24 CBTE institutions.

The willingness of participants to be named in the study was also a strength.

[108]All of the research instruments used in this research were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use.

Most CBTE institutions lack name recognition. Lack of awareness and name recognition reflected the regional, rather than national, appeal of these institutions. It also created a hindrance to student recruitment and fundraising. During the course of 35 interviews, each interviewee was asked to identify other CBTE institutions suitable for this research study. The highest number of named CBTE institutions was six revealing that the majority of the CBTE institutions are unknown, even to similar CBTE institution administrators. The ability to name the institutions in this study, rather than reporting data anonymously, was critical to defining CBTE as a movement from 1980-2017.

The theological and denominational diversity of participating institutions in the research population strengthened the research findings. Rather than being limited to a single denomination of seminaries, this research study included representation from Southern Baptist, Presbyterian, Fundamental Baptist, Bible Church, and non-denominational churches.

Weaknesses of the Research Methodology

A primary weakness of the research methodology was the broad scope of the study. The expansive nature of the three main categories (educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards) made it necessary to speak in general terms. This weakness was the result of limited time and space allotted in a single research study. There remains a need for quantitative research in this area of study. A number of suggested areas of further research are proposed in chapter 5 to contribute to the literature base on the CBTE model.

Educational philosophy proved difficult to yield meaningful results. While this was less a reflection on the research methodology of this study, it confirmed David Kelsey's original proposition that theological education in North American is conflicted in its overall perspective on education.[109] The open-ended, semi-structured interviews

[109]Kelsey reflects the findings of this research study when contrasting two of the four aspects

associated with a phenomenology study allowed for broad-spectrum answers revealing the "all of the above" approach in most theological educational philosophy.

Another limiting factor to the research methodology was the focus on the CBTE institutions. During the data gathering phase, it would have been desirable to interview a church leader for comparative analysis.[110] While interviewees often shared roles between the church and institution, objectivity was difficult to achieve on both accounts. Further research should be conducted in a 360-degree approach giving equal weight to leaders in the church as to leaders in the CBTE institution. Graduates could also be studied in a similar fashion, which was beyond the scope of this research study.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 presented in detail the research methodology for the study of CBTE institutions from 1980-2017. Chapter 4 summarized the data gathered according to the methodology of chapter 3, presented the detailed findings of this research study, and concluded with an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology.

The overall research purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE institutions. In conducting the research, all possible CBTE institutions identified using purposive sampling participated in at least a single, hour-long semi-structured interview. A second interview was conducted in 11 institutions in which a founding pastor, president, or administrator was accessible. In total, the methodology yielded 35 interviews from which 455 transcribed pages of content was analyzed providing 1,118 coded excerpts on the topic of CBTE in general and educational philosophy, church

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of education philosophy, "I suggest that for historical reasons Christian theological education in North America is inescapably committed to two contrasting and finally irreconcilable types or models of what education at its best out to be." David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 5.

[110]A comparative analysis study has been suggested in chap. 5 under "Areas for Further Research" to evaluate church proximity by gathering equal data from the church's leadership and the institution's leadership.

proximity, and academic standards in particular. In chapter 5 conclusions are presented based upon the reported data.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The research concern for this study was presented in chapter 1, namely the need to investigate educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in theological education at their root, the local church. It was, therefore, the study's intention to report the current state of the CBTE movement and the development of CBTE institutions from 1980 to 2017. The phenomenological methodology resulted in a theologically, philosophically, educationally, and historically informed understanding of church-based theological education institutions in North America. Chapter 2 provided a literature review including a definition of theological education, calls to reform theological education and return it to the church, and a history of the CBTE movement. Chapter 3 explained the phenomenological methodology, and chapter 4 reported and analyzed the research findings. This chapter concludes the study by answering the research questions, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the research findings, drawing implications for the future of CBTE institutions, considering the study's contribution to the precedent literature, and proposing areas for further research.

Analysis of Research Questions

A literature review revealed a longstanding debate over the definition of theological education and a groundswell of calls for the reform of theological education. Furthermore, previous research studies regarding the overall decline in enrollment of traditional seminaries along with the devaluing of the M.Div. degree and the diminishing

sense of ministry preparedness among M.Div. graduates led to a movement of institutions associated with a single local church.[111] This research study intended to codify the CBTE movement by identifying the population of institutions that comprise the CBTE movement and report their convictions and practices on educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards both individually and collectively.

Assumed from the beginning was a conviction that the church and seminary are necessarily united in a complementary relationship in which the institution is submissive to and vital for the church. In order to accomplish this goal, three central research questions guided the inquiry:

1. What educational philosophy underpinned the church-based theological education model?
2. How did close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in church-based theological education?
3. What was the state and significance of academic standards in church-based theological education?

This research study followed a phenomenological research design methodology exploring views on educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE institutions as described by CBTE administrators. An expert panel was assembled to review an interview protocol based on the three central research questions. The interview protocol, provided in appendix 5, shows the categories of questions related to each research question. Interviews were semi-structured following the phenomenological research design and allowed for follow-up questions in keeping with the proposed questions found in the interview protocol. The results from 35 total

[111]Barbara G. Wheeler, "Is There a Problem? Theological Students and Religious Leadership for the Future," *Auburn Studies* 8 (July 2001): 1–29. Barbara G. Wheeler and Anthony T. Ruger, "Sobering Figures Point to Overall Enrollment Decline: New Research from the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education," *InTrust Magazine*, 2013. Colin Hansen and Jeff Robinson, eds., *15 Things Seminary Couldn't Teach Me* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018). Colin Hansen and Jeff Robinson, *What Seminary Can't Teach a Pastor*, April 17, 2018, accessed August 7, 2018, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/tgc-podcast/seminary-cant-teach-pastor/.

interviews among 24 CBTE institutions were reported in chapter 4 along with institution-by-institution profiles. The remainder of the chapter analyzes the results and implications for CBTE from the data, drawing from repetitive themes and from specific statements shared during the interviews. Implications are reported as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE gathered from the research data.

Research Question 1: Educational Philosophy in the CBTE Model

This research study proposed to answer the question, "what educational philosophy underpins the church-based theological education model?" Since educational philosophy is a broad pedagogical category, it was narrowed for the purposes of this study to include the four classifications offered in Brian Edgar's article, "The Theology of Theological Education."[112]

The four categories were classical education, vocational education, confessional education, and missional education. Each category took into account the theology, content, purpose, method, ethos, context, and personal dimensions of educational philosophy. The classical, vocational, confessional, and missional views correspond to educational philosophy views presented by David Kelsey and Robert Banks in the literature review with an additional model offered by Brian Edgar.[113] The four categories are presented in table 7 associated with its geographical metaphor and learning outcome.

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[112]Brian Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (July 2005): 208–217.

[113]David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011). Robert J. Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 208–217.

Table 7. Taxonomy of educational philosophy in theological education

Educational Philosophy	*Geographical Metaphor*	*Learning Outcome*
Classical	Athens	Spiritual formation
Vocational	Berlin	Ministry training
Confessional	Geneva	Faith through Creeds and Confessions
Missional	Jerusalem	World conversion

As the research findings in chapter 4 attested, the preliminary questionnaire showed an "all of the above" approach to educational philosophy among CBTE administrators. No prevailing view among the classical, vocational, confessional, and missional models took precedence or emerged as a consensus choice among CBTE institutions. However, the questionnaire did produce meaningful results toward answering the research question on at least three points.

First, the "all of the above" approach supported David Kelsey's view that theological education is historically bound to multiple approaches to theological education. Kelsey wrote, "I suggest that for historical reasons Christian theological education in North America is inescapably committed to two contrasting and finally irreconcilable types or models of what education at its best ought to be."[114] In *Between Athens and Berlin* theological education was deemed committed to the classical and vocational models. In this research study, the contrasting views of educational philosophy were expanded to include the perspectives of Robert Banks and Brian Edgar. The results validate Kelsey's point with the same inclusive commitment.

Second, the "all of the above" approach to educational philosophy in CBTE institutions created a desire for holistic instructors. CBTE institutions view instructors as educators in the classroom as well as practitioners in the church. However, the comprehensive role may become an educational burden on instructors to be a provider,

[114]Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*, 5.

professor, priest, and practitioner of the theological education.[115] CBTE institutions must ask themselves, is this too broad an expectation for instructors? Instructors will likely struggle to impact students' spiritual formation, train them for practical ministry, deepening their commitment to confessional faith, and demonstrate these commitments in the community context beyond the classroom, each of which correspond to an outcome among the views of educational philosophy.

Third, the "all of the above" approach to educational philosophy emphasizes the distinction between theology as a research discipline in the academy and theology as a practical discipline in the church. While this is an inherent distinction between the classical and vocational models, the distinction between research in the academy and ministry in the church is a historical division—a gap which will widen with the growth of CBTE institutions.

Interview questions related to educational philosophy confirmed the inclusive findings in the preliminary questionnaire. The following quotes correspond to the classical, vocational, confessional, and missional models respectively in an "all of the above" approach to educational philosophy: Classical and vocational ("I don't think theological education is complete if the character of the person has not thoroughly developed and if their ministry skills have not been thoroughly developed."), confessional ("We require a man to come under what we call the care of the presbytery. He is under the presbytery as to his education and everything that gets him to ordination.") and missional ("It's actually to equip students to become leaders in the outside world . . . so that they can think, live, serve the church and the community.").

[115]Edgar, "The Theology of Theological Education," 217.

Research Question 2: Close Proximity's Influence on Educational Philosophy and Academic Standards

This research study proposed to answer the question, "how does close proximity to a church's ministry and location influence the educational philosophy and academic standards in church-based theological education?" Church proximity was defined in this research study as located on a church's property and functioning under a church's influence. Administrators called the relationship between church and institution a "symbiotic relationship," "congenial relationship," and "a family relationship."

Church proximity's influence on educational philosophy and academic standards was determined by interview responses related to three categories: doctrinal statement, church funding, and institutional relationship. Each statement was weighted regarding its strength or weakness in each category. While most CBTE institutions held a doctrinal statement either identical or compatible with the church, the doctrinal statement's influence in the educational philosophy and academic standards was more difficult to determine. Many CBTE institutions considered themselves non-denominational, even though the overseeing church held historic denominational ties. In addition, a majority of CBTE institutions accepted students with a simple acknowledgement of the institution's doctrinal position.

Church funding in CBTE institutions represented a broad spectrum of practices. Included in the study were institutions receiving no (or limited) financial support from the overseeing church as well as institutions whose entire budget was included in the church's unified budget. As a movement, CBTE institutions received church funding in the form of budgeted funds, designated church offerings, shared donor pools, unified benefit groups, shared physical plant and technological costs, and human resources. Financial factors directly influenced the institution's academic standards. Increased finances was frequently expressed as needed for faculty development and higher academic standards.

Institutional relationship referred to a set of interview questions about the physical and personal connection between the church and institution. It assessed how governance structure, facilities, events, the congregation, and the nature of the relationship influenced educational philosophy. While institutional relationship was a difficult dimension to qualify, the scores offered in table 3 in chapter 4 presented a good faith attempt to determine it by institution. As presented in the literature review, non-formal education was a central reason for returning theological education to the church. Ted Ward wrote about the anomaly of theological education emphasizing life-on-life encounters and a communal experience that will achieve more effectively the desired outcomes of theological education.[116] Ward elaborated:

> When teaching is scheduled, boxed, structured, 'presented,' and over organized, it is reduced to a thing. Teaching must struggle to free itself from such habits, customs, and limitations so that learning may occur. Learning at its finest, is a lively encounter with some intriguing aspect of life. Thus, learning is the extending of one's thoughts and understandings to encounter, discover, and blend one's past with the unfolding present, thus enabling an active involvement in the shaping of a creative future.[117]

These "lively encounters" occur in the church, according to CBTE administrators. Non-formal education in CBTE institutions takes place through mentoring relationships. A commitment to life-on-life mentors was repeatedly spoken of by administrators describing the beneficial impact of church proximity on educational philosophy and academic standards.

CBTE administrators frequently spoke of the unique (and intangible value) of imbedding the theological education in the context of the church. For example, "It is communication. It is presence. It is having people on your board that you are constantly asking for counsel and advice on curriculum and other important matters. Involvement and communication are really key." Another example, "Lots of personal touch and just

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[116]Ted W. Ward, "The Anomaly of Theological Education: Institutions Serving an Instituion," in *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 9–17.

[117]Ward, "The Anomaly of Theological Education," 16.

trying to keep making the connections and casting the vision and helping to connect pastors with students." The constant physical and relational encounters created space and opportunity for non-formal education to occur.

Research Question 3: The State and Significance of Academic Standards in CBTE

This research study proposed to answer the following question related to academic standards in CBTE institutions: "What is the state and significance of academic standards in church-based theological education?" Based on the research findings presented in chapter 4, CBTE institutions have pursued academic standards through academic accreditation, the same means as traditional seminaries.

The state of academic standards in CBTE reveals that the majority of CBTE institutions have obtained academic accreditation and comply with the same accreditation standards followed by traditional seminaries. Of the 24 CBTE institutions included in this study, 18 hold academic accreditation through 5 accrediting agencies.[118] Six institutions remain unaccredited. When asked about accreditation, administrators from the 6 unaccredited institutions cited convictions and finances as the major reasons for the decision. Convictions against accreditation included the desire to maintain academic freedom to teach according to Scripture, the necessity of keeping the governance linked between church and institution, and the suspicion of submitting theological education to unbelieving accreditation committee members. Finances also played a significant factor for unaccredited CBTE institutions. Because CBTE institutions tend to operate with limited budgets and human resources, the financial investment for accreditation fees and personnel costs was cited as a prohibitive factor.

Among the 18 CBTE institutions with accreditation status, the perception of

[118]The Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS), the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (ARTS), and the Distance Education Accreditation Commission (DEAC).

academic accreditation was positive. Positive perspectives included the pursuit of excellence, the need for institutional accountability, and the necessity of accreditation for offering distance education. As one administrator said about academic excellence, "We are going through accreditation right now and that has helped us to improve and consider academic rigor and forced us to put things in writing which is good. So we are pursuing accreditation to help us with academic standards." Another administrator welcomed accountability by saying, "Accreditation, I think, is very important. There is not a day that passes that I wish it was not. It is a pain. It flat-out is a pain. But it is good in the sense that it holds you accountable." A third administrator emphasized accreditation's role in distance education, "We pursued the Distance Education Accrediting Comission (DEAC) . . . DEAC has always had this attitude that we have got to be better to establish our credibility."

The significance of academic standards in CBTE institutions is two-fold. First, CBTE institutions are able to offer the same academic degrees as traditional seminaries following the same accreditation standards. As presented in table 4 in chapter 4, CBTE institutions offer M.A., M.Div., Th.M., and D.Min. degrees.[119] Second, CBTE institutions report the same accreditation self-assessments at the same level of peer review as traditional seminaries, and they participate in accreditation meetings without distinction from traditional seminaries.

In answer to the sub-questions related to academic standards in this research study, CBTE institutions have taken traditional steps to develop academic standards through accreditation. The local church has created a unique environment in which mentoring relationships can be utilized as part of the educational process. Little distinction was found between the academic standards of CBTE institutions and traditional theological education that informed the model. Accreditation was found to be

[119]Master of Arts, Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, and Doctor of Ministry.

the primary means of establishing academic standards in CBTE institutions.

When asked what more could be done to develop high academic standards in CBTE institutions, administrators voiced a desire for further faculty development, updated library holdings, expanded access to online databases, developed course curriculum, and course offerings in distance education programs.

When asked about the potential for a local church self-assessment for the CBTE model, the majority of administrators questioned the church's ability to offer a meaningful assessment and struggled to envision a means by which a church assessment would produce helpful oversight. It was clear from the interviews that administrators had not considered the church's role in assessing the academic standards of the CBTE institution.

Analysis of Results and Implications for CBTE

It was not the intention of this research study to reflect negatively on traditional theological education, nor was it the study's aim to research all types of relationships between churches and seminaries such as branch campuses, extension centers, and teaching sites. All efforts toward theological education within the ministry and under the authority of a local church complement, rather than contradict, the CBTE movement. The study presupposed the necessity and value of the relationship between church and seminary in theological education.

The results and implications of the research data concerning the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards are presented as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

CBTE Strengths

Strengths in the CBTE model represent qualities unique to institutions associated with a single local church. While many strengths were represented in the research findings, the following three strengths emerged as themes among CBTE

institutions as a whole.

Close proximity to the church aligns immediate feedback loops. Church proximity was defined as being located on a church's property and functioning under a church's influence. A strength of the close context to a local church was the immediate evaluation and impact of the theological education. An administrator emphasized the value of instant accountability. "Our educational philosophy is validated by the church. In other words, it's not just informed, it's not just accountable, it's validated. The church is going to tell us if we are doing a good job." To one degree or another, this face-to-face obligation is shared by CBTE institutions relating to the overseeing church.

In distance or online education programs, CBTE institutions emphasized the mentoring role of a pastor or designated mentor. Even as distance education has been listed below as a threat to the educational philosophy of CBTE, several institutions and administrators considered it superior to residential programs because it keeps students situated in the context of local church ministry. One interviewee referenced this approach, "That is, kind of, our way of putting power back in the hands of the local church, rather than people being taken out of the local church and going to some brick-and-mortar place." Another interviewee added, "Really it's what our students are saying back to their churches. We evaluate what their mentors are saying, and the mentors, of course, are church-based." Presbyterian CBTE institutions sense a natural obligation to the presbytery, which leads to a formal testing of graduates via ordination exams creating another strong evaluative element to the CBTE model.

There was an expressed belief that the purest feedback returns through non-formal loops. For CBTE institutions, the student embodies the feedback loop. "By virtue of that relationship between the church, the student, and the seminary, we are able to learn what those needs of the church are in a more organic way. . . . trying to be, sort of, woven back into the church through its students." A strength of the CBTE model is the

immediate feedback from its constituency.

A small size, narrow mission, and strategic focus. While it was beyond the scope of this research study to account for demographic information like student population, ethnic diversity, full-time equivalency cost, and residential verses distance education students, the reality is that CBTE institutions are small in size, student population, budget, and resources. Each limitation presented a challenge, but many CBTE institutions and administrators saw unique potential in their small size, narrow mission, and strategic focus.

While a lack of finances, students, and resources is listed below as a weakness of the CBTE model, small institution size can be a benefit if a critical level of income, headcount, and resources is sustained. Perhaps one of the most attractive aspects of a CBTE institution is the ability to know the professors in class, in church, and in life. "It is small enough that you are going to be able to get to know the professors," one administrator pointed out.

The small nature of CBTE institutions resists the "walmartization of theological education" according to a founding leader. As presented in the research findings in chapter 4, CBTE institutions offer a limited number of ministry-specific degrees. These programs appeal almost exclusively to pastors. Therefore, the small institution size should be regarded less as a hurdle to overcome and more as an inherent characteristic to be woven into the mission and focus of the institution. In that sense, CBTE institutions should be valued as "special forces" training for the local church.

Each CBTE institution demonstrated a narrow focus, a targeted approach to theological education. One administrator responded, "I believe that the measure of a school's effectiveness should be measured in terms of the fulfillment of its mission. For this reason, any church-based seminary can improve its effectiveness by drawing clear lines between planning, allocation of resources, and the mission of the seminary," adding,

" . . . by doing this in the context of the local church we are uniquely situated to help students keep their eyes on the target and to learn ministry in the context in which they will serve." Another administrator stated, "We decided that there is a coherence between the learning and church life and worship." The institution is not an end in itself. It serves the local church as attested in the data.[120] This posture may put the CBTE institution at odds with accreditation standards that seek the institution's autonomy.[121]

Two CBTE institutions strategically limit their M.Div. student population in order to focus resources on a specific group of students. In one example, the focus was narrowed to eighteen students accepted into the program as a cohort. They will take ninety percent of their classes together, forming life-long personal and ministry relationships in addition to mentoring one another through the four years of their program. Another example limits the M.Div. population strategically to align with the number of available full-time paid pastoral internships in the church and approved churches within the region.

Mentoring, discipling, and educating according to 2 Timothy 2:2. The data revealed many ways in which administrators described the necessity of mentoring and discipling in the educational process. All of which referred to a non-formal, one-on-one component of theological education. Second Timothy 2:2 represented a strategic part of the CBTE institutions' educational philosophy. The CBTE model depends on mentoring

[120]One CBTE leader commented, "The accrediting agency is supposed to vouch for the institution so they think the institution has to be viable on its own. Because it is the ministry of our church, in their mind 'if push came to shove' and something had to die, the seminary's going to die, not the church. Another administrator from an accredited CBTE institution said, "Furthermore, the Grace Church elder board has been given the freedom. It is written into our bylaws that they can shut down the seminary at any time if the seminary fails to live up to its doctrinal statement."

[121]The July 18, 2018 WASCUC probation letter to The Master's Seminary represented a specific example of the tension church proximity creates for CBTE institutional accreditation. WASC Senior College and University Commission, "The Master's University and Seminary Action Letter," July 18, 2018, accessed August 30, 2018, https://www.wscuc.org/institutions/masters-university-and-seminary. Brennon Dixson, "Master's University on Probation," *Santa Clarita Valley Signal*, August 16, 2018, accessed August 31, 2018, https://signalscv.com/2018/08/masters-university-on-probation/.

relationships overlapping the institution and the local church.[122] With varying degrees of formality, each institution focused efforts to shape the student's character, in addition to intellect and skillset. One institution offered twelve hours of mentoring toward the M.Div. degree—one class per semester. An administrator shared the reason:

> Now the classroom is the easiest, but we want to really focus in on getting them involved in the work. And also to learn how to be mentored and to mentor others. We realize from all the statistics that more pastors leave the pastorate not because of doctrinal problems but because of personal issues.

In 2 Timothy 2:2 the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Second Timothy 2:2 was repeatedly referenced in interviews as a foundational component of the CBTE model. Some interviewees place a stronger emphasis on the church's role in mentoring while others institutionalized mentoring as part of the curriculum. All CBTE institutions agreed with one interviewee, "We view 2 Timothy 2:2 as a mandate, not an option." The church proximity provided the context and the institutional size made mentoring relationships realistically possible.[123]

One institution hosted a mentoring conference for the seminary in 2018. Another institution required three mentors in the program: a pastoral mentor to develop ministry competency, a personal mentor for soul care, and a faculty mentor for academic guidance. Other schools developed a set of mentoring tools and assessment for mentoring effectiveness.

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[122]As presented in the literature review, Ted Ward predicted the opportunity large churches would have to use pastoral internships to coincide with theological education. Ward wrote, "Using the internship model coupled with intensive small-group educational experiences, many a church will come to be its own source of leadership resources." Ted W. Ward, "Leaders among the People of God," *Common Ground Journal* 11, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 66. This replicates the historical apprenticeship model also noted in the literature review. W. Clark Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal in American Protestant Ministerial Education, 1700-1808," *Theological Education* 20, no. 2 (1984): 85–106. In addition to the Log College, Spurgeon's Pastor's College, and Bonhoeffer's Confessing Church seminary presented in the literature review, Phil Newton added the historical examples of Zwingli, Calvin, Spener, and Gano. Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 10.

[123]One administrator who oversees mentors called "certified leaders" said, "Mentorship is taking place out in the churches and ministry practicums are taking place out in the churches so that the theological education is as tightly integrated into the actual life of the churches on the ground as it possibly can be."

CBTE Weaknesses

Weaknesses in the CBTE model represent areas of limitation or areas of needed improvement. While each of the CBTE institutions exhibited weaknesses that were unique, represented in this section are weaknesses evident in the CBTE movement at large.

Lack of financial, recruitment, and institutional resources. The difficulty of developing a strong donor base and the lack of financial resources creates institutional weakness. Even among the CBTE institutions receiving strong (or total) financial support from the associated church, interviewees considered the church support as too narrow a financial base. With a few exceptions, CBTE institutions struggle to maintain enrollment and finances. A lack of students amplified the financial struggles. In response to interview questions about the greatest hindrance to theological education in your circumstances, comments were made like "there is just the logistical element of we run super efficient in terms of finances," "overall, it is a budget concern and labor," "right now, it is just finances. It costs a lot of money," "one of the things I think is going to be donors," and "it is going to require donor base support by Christians and organizations with financial means."

In general terms, lack of institutional resources could be cited as a weakness for any academic institution. However, CBTE institutions face particular limitations because of their small size and narrow constituency, creating thin margins throughout the institution. Institutional limitations include facility space coordinated with the overseeing church, library services, inadequate internet access, and overlapping institution and church positions.

Lack of transferability. A second weakness of the CBTE model was its lack of transferability. The lack of transferability means that the CBTE model of theological education is practically inaccessible for median and small size churches. This eliminates

most churches from practicing CBTE, especially in rural parts of the country. While CBTE institutions philosophically hold to the importance of local church involvement in theological education, only a certain size congregation will be large enough to support a CBTE institution.

Two administrators acknowledged the dilemma, "This model is not as reproducible as the traditional seminary in the local church because it requires a certain size to do what we are doing and not every church is able to do this," and "I do not feel like what we are doing is very reproducible in the way we are doing it at the extent that we are doing it." This reality was also substantiated in the literature.[124]

CBTE institutions have responded to this weakness by extending their academic programs through distance education. While continuing to function on a church's property and under a church's authority, the institution reached a wider student population, broadened its financial support, and gained greater name awareness. One administrator projected it as necessary for long-term survival, "I think it is going to become less and less possible to be a stand-alone, completely stand-alone form of higher education, because it is a smaller pool of people who want to spend the time, energy, and money to complete an M.Div. degree." In chapter 4, table 6 shows that 5 of the 24 CBTE institutions teach in multiple church locations within the United States, totaling 29 teaching sites.

Lack of a stable church environment. The intimate relationship between church and institution, which often contributes positively to the CBTE model, can exist on personal relationships rather than structural connections. This creates instability. Long-term unsustainable relationships was a third weakness among CBTE institutions. Speaking from prior experience, one administrator cited instability as a weakness to the

[124]Carolyn Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow: A Study of Ministry Needs of the Local Church in the 21st Century* (Granada Hills, CA: Multi-Staff Ministries, 1993).

CBTE model. "The stability of the institution based in one local church is problematic. We tried to remedy that by having a dual basis for our seminary." Repeatedly, the content analysis revealed intangible, unquantifiable factors like flexibility, grace, trust, attitude, and respect as the sole basis for unity between church and institution. These factors are weaknesses when isolated from structural support maintaining clear institutional boundaries.

Because CBTE institutions were established primarily around the central vision of a founding pastor, president, or administrator, the institution itself struggles in its early years and during its first leadership succession. Leadership succession will be discussed below under threats to the CBTE model. While anecdotal evidence leads to assuming institutional weakness in all leadership transitions, start up struggles are less obvious and anticipated. One founding administrator describe the beginning as rough, rocky, and tumultuous. The church lost elders and pastors largely over power struggles for time and resources. Also, non-seminary trained leaders devalued graduate-level theological education. Division surfaced during public business meetings and joint church-seminary services leading to perceptions that the institution diverted too much of the pastor's and church's attention.

Leadership transitions force CBTE institutions to renegotiate the relationship between the church and institution. The transition beyond the founding pastor, president, or administrator marks a significant moment for the institution. In the era of a founding pastor, president, or administrator much of the church proximity is determined intangibly by the single leader's personal and credible influence in both church and institution. A transition will force a structured relationship between the church and institution to be established.

Another scenario presented in the research data was the lack of a fully engaged congregation, which led to CBTE institutions co-existing with a church rather than mutually benefiting from its presence. A CBTE institution founder noted that

congregational interest was essential to the CBTE model. "The key is leadership articulating involvement and then congregational involvement making things really fly." Due to the ebbs of congregational demographics and pastoral leadership, the relationship between church and institution will experience some level of weakness inherent to both.

One institution acknowledged that decline in the church was leading to discussions of selling the church building, which would lead to the institution being homeless. The administrator was resigned to the possibility. "That's one of those things we can't control. We just have to wait and see what God does with that one. I don't worry about it. That's one of those things I have no control over." This weakness represents an occupational hazard to CBTE institutions. Factors influencing church health like financial instability and leadership transition directly affect the institution.

CBTE Opportunities

Opportunities stand for significant factors for the future that capitalize on the CBTE model's effectiveness in achieving its institutional mission. Specific opportunities vary among CBTE institutions. The following three categories express general areas of advancement for the CBTE model.

Rising cultural resistance to biblical Christianity. First, as found in the literature review, there was a call to return theological education to the church.[125] Twenty-one of the 24 CBTE institutions included in this research study began since 1980. Three seminal articles were published before 1980 including John Frame's 1978 article "Proposal for a New Seminary," David Singer's 1978 *Christianity Today* article "Seminary Goes to Church," and James Montgomery Boice's 1979 *Christianity Today*

[125]Dreher's call for "a Christian academic counterculture" was presented in the literature review. He wrote, "School-church integration in a post-Christian age also has a practical benefit. Existing under the umbrella of a church offers legal protection not available to other Christian schools. Legal experts say that Christian schools facing antidiscrimination challenges in court have greater protection if they can demonstrate that they are clearly and meaningfully guided by established doctrines of a particular church and can demonstrate that they enforce these doctrines." Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Sentinel, 2017), 162.

article "The Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship."[126] The CBTE model was, in part, a response to shifting cultural trends away from historic Christian beliefs and practices. CBTE institutions believe that being located on a church's property and functioning under a church's authority will allow them to thrive in cultural isolation or, even, persecution.

One administrator described the CBTE model as "the wave of the future" as seminaries shrink. In mind was the historic example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's seminary experience from 1935 to 1940 as presented in the literature review.[127] CBTE institutions on the West Coast and in urban centers seemed particularly attuned to the cultural currents, as one administrator responded, "What used to be considered normative biblical perspective, theological perspective, is starting to become more and more provocative like I said. The more conservative approach to theology is kind of becoming more of the minority."

The result of cultural shifts against biblical Christianity creates an opportunity for CBTE institutions to grow in student population and multiply as a model if traditional brick-and-mortar seminaries struggle to address shifting anti-Christian cultural trends.[128] As related to accreditation, comments acknowledged the rise of government regulation at the expense of institutional peer review assessment.[129] Almost uniformly administrators

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[126]John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* (January 1, 1978): 10–17. David Singer, "Seminary Goes to Church: An Alternative Approach," *Christianity Today*, February 10, 1978. James Montgomery Boice, "Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship," *Christianity Today*, February 2, 1979.

[127]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education at Finkenwalde, 1935-1937*, ed. H. Gaylon Barker, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works, vol. 14 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2013). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education Underground: 1937-1940*, ed. Victoria Barnett, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works, vol. 15 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011). Paul R. House, *Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision: A Case for Costly Discipleship and Life Together* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015).

[128]Ian Lovett, "Seminaries Reflect Struggles of Mainline Churches," *Wall Street Journal*, August 10, 2017, sec. US, accessed September 2, 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/seminaries-reflect-struggles-of-mainline-churches-1502357400. Vincent Cushing, "Some Reflections on Institutional and Cultural Issues Facing Theological Education," *Theological Education* 36, no. 2 (2000): 1–10.

[129]As noted in the literature review, see Judith Eaton's "Disruption in the U.S. Accreditation Space." Judith S. Eaton, "Disruption in the U.S. Accreditation Space," *International Higher Education* (Winter 2017).

commented that doctrinal faithfulness would be chosen over academic accreditation.

Alumni networks. Second, a growing opportunity for CBTE institutions will be the further development and support from alumni. Because 21 of the 24 CBTE institutions were founded between 1980 and 2017, graduates are now entering the prime of their ministry careers as pastors, missionaries, educators, and publishers. The full impact has yet to be determined, but the research data would indicate that CBTE institutions possess a sustainable ability to network their own graduates. This represents the ultimate evaluation of the effectiveness of CBTE's academic standards.

This is partly true because of the regional identity of the CBTE model. For example, CBTE administrators readily acknowledged their narrow identity, as one admitted, "Because we are a local church seminary, we feel like we have a pretty clear and distinct mission. We do not view ourselves as being an educational institution for anybody and everybody." The question becomes, "who does a CBTE institution serve?" The answer lies in its regional identity. Without a broad alumni network or national name recognition, CBTE institutions educate and serve local churches and pastors in a particular region. Two administrators affirm, "It seems to me that the future for church-based theological education has to be regional," and "we believed at the formation of the institution that there was not in this region a local church conducting theological education with a philosophy of ministry and a package of theology that was of our stripe."

The web of alumni relationships appeared to be tight-knit among CBTE graduates because a smaller student population allowed for deeper, longer-lasting relationships among students and between students and faculty. These relationships are enhanced in CBTE institutions committed to a cohort model. It was common to observe professor positions filled by graduates, teaching sites led by pastor-graduates, and recent graduates promoted online and within publications. One example of strategically

networked alumni was the Shepherd's Fraternal. This group of graduates from one CBTE institution network around love, trust, and care. It is described as a strong brotherhood with a strong family bond.

Churchliness. Third, the CBTE model tied theological education to its root, the local church. While it goes beyond the scope of this research study, the literature review alluded to the danger of institutional drift among traditional seminaries that function independently from the local church.[130] Being closely knit to the church creates the rapid response flexibility mentioned above under strengths. CBTE institutions were influenced directly by the church and responded quickly and creatively to its needs.

The relationship between church and institution also fostered a whole person formation—similar to that of discipleship in the local church. One administrator referred to this cultural sense as "churchliness." "In seminaries like ours, there is sort of a 'churchliness' that pervades the seminary because of its close tie." The following are a representative sample of quotes from other administrators affirming the "churchliness" of the CBTE model:

1. "We really believe that the local church is the place where those things are going to be best hammered out and learned."
2. "We really want students to be able to observe it and see us in action. I use the phrase, 'It is wonderful if the faculty members smell like sheep.' I think there is something about a professor teaching, having come from the field or a student having the ability to watch them tend sheep. You just can't beat it."
3. "With the church's involvement we are trying to create that eclipse intentionally as often as we can. And so we really need the church's support that this student is going to serve in the church."
4. "We feel that education is caught as well as taught. There is a lot to be modeled. Not modeled only in the lives of the faculty members but in terms of the environment. It is like going to medical school at the hospital. . . . Day to day, day after day, every week they see the ministry of a local vibrant church taking place."

[130]John M. Frame, "The Academic Captivity of Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:59–76. Thomas C. Oden, *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995).

5. "The advantage from the beginning that we saw in doing it in the local church context is that we could press home to our students that it is for the church."

6. "Our guys are being educated in the river. They are swimming upstream doing ministry while they are going to school."

7. "It is church-integrated theological education, which means for us that the seminary is not the dog. It is the tail and the tail doesn't wag the dog. Everything revolves around the church."

The "churchliness" of the institutional culture allowed non-formal education to occur. It permitted the hidden curriculum to shape a student's experience in and around the classroom, and it encouraged conviction to form theology, ministry, and the congregation.

CBTE Threats

Threats to CBTE institutions represent factors that could jeopardize their success. As one founding administrator qualified, "We are besieged by potential and by threat." While many threats were identified in the research findings, the following three emerged as threats to CBTE as a movement.

Institutional drift away from the church. Institutional drift in CBTE institutions can occur for several reasons, primarily good reasons. For example, growth of student population creates a significant strain on facilities and the relationship between the church and institution sharing those facilities.

One institution included in this study relocated twice when the student population made it impossible to remain on the church campus. Another institution announced plans to relocate to an off-church site in an email to supporters since this study began. There will be a natural tendency to separate from the church due to growth and development. During one interview, relocation was mentioned as an option to ensure the institution's survival through leadership transition.

Other CBTE institutions purposively chose to stay on the church campus in order to maintain the complementary relationship between church and institution. One

administrator spoke of God's providence keeping them in the church.

> We almost early in our history rented a space in the neighborhood that was probably a mile and a half away from the church. By God's grace, it fell through at the last moment. We thought it through and said, 'No, we are going to stay in the building.' The church isn't the building. We don't want to communicate that. But the church building is where our students are rubbing shoulders all the time with church people during the week. . . . That's been an important part of the proximity, I think.

Another administrator pointed to the church campus as a strategic choice "because of the philosophy that we wanted them surrounded with ministry so that they would be enlightened and encouraged."

Institutional drift causes effective CBTE institutions to act out of character, striving to become like traditional seminaries, even mimicking higher educational practices for credibility sake. One administrator cited, "I think many small church-based schools are plagued by an inferiority complex. They do not have the capacity to carry on their business with really significant people and significant numbers and things that suggest effectiveness." The evident threat from institutional drift will be the loss of the distinctive qualities and uniquenesses of the CBTE model.

Institutional autonomy promoted by accreditation is another factor contributing to institutional drift. One founding leader with experience on both sides warned, "The formal tie [between church and institution] can be a noose if we are not careful." Another emphasized the necessity of the church, senior staff, and president being on the same page.

Online education's impact on CBTE educational philosophy. The study's data revealed diverse opinions among CBTE institutions about distance education, in general, and online education, in particular. Extremes from completely online theological education to in-class education only were represented. Distance education approaches included correspondence courses, directed studies, teaching sites classes and modules, and synchronistic and a-synchronistic online classes. Each of these approaches were practiced by CBTE institutions as presented in table 6 in chapter 4. The majority of

CBTE administrators wrestled with the educational and financial advantages of online education versus the philosophical and pedagogical sacrifices.

The uneasiness of online education in the CBTE model was reflected in administrators who said, "We have been very hesitant to move toward distance education largely because we really value the residential experience and we think it is an important part of what you are getting in education," "I really believe that seminaries need to look their people in the eyes," "All of the class part is done in the classroom. We want that personal connection there. We do nothing by way of online unless a student is short something," and "There is something that is lost by not being on the campus and interacting with the professors and other students and all that stuff that is going on that is not precisely inside that class time." Most CBTE institutions worked to strike a balance in distanced education. Purely online education threatens to undermine the educational philosophy espoused by CBTE institutions, but CBTE institutions are struggling to attract sufficient enrollment without online course options.

Second generation leadership succession. Another threat to the CBTE model was the instability caused by leadership transition, especially the death, retirement, or resignation of a founding leader. The research data reported positive and negative examples of transition. For example, one institution benefited from a leadership change allowing a president's full-time attention to be devoted to the institution and making available his travel and preaching schedule for advancement. An administrator attested, "In my view, a single individual could not deliver with full effectiveness the expectations that come with being the pastor of a church and the president of a seminary."

Two examples arose in the research findings that exemplified how leadership transition disrupted the institution's ability to function because of the founding leader's ability to persuade stakeholders, recruit students, and raise funds. Following a founding leader's death, one CBTE institution attributed the difficulty to the leader's "dynamic

personality" after which administrators struggled to determine and fill roles left open in his absence. In another CBTE institution, leadership transition was even more dramatic leading to a crisis in both the institution and the church. A power-struggle resulted after the resignation of a majority of board members ending in a rewriting of the institution's mission. An administrator described the trauma, "the money dries up and if the model does not change, you are now faced with the reality of academic standards that were not inappropriate in general, but were inappropriate to the location, culture, and place of the seminary. That caused the seminary to very nearly close at one point." The CBTE institution survived but not without significant change and decline.

The primary reasons that leadership transition threatens the CBTE model were twofold: First, being connected to a single local church invariably ties institutional health to church health. Leadership disruption or decline will affect both. Second, many of the CBTE institutions included in this study have not yet faced a transition of its founding pastor, president, or administrator. It has yet to be determined how these transitions will impact the institution and the church.

Contribution to the Precedent Literature

Data gathered by this research study builds on the precedent literature about theological education by describing the CBTE movement from 1980 to 2017 and advancing the understanding of CBTE in North America. These contributions can be summarized under the following headings:

1. This study defined the relationship between church and seminary as a complementary relationship, further describing the institution as located on a church's property and under a church's authority.
2. Because CBTE institutions serve a regional constituency, this study has provided name recognition, both as a movement and as individual institutions, among similar CBTE institutions and among theological education institutions at large.
3. This study presented the CBTE movement as a response to the call to reform theological education and return theological education to the church found in the precedent literature.

CBTE Defined

In the precedent literature, no consistent and transferable definition of CBTE was present. The closest definition was Jeff Reed's non-formal model of theological education presented in 1992, in which Reed distinguished between church-housed and church-based institutions. Using Reed's definition, only the curriculum of BILD International and the program of The Antioch School were church-based.[131]

The research findings contributed the CBTE definition, as being located on a church's property and functioning under a church's authority, to the field of theological education. CBTE was explored as a model of theological education and a movement of theological education institutions from 1980 to 2017. CBTE institutions were defined in their proximity to the church.

The research findings also revealed that CBTE institutions are not static. The relationship to the church was dynamic and will change over time. CBTE institutions may develop into independent institutions unless a convictional tie to the CBTE model is maintained.

CBTE Institutions Identified

Prior to this research study, there was little knowledge or promotion of CBTE as a model or as a movement of theological education. The limited uses of the term CBTE represented a canopy term for any church–seminary relationships including teaching sites, branch campuses, and extension centers.

In keeping with the exploratory nature of a phenomenological research methodology, this study identified 24 CBTE institutions located on a church's property and functioning under a church's influence.[132] These institutions had never been grouped

[131]Reed defined church-housed, "Bringing theological education, which is essentially based in an institutional or organizational model, inside the four walls of a church building, and he defined church-based, "Building a training strategy that grows out of the life of local churches and takes place in the context of laboring to establish local churches." Jeff Reed, "Church-Based Theological Education: Creating A New Paradigm" (presented at the North American Professors of Christian Education, Dallas: 1992), 9.

[132]A listing of CBTE institutions and associated churches can be found in table 2 in chapter 4.

as a movement, nor had they contributed to a collaborative view of educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards as presented in this study.

Since CBTE institutions offer a limited number of degree programs, serve a narrow constituency, and appeal to a local region, these institutions lack name recognition nationally. For example, when asked to identify similar institutions CBTE administrators identified no more than 6 of the 24 institutions. Each institution's constituency included a pool of potential students and supporters narrowed and limited by denomination and theological conviction. Administrators spoke of regional identity as a niche for their institutions, saying, "It seems to me that the future for the church-based theological education has to be regional," "Our goal was basically to be a school in the Atlanta area. It is a matter of keeping students in the churches where they are," and "we wanted a regional presence." This research study revealed how limited programs, a narrow constituency, and a regional focus allowed CBTE institution to be strategic in educational philosophy, simple in church proximity, and efficient in academic standards.

The CBTE Response to the Call to Reform Theological Education

Prior to this research study, a refrain from both mainline protestant and conservative evangelicals called for reform in theological education. For conservative evangelicals, reforming theological education meant restoring theology in its biblical and systematic forms.[133] The literature included theological, historical, missional, and cultural calls for reform. CBTE as a model and as a movement represented one response to calls for reform in theological education.

The idea of reform presupposes returning to an original or previous state. Applied to theological education, CBTE as a model and as a movement answered that call by returning theological education to a previous form. The research findings included

[133]John M. Frame, "The Demise of Systematic Theology," in *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 2:94–100. Oden, *Requiem*.

multiple statements by administrators citing historical examples of CBTE as a model for their institution. Supporting statements included, "We somehow got to where we believe that training a student for five to seven years along with a lot of pastor's experience like the Log College somehow would be shortened," and "I think in the history of America of the way people were trained in the early years. If you go back to the colonial period it was the pastor training the young guys who wanted to be pastors . . . like Princeton and the Log College," and "We were after the idea: Is it possible to be Princetonian in that sense in bringing formal education together embedded with a residency program in the local church?," and "This reflected the outlook of C. H. Spurgeon who established his Pastor's College in London. We wanted to train men whom God called to his ministry."[134]

This research study contributed one clear response to calls for reform in theological education. It brought attention to the CBTE model and movement shedding light on a trend with 24 institutions and 40 years of history with little previous research.

The CBTE Response to the Call to Return Theological Education to the Church

Prior to this research study, the literature on theological education included calls to return theological education to the church. Church leaders and theological educators including Ted Ward, Linda Cannell, and John Frame promoted the church's place in theological education.[135] The need for such a return was cited in magazine and journal articles by James Montgomery Boice, Stanley Hauerwas, and Mark Dever.[136]

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[134]Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal," 85–106. Michael Kenneth Nichols, “Spurgeon’s College,” *Christian History* 10, no. 1 (February 1991): 40.

[135]Ted W. Ward and Linda M. Cannell, "Theological Education and the Church," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (1999): 29–47. Ted W. Ward, "To Serve the Church," *Evangelical Journal* 12 (1994): 3–12. Ted W. Ward, "The Anomaly of Theological Education: Institutions Serving an Instituion," in *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 9–17. Linda Cannell, *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008). Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," 10–17. Frame, "The Academic Captivity of Theology," 59–76.

[136]Boice, "Church and Seminary." Stanley Hauerwas, "The Ministry of a Congregation: Rethinking Christian Ethics for a Church-Centered Seminary," in *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*, ed. Joseph C. Hough and Barbara G. Wheeler (Atlanta: Scholars,

The research findings contributed responses to the call to return theological education to the church. The data presented CBTE as a movement that heeded Ted Ward's appeal for non-formal education and John Frame's proposal for a new seminary model cited in the literature review.[137] Two CBTE administrators were influenced by working relationships with Ted Ward. One of them identified:

> I use to work with Dr. Ted Ward who was at Trinity Divinity School. Of course the big draw there was that you were moving away from formal education to non-formal rather that just informal. I think the non-formal approach is where you can accomplish a lot where you are not focused on grades and papers. I think that is why CBTE is often so popular.

Perhaps the strongest answers came in response to John Frame's 1978 article, "Proposal for a New Seminary."[138] Often cited as a foundational document for CBTE educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards, it primed the movement seeking to return theological education to the church. Two administrators said respectively, "The seed of it came from the idea of what John Frame spoke of when he first wrote of doing theology a little differently," and "I have read several of Frame's papers on that. He admits he is the academic, but he realizes it is not always the best way to do this." Frame's perspective resurfaced repeatedly in the research interviews, which showed that the CBTE movement was, in part, a response to his 1978 call to return theological education to the church.

Areas for Further Research

Four specific areas would be worthy of further research:

1. Research using case studies focused on the highest performing CBTE institutions is needed to determine best practices for CBTE institutions.
2. Using a mixed methods methodology, further research is needed to determine

1988), 119–136. Mark Dever, "Raising Up Pastors Is the Church's Work," *9Marks Blog*, n.d., accessed June 13, 2017, https://www.9marks.org/article/raising-pastors-churchs-work/.

[137]Ward and Cannell, "Theological Education and the Church," 29–47. John M. Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," in *The Academic Captivity of Theology* (Lakeland, FL: Whitefield Media, 2012), 55–71.

[138]Frame, "Proposal for a New Seminary," 10–17.

distance education's impact on the educational philosophy of CBTE institutions.

3. Using the same research methodology, data from graduates of CBTE institutions can be compared with that from administrators regarding the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE.

4. Further evaluation of church proximity is needed gathering equal data from church leaders and institution leaders using a comparative analysis.

Case Study of Highest Performing CBTE Institutions

Within the twenty-four CBTE institutions identified in this research study, there was a wide spectrum of institutional health among them. A case study would allow a researcher to probe in-depth what has been presented in the present study in a cursory way. Because the dynamics of church proximity were difficult to quantify, a case study with site visits would provide a richer explanation of the relationship between the church and institution. A case study focused on the highest performing CBTE institutions could provide best practices for institutions looking to follow the CBTE model.

Distance Education's Impact on CBTE

Distance education was a broad category in this research study including correspondence courses, directed study, and online synchronistic or a-synchronistic classes. For further research, the term 'distance education' must be narrowly defined. Distance education presented a unique challenge to CBTE because of its impact on educational philosophy. Because CBTE institutions valued the close relationship to the church context, there are potential adverse effects of online education on CBTE educational philosophy. This requires further research using a mixed methods design.

Graduate Perspectives on CBTE

While the present study explored CBTE as a model and a movement from the perspective of institutional administrators and founding leaders, a future research study should investigate CBTE views among the institution's graduates. A study of CBTE

graduates would be timely because first generation alumni from these institutions are in the prime of their ministry careers. A similar phenomenological research design could be used to gather data regarding the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE from the graduate's point of view.

Comparative Study on Church Proximity

Church proximity is a CBTE institution's relationship to a church, located on the church's property and functioning under the church's influence. The dynamics of this relationship should be further explored from both sides of the relationship. A comparative analysis can relate CBTE views from the institution's perspective to the church's perspective yielding insight into how a healthy relationship can be maintained and how leadership transitions can be managed.

Conclusion

The church and the seminary create the environment for theological education. These two institutions exist in a complementary relationship in which the institution trains the leaders called by the Lord to serve the church. Institutions founded on a church's property and under a church's influence are CBTE institutions.

This research study has identified the twenty-four CBTE institutions in North America and presented CBTE views on educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards. CBTE is both a model and a movement of theological education. As a movement it began around 1980 with the publication of John Frame's "Proposal for a New Seminary", David Singer' "The Seminary Goes to Church", and James Montgomery Boice's "The Church and Seminary: A Reciprocal Relationship." Twenty-one of the twenty-four CBTE institutions were founded since 1980. As a model, CBTE represents fully-formed institutions practicing theological education within the life and ministry of a local congregation.

APPENDIX 1

A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Knowing God is the beginning and the goal of theological education, and God is made known through divine revelation. As Ecclesiastes 12:13b commands, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." The result of this divine learning is wisdom, as Proverbs 2:5-6 promises, "Then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." All theological education begins with the Bible because Scripture provides both the content and the context for knowing and obeying God.

The Old Testament and Theological Education

Through the Old Testament, learning began with God (Prov 2:5; 9:10). Thus theological education consisted of knowing God and knowing all that God revealed about himself, the world, and humanity (Prov 1:7). Humanity learned as God directly educated by divine revelation through various means such as dreams, visions, and divine encounters (Gen 28:11-13; Ezek 7:13; Gen 16:11-13).

God primarily used intermediary means to teach his people about himself through the Law. Teaching became part of leadership. Moses guided Israel out of Egyptian captivity and through the wilderness by speaking God's Word to God's people and leading God's people as God instructed. Israel, as an ethnic nation, learned from God through its conquest, dynasty, deportation, and restoration epochs. In each generation and political circumstance God instructed his people through national leaders like Moses (Exod 3:9-15), Joshua (Josh 1:5-6; 2:16-18), and Samuel (1 Sam 3:1-21); kings like Saul

(1 Sam 10:1-27), David (1 Sam 16:1-13), and Solomon (1 Kgs 4:29-34); priests like Aaron (Exod 28:1-3), Eli (1 Sam 1-4), and Ezra (Ezra 7-10; Neh 8); judges like Gideon (Judg 6-8), Jephthah (Judg 11:1-12:7), and Samson (Judg 13-16); prophets like Elijah (1 Kgs 17:1- 2 Kgs 2:18), Elisha (1 Kgs 19:15-21; 2 Kgs 2-9, 13), and Jeremiah (2 Chr 36:12; Jer). Israel's leaders, kings, priests, judges, and prophets represent positions through which God instructed his people.[139]

The family was the foundational unit of education in the Old Testament. God intended the Law to be taught in the home. Moses wrote, "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deut 6:6-7). The Shema (Deut 6:4-5) constituted the starting point for Jewish family instruction.[140]

Within the family, parents were responsible for teaching their children about the Lord. Abraham (Gen 18:17-19; 22:6-7), Moses (Deut 6:4-7), and Joshua (Josh 24:15) each presented parental, educational responsibilities. Parents educating children about the Lord was a cultural norm. As Asaph's Psalm alluded, "He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children" (Ps 78:5-6).[141] Solomon taught that wisdom came through parental instruction as a guide to life (Prov 6:20-23). Consequently, theological education was a whole-person, life-long, all-encompassing pursuit.[142]

In the sixth century B.C., synagogue schools and rabbinic academies oversaw

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[139]Michael J. Anthony and Benson, Warren S., *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education: Principles for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 18-22, 28-34.

[140]Ibid., 25-27.

[141]Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 15-24.

[142]D. Bruce Lockerbie, *A Passion for Learning: A History of Christian Thought on Education*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Purposeful Design, 2007), 3.

theological education. Since synagogues already served the community as a place for worship, Jewish leaders focused on spiritual education for young men.[143] Anthony and Benson describe, "Using the books of the Mosaic Law as a basis of the curriculum, they required boys to memorize large portions of the Law. . . . Every community that had ten Jewish families was required to maintain such a school for their children."[144] In the post-exilic period, the Talmud became the central textbook for education in the synagogue schools.

In the rabbinic academies, theological education featured a mentoring relationship in which students were taught exclusively by a single rabbi. Pedagogy followed transmission methods practiced by Greek and Roman rhetoricians like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Arcesilaus, and Carneades. Beginning at fifteen, Jewish students learned as apprentices from master-teachers. These mentoring relationships relied on imitation as much as instruction.[145] The education's value depended on the rabbi's instruction as well as the rabbi's influence.[146] These educational relationships preceded the discipling model used by Jesus Christ and the subsequent model of Christian discipleship.

Jesus Christ and Theological Education

As it relates to the process of learning, Jesus Christ himself "grew in wisdom and stature" (Luke 2:52). Before Jesus taught others, he educated himself in a human sense by cognitively hearing, understanding, and applying information. Additionally, the years of public ministry when Jesus served as a rabbi to his disciples demonstrate a

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[143]Michael J. Anthony, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), s.v. "Synagogue Schools."

[144]Anthony and Benson, *Exploring the History and Philosophy*, 35.

[145]Günter Krallmann and Floyd McClung, Jr, *Mentoring for Mission: A Handbook on Leadership Principles Exemplified by Jesus Christ*, 2nd ed. (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2003). "The words of the rabbi were precious, his example, more precious still." Ibid., 33.

[146]Russell W. West, "Church-Based Theological Education: When the Seminary Goes Back to Church," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 2, no. 2 (September 2003): 118.

biblical model for theological education (John 1:35). Jesus' approach followed the pattern of post-exilic rabbinic teaching. Because mentoring depends on the teacher's ability, Jesus' instruction was superior to others. Lockerbie notes the difference between Jewish rabbis who received authority from the Law and Jesus who exercised authority over the Law.[147] Mark 1:22 points it out, "And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes." Jesus' superior authority in his pedagogy manifested from his divine personhood.

Classifying Jesus' educational model can be tricky. Robert Coleman in *The Master Plan of Evangelism* described it as a process of selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction.[148] Arn and Arn in *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* point to the final product: a disciple who is a believer, follower, learner, and witness, who is baptized and reproducing.[149] This review of the biblical foundation of theological education presents Jesus as teacher and discipler.

Jesus as a Teacher

Education was the core of Jesus' ministry. At each event of public ministry, Jesus preached, answered questions, and taught.[150] He educated congregations in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-22; 6:2). He openly and indiscriminately taught to crowds (Mark 4:1-2; 6:6, 34; 10:1). He taught social outcasts (Mark 2:13), worshipers at the Temple (Mark 11:17; 12:35; 14:49), and, most prominently in the NT Gospels, his chosen disciples (Mark 8:3; 9:3). Mark 10:1 says, "And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his

[147]Lockerbie, *A Passion for Learning*, 6.

[148]Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Revell, 2010).

[149]Win Arn and Charles Arn, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples: Every Christian an Effective Witness through an Enabling Church*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 27.

[150]Anthony and Benson, *Exploring the History and Philosophy*, 99-102.

custom, he taught them." Regardless of location or audience, it was Jesus' custom to teach. The New Testament records several of Jesus' extended theological lectures including the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7), the Farewell Discourse (John 14-16), and the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24-25).

Jesus personally taught the twelve disciples. Jesus taught by opportunity as well as by lecture. The teaching focused on spiritual formation as well as factual knowledge. Often questions sparked the teaching moment.[151] For example, Jesus taught childlike humility in response to the disciples' question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt 18:1-4). Jesus taught through his promises. He promised the disciples his presence (Matt 18:20), care and protection (Matt 10:29-31), the sending of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-26), and future reward for good works (Matt 10:41-42). Jesus taught through correction. He rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith (Matt 8:26; 14:31; 17:17-20), lack of humility (Matt 18:1-4; 20:20-28), lack of love (Luke 9:49-50), and lack of understanding (Matt 15:16-17; 16:8-12; 19:25-26) among other failures.

Love and obedience became the central expressions of spiritual formation. True disciples of Jesus learned from and followed him. "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt 16:24). True disciples were those who loved one another as John 13:35 instructs, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus as a Discipler

Jesus' training took the form of discipling.[152] Discipling took place during the course of events (Mark 8:14; 10:13-16), disputes (Mark 10:41-45), challenges (Mark 2:18-22; 10:1-10), observations (Mark 4:1-40; 12:41-44), and question and answer (Mark

[151]Jesus also used situations to teach as in John 4:31-38 and 9:1-10:21.

[152]Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016). "Discipling is deliberately doing spiritual good to someone so that he or she will be more like Christ. Discipleship is the term I use to describe our own following Christ. Discipling is the subset of that, which is helping someone else follow Christ." Ibid., 13.

9:11-12, 38-41). Jesus used life as a platform for teaching.[153] Robert Banks identifies four stages in which Jesus drew people to his ministry and empowered them to minister for him: (1) Jesus preached a message of the Gospel of the Kingdom for all to hear. (2) Jesus healed people in connection with his preaching showing the importance of addressing physical and emotional needs. (3) Jesus forgave sin, abolishing what separated people from God. (4) Jesus developed personal relationships with his closest followers teaching them to fellowship with God the Father and with each other.[154] Jesus used discipling relationships to initiate a never-ending cycle of teaching and learning that became the basis for apostolic and early church ministry (Matt 28:18-20).

What is unclear was the extent to which Jesus intended his disciples to model him as an educator. Certainly, Jesus directly instructed his followers to imitate God the Father, saying, "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48). Peter would later echo, "But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct" (1 Pet 1:15). An argument can be made that Jesus' mentoring style inherently showed imitation, as a pedagogy, effectively accomplishes discipling. Franz points to the New Testament letters to emphasize how the Apostles viewed Jesus' teaching.

> The apostles understood that Jesus was the Exemplar for the Christian, for in the Epistles Jesus' example was developed as the Christian goal. Christians are to grow in Christ-likeness (Phil. 2:5), being transformed more and more into His image through the sanctifying work of His Word and His Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). The apostles also noted specific aspects of Jesus' character to be imitated, such as exercising forbearance (Romans 15:7), living to please others (Romans 15:2-3), sacrificial giving (2 Cor. 8:9), loving others (Eph. 5:2), being humble and obeying God (Phil. 2:5-8), forgiving others (Col. 3:13), enduring opposition (Heb. 12:3-4), suffering in a godly way (1 Pet. 2:21; 3:17-18) and giving our lives for others (1 John 3:16).[155]

[153]Robert J. Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). "Almost anything could become grist to Jesus' mill—personal or group failure, inappropriate ambition and conflict among his followers, the presence or appearance of small children, a prostitute or a sick person; everyday objects and activities in the home, field, or countryside." Ibid., loc. 1027, Kindle.

[154]Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 1003, Kindle.

[155]Gerald Patrick Franz, "The Compatibility of Practices in American Protestant Seminaries with a Biblical Model of Theological Education" (PhD diss., Regent University, 2002), accessed November

Robert Banks, however, contends that Jesus emphasized his teaching rather than his actions. Imitation plays a submissive role to believing and obeying. Banks writes, "The imitation of Christ is only a secondary motif in the gospels, and it is not accidental that the call to the Twelve omits any reference to it."[156] Citing Franz and Banks suggests that education may be an indistinguishable mixture of teaching and mentoring. Discipling, therefore, is both instruction and imitation in proportions adopted to circumstance, ability, and need.

A. B. Bruce identified the pedagogical approach to Jesus' mentoring of the twelve disciples.

> These twelve, however, as we know, were to be something more than traveling companions or menial servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were to be, in the meantime, students of Christian doctrine, and occasional fellow-laborers in the work of the kingdom, and eventually Christ's chosen trained agents for propagating the faith after He Himself had left the earth. From the time of their being chosen, indeed, the twelve entered on a regular apprenticeship for the great office of apostleship, in the course of which they were to learn, in the privacy of an intimate daily fellowship with their Master, what they should be, do, believe, and teach, as His witnesses and ambassadors to the world. Henceforth the training of these men was to be a constant and prominent part of Christ's personal work.[157]

With roots in the social construct of Jewish synagogue schools and rabbinic academies, theological education developed through the teaching and mentoring pedagogy of Jesus Christ, a pattern the Apostles regularly followed.

The Apostle Paul and Theological Education

The apostle Paul is primarily known as the Apostle to the Gentiles, whose three missionary journeys are recorded in the book of Acts (Acts 13:46-47; Acts 13-28). Paul was committed to theological education and referred to himself as a teacher (1 Tim 2:7).[158] His pattern of ministry was to preach publicly in open venues and teach privately

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17, 2016, http://search.proquest.com/docview/251660109/abstract/7E0B954F1196443EPQ/11, 24-25.

[156]Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 1046, Kindle.

[157]A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000), 30.

[158]Roy B. Zuck, *Teaching As Paul Taught* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998). "Analyzing and following Paul's educational goals and strategies can help us become better teachers of God's Word.

from house to house (Acts 20:21). Thirteen New Testament letters show Paul's commitment to educating believers and churches. The letters to Rome and Ephesus are distinctly organized in doctrinal and practical parts, showing the Apostle's desire to instruct truth principles then apply the principles to life and practice.[159]

Paul was personally discipled by Barnabas and enjoyed a strong friendship with Luke. Paul, then, discipled Timothy, Titus, and John Mark among others. These were long-term ministry relationships. Barnabas associated with Paul for over twenty years. Timothy and Luke were each associated with Paul for eighteen years.[160] Paul's discipling relationships were meant to be whole-person, life-long partnerships.

Paul's lengthy list of greetings at the end of Romans (Rom 16:1-24), Colossians (Col 4:7-17), and 2 Timothy (2 Tim 4:19-21) point to many more discipling relationships as Paul expressed interest in others' spiritual well-being. Banks points out that Paul used "on-the-job" mentoring relationships to disciple.[161] Words like "school" or

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Examining his pedagogy can acquaint us with a number of important principles and procedures in teaching. The Book of Acts and Paul's epistles show us at least thirty two important aspects of teaching." 14. Paul (1) expressed concern for his converts, (2) instructed others in doctrine and Christian living, (3) used his knowledge of contemporary culture, (4) adapted his message and style to various audiences, (5) willingly endured hardship in order to help others, (6) showed the impact of the truth on one's life, (7) urged his learners to live for the Lord, (8) made clear his ministry aims, (9) revealed his inner motives, (10) trained others to serve the Lord, (11) shared his ministry with his companions, (12) depended on the Lord for guidance and strength, (13) exemplified Christlikeness, (14) exhibited qualities necessary for effective teaching, (15) used letter writing as a means of communication and teaching, (16) corrected his learners when they needed it, (17) responded to those who opposed his teaching, (18) used questions to prod his listeners' and readers' thinking, (19) expressed concepts in strikingly picturesque ways, (20) used contemporary illustrations to communicate his points, (21) boldly gave commands for his learners to follow, (22) modeled a servant attitude, (23) adapted his teaching to a variety of locations and situations, (24) affirmed and encouraged his learners, (25) lectured with dynamic impact, (26) quoted the Old Testament in his teaching, (27) captured and held the attention of his listeners, (28) involved learners in the teaching-learning process, (29) trained and developed disciples, (30) varied his teaching method, (31) shared his pastoral heart, and (32) relied on the Holy Spirit for spiritual power. Ibid., 14-15.

[159]In Romans, chapters 1-11 are theological instruction followed by chapters 12-16, which are application. The same pattern governs Ephesians. Chapters 1-3 are theological instruction, and chapters 4-6 are an application.

[160]Harold H. Hoehner, "Chronology of the Apostolic Age" (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1965), accessed August 8, 2017, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/docview/302194759/C757B75B672C45D9PQ/1?accountid=14061.

[161]Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 1147, Kindle.

"student" were too formal for Paul's pedagogy. Perhaps out of necessity, or perhaps out of conviction, Paul discipled as he traveled. Education was a mutually beneficial partnership between mentor and mentee. In Pauline letters, key terms support Paul's personal commitment to discipling others. Expressions like "partnership in the gospel" (Phil 1:5), "my beloved, as you have always obeyed" (Phil 2:12), and "my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier" (Phil 2:25) are found in Philippians.

According to Roy Zuck in *Teaching as Paul Taught*, Paul had four teaching-related goals: to communicate knowledge, to create spiritual growth, to make disciples, and to lead in a way that others followed.[162] Unique to Paul is the imitation mandate. Imitation as a pedagogical method for theological education was commanded nine times in Paul's letters: (1) "I urge you, then, be imitators of me" (1 Cor 4:16), (2) "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1), (3) "Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am" (Gal 4:12), (4) "Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us" (Phil 3:17), (5) "What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things" (Phil 4:9), (6) "And you became imitators of us and of the Lord" (1 Thess 1:6), (7) "For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess 2:14), (8) "For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us" (2 Thess 3:7), and (9) " . . . to give you in ourselves an example to imitate" (2 Thess 3:9).[163]

So what does it mean to imitate? It is helpful to note that Paul only encouraged imitation among believers he converted and the churches he founded. Imitation aims for progress towards spiritual maturity. Personal character embodied the espoused ethic.

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[162]Zuck, *Teaching As Paul Taught*, 112-24.

[163]Anthony and Benson, *Exploring the History and Philosophy*. "The Teaching Ministry of the Apostle Paul," 106. James M. Howard, “Saint Paul as Spiritual Director: An Analysis of the Concept of the Imitation of Paul with Implications and Applications to the Practice of Spiritual Direction,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 4 (December 2008): 853–56. Charles A. Gieschen, “Christian Identity in Pagan Thessalonica : The Imitation of Paul’s Cruciform Life,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (2008): 3–18.

Zuck applied imitation in Pauline letters to theological education, "Being an example to our students is as important as knowing the content of our lessons and communicating it well. In fact, if we are not modeling godliness, our teaching sessions will be ineffectual, because people reject what they see as an inconsistency between what we are and what we say."[164] Paul's method of theological education included instruction and imitation. Like his New Testament writing, personal application followed doctrinal principle.

The Church and Theological Education

Biblically, the church is responsible for theological education because God chose the church to accomplish his purposes in the world and because the church received the Great Commission mandate. Matthew 28:19-20 instructs, "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." The Great Commission is a teaching mandate.[165]

Scripture outlines a biblical model for education in the church. Ephesians 4:11-16 says that the Lord gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherd-teachers as gifts to the church for education. Kenneth Gangel in *Leadership for Church Education* draws the following six pedagogical conclusions from Ephesians 4:11-16: (1) The church's educational ministry is carried on by those who are first gifted by God to teach and then given to the church for that purpose (Eph 4:11). (2) The purpose of the church's educational ministry is to make God's people mature so that they can minister (Eph 4:12). (3) If the church's educational ministry is properly carried out, the result will be maturity in individual believers and a harmonious relationship between the believers collectively (Eph 4:13). (4) The church's educational ministry is highly theological, producing

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[164]Zuck, *Teaching As Paul Taught*, 123.

[165]Kenneth O. Gangel, *Leadership for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody, 1970), 28.

discerning students of truth who are able—because of their understanding of truth—to detect and avoid error (Eph 4:14). (5) A properly functioning church educational ministry will effectively combine truth and love (Eph 4:15). (6) A properly functioning church educational program not only consists of a few teachers and many learners, but also will be carried out for mutual edification as God's people help each other to grow spiritually (Eph 4:16).[166] Consequently, the church is an educational institution naturally growing its members in Christian maturity.[167]

The church accomplishes theological education through evangelizing ("Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Matt 28:19) and discipling ("teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Matt 28:20). A person is saved through knowing Jesus Christ. "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20). A person is educated through reciprocal discipling relationships. "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2).

The Great Commission mandates disciple-making as a Christocentric, global teaching initiative.[168] Knowing Jesus Christ is the learning objective in which all education is informative and formational. It is both orthodoxy and orthopraxy. As Ephesians 4:20-24 says, "But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old

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[166]Gangel, *Leadership for Church Education*, 29-30.

[167]Ibid., "This then is the nature of the church: God at work in people through His Word and His Spirit; called-out ones whose entire commitment to human life is the glory of Jesus Christ. A church devoted to this kind of life is not stagnant but dynamic; it is not backward but progressive; it is not irrelevant but communicative to its surroundings; it is not only an organization, it is an organism. This is the true church; anything less falls short of what God intended." Ibid., 30.

[168]Mark L. Bailey, “The Foundation and Shape of Theological Education,” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 34.

self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." Theological education, biblically rooted, strives for both cognitive learning and character formation. Content leading to character determines successful learning.

The church is a theological and educational community through which the Great Commission is fulfilled. In short, the future of theological education is bound to the church community in which Scripture can be taught and imitated.[169]

The way forward in theological education according to Cram and Saunders is a return to the past. The content and context of theological education need to be returned to the local church. Cram and Saunders answer the question, "How might we reconsider the culture and economy of theological education and the church?"

> When the streams of the tradition become stagnant, we must return to the fountainhead. Thus, we propose to look again to the scriptures for models; this time, however, for images that might help us reenvision the contexts and categories of theological education. The Scriptures provide us with ideal constructs for cultures not our own, and it is necessary to translate these images and ideals carefully; nevertheless, the most significant movements of reform and revitalization in the history of the Church have always been rooted in fresh, contextual readings of the Scripture.[170]

The early Church taught in the context of a mission where life experience and biblical

[169]Linda Cannell, *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: BookSurge, 2008), 254. Linda Cannell identifies eleven characteristics of the church as a theological and educational community. (1) The church is the community of the redeemed. (2) The church is gathered by God for God's purposes. (3) The church exists as an agent of reconciliation. (4) Christ is the head of the church. (5) The congregation called together by God for God's purposes is under the leadership of Christ and empowered by the Spirit. (6) The church is a community of people on mission and as such must fulfill God's purposes. (7) The church is a community where the Holy Spirit is active. (8) The Spirit of God empowers, gifts, sustains, and sets apart the church for the accomplishment of God's purposes. (9) Authority resides in God and God's revelation. (10) Congregations have particular responsibility over matters of decision making and discernment of error. (11) The church is a community where church discipline is practiced—where members help each other follow the path of obedience. Cannell concludes, "the theological character of the church as the people of God is fundamental to what theological education becomes in the twenty-first century." Ibid., 252.

[170]Ronald H. Cram and Stanley P. Saunders, "Feet Partly of Iron and Partly of Clay: Pedagogy and the Curriculum of Theological Education," *Theological Education* 28, no. 2 (1992): 43-44. By "contextual readings of the Scripture" Cram and Saunders are referring to the mission of the early church in which "there was no fundamental distinction between learning (especially theological learning) and everyday life." Ibid., 44.

authority came to bear on realities of the culture. Theological education occurred in the regular gathering of believers for worship, prayer, and fellowship within discipling relationships. The church provided the context for personal relationships and shared life.[171]

The New Testament principles for theological education describe a model of pedagogy contextually tied to the local church. For the purpose of this review of a biblical foundation of theological education, close association with the church is assumed to be preferable with the recognition that each institution of theological education relates to a church constituency and chooses philosophically to maintain a dependent or independent relationship to the church.

[171]Cram and Saunders, "Feet Partly of Iron and Partly of Clay," 44-45. Cram and Saunders contrast this communal life of the early Christians with the educational models of modern seminary training. "While we may not like to admit it, most mainline seminaries are all pretty much the same when it comes to curricula, aims, and teaching models....Virtually none embody a communal way of being and academic center for teaching and learning. None seek to question in any fundamental way the institution of seminary, and its related assumptions, processes, and values. None are intentionally providing alternative models of life together for their graduates that seek to question economic disparity. Nor are biblical models of theological education taken to be serious alternatives for current institutional identity and organization." 46. Cram and Saunders conclude their article with the question, "Which, if any, of the traditional, mainline theological institutions will be willing to risk a different way?" Ibid., 46.

APPENDIX 2

A HISTORY OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Theological education can be outlined historically in various groupings. Justo Gonzalez in *The History of Theological Education* categorized theological education around schools of thought like the catechumenate, scholasticism, reformation, rationalism, and pietism.[172] Lockerbie took a chronological approach identifying eras and figures including the first five centuries, popes, princes and pedagogues, Christian humanism and the Protestant Reformation, the roots of modern universal schooling, the American experience, American reformers, the deification of democracy, and twentieth-century renewal.[173] Anthony and Benson traced Christian education in *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education* through the following phases: Hebrew origins of Christian education, Greek education and philosophical thought, Roman education and philosophical thought, Christian education in the early church, Christian education in the middle ages, Christian education in the Renaissance, Christian education in the Reformation, European origins of modern Christian education, early origins of the Sunday school movement, Christian education in colonial America, Christian education in the nineteenth century, and Christian education in the twentieth century.[174]

An efficient summary, for the purpose of this research study, was to view the history of theological education as epochs. To accomplish this, Russel West outlined its

[172]Justo L. González, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015).

[173]D. Bruce Lockerbie, *A Passion for Learning: A History of Christian Thought on Education*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Purposeful Design, 2007).

[174]Michael J. Anthony and Warren S. Benson, *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education: Principles for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011).

history in seven eras: pre-church era: whole-life relational training and observation, NT apostolic era: relational transfer, post-apostolic era: catechetics and monastic orders, middle centuries era: clerical model of ministry, colonial era: theory-to-practice model, industrial era: professional functionalist, and post-modern era: a return to context.[175] To narrow the scope of the history of theological education, this appendix includes the middle centuries era through the post-modern era. Summarizing theological education's trajectory in church history, West writes, "An examination of leadership formation in church history shows that the scales tip away from the context of the church, away from the life-on-life impact images so prevalent in the church era, (for example, Jesus and the Twelve, Paul and the Apostolic Band) and away from holistic focus to compartmentalized formal education."[176]

Middle Centuries Era: Clerical Model of Ministry

From the twelfth century to the eighteenth century, the Renaissance and the Reformation significantly shaped theological education. As cultural movements, the Renaissance and Reformation impacted the church differently. Methods of theological education did not escape the transformative power of the times.

The Renaissance

The Renaissance influenced Europe between 1350 and 1650 and transitioned the medieval world to the modern world. The Renaissance can be defined as "that era of cultural reorientation in which people substituted a modern secular and individualistic view of life for the medieval religious and corporate approach to life."[177] Worldview

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[175]Russell W. West, "Church-Based Theological Education: When the Seminary Goes Back to Church," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 2, no. 2 (September 2003): 113–65.

[176]Ibid., 116.

[177]Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 253.

changed. "The medieval theocentric conception of the world, in which God was the measure of all things, gave way to an anthropocentric view of life, in which man became the measure of all things....A humanistic, optimistic, and experiential approach to the things of this life became common."[178] The Renaissance was mainly an educational movement. Cathedral schools in the twelfth century served as precursors. Scientific inquiry popularized creating a desire for knowledge and increasing the number of desiring students. The growth resulted in universities committed to Christian humanistic education. Paul Grendler wrote of the importance of Renaissance education in Europe.

> The extraordinary political, social, economic, and even linguistic diversity—divisiveness would be the better term—threatened to pull the peninsula apart at any moment. But schooling united Italians and played a major role in creating the Renaissance. Humanistic pedagogues developed a new educational path very different from education in the rest of Europe in the early fifteenth century....The humanistic curriculum unified the Renaissance, making it a cohesive cultural and historical epoch of great achievement. When humanistic education crossed the Alps, it created a similar cultural accord that endured beyond the shattering of religious unity.[179]

Grendler explains that the church played no institutional role in Renaissance education until late in the sixteenth century as catechetical schools were established. Catechetical education focused on instructing the laity and shaping moral behavior.[180] As noted in appendix one, these schools sought to return theological education to its informational and formational roots.

Theological education in North America was rooted in the European Renaissance desire for formal training. The distinction between clergy and laity created two classes of people within the church. Education became "past-oriented, reason-centered, expert-reliant, and material resource-dependent."[181] This *cleros* and *laos* divide normalized in church life, and church leaders were judged by their education.

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[178]Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 253-54.

[179]Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1991), 410.

[180]Ibid., 409-10.

[181]West, "Church-Based Theological Education," 122-23.

The Reformation

The Protestant Reformation was a reform movement within the Roman Catholic church between 1517 and 1648 that resulted in a split between the Catholic church and developing Protestant denominations. It was primarily a religious movement and secondarily a political one.[182] Prior to the Reformation, education divided the clergy and laity creating an inequity that ultimately divided the church. With the invention of Gutenberg's movable type press and the printing of the first Bible, a movement of informal theological training ignited a return to biblical and foundational beliefs that converted the laity's belief and behavior.

Key leaders of the Protestant Reformation used informal means to teach the common people. West explains by example, "William Tyndale meets with his peers in taverns to study scripture. Martin Luther . . . augmented formal seminary studies of his students with informal, 'off-campus' conversation groups . . . John Calvin made available a similar academy-based experience for the intensive study of Scripture."[183] Unofficial forms of theological education like table talks, log cabin colleges, parsonage seminaries, and reading divinity restored not only the content of theological education,but also the context of theological education—the people of God in the local church.

Colonial Era: Theory-to-Practice Model

Colonial America experienced a hybrid approach to theological education born out of necessity. It combined the European university model of education with a pioneering apprentice model for hands-on training. Gilbert Tennant called for reform in theological education in 1740 in his sermon, "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry." Tennant preached, "The most likely method to stock the church with a faithful ministry,

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[182]Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 271-72. Cairns provides a helpful chronological chart comparing the intellectual impact of the Renaissance (1350-1650) to the spiritual impact of the Reformation (1517-1648). Ibid., 273.

[183]West, "Church-Based Theological Education," 123.

in the present situation of things (the public academies being so much corrupted and abused generally), is to encourage private schools or seminaries of learning which are under the care of skillful and experienced Christians . . . "[184] Tennant had begun the Log Cabin College movement in 1727, providing ministry training to his sons, then expanded to others over a fifteen year period. This outside-the-establishment model of theological education drew praise from the Great Awakening revivalist, George Whitefield.

> The place where the young Men study now is in comtempt call'd the College . . . From this despised Place Seven or Eight worthy Ministers of Jesus have lately been sent forth; more are ready to be sent, and a Foundation is now laying for the instruction of many others.[185]

The education served less like a comprehensive curriculum and more like a series of ministry tasks closely associated with the work of the church. It also prepared potential ministers for ordination and provided mentoring for theological and denominational matters. This style of colonial theological education was known as reading divinity.[186]

The shift from theory to practice emphasized information and formation. The minister's character was deemed as important as his knowledge. Theological education in the Colonial Era mirrored the biblical model of training found in the early church, the apostle Paul, and Jesus' training of the twelve disciples. West connects the former to the

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[184]Gilbert Tennent, "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry," in *Sermons That Shaped America: Reformed Preaching from 1630 to 2001*, ed. William S. Barker and Samuel T. Logan, Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2003), loc. 1977, Kindle.

[185]James W. Fraser, *Schooling The Preachers* (Lanham, MD: University Press, 1988), 6-7.

[186]W. Clark Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal in American Protestant Ministerial Education, 1700-1808," *Theological Education* 20, no. 2 (1984): 85–106. Gilpin makes three points about "reading divinity" to be examined, emphasized, and researched. (1) Reading divinity is better understood not as a single institution but rather as the common name for a collection of educational tasks capable of being performed by individual persons and intended to ensure ecclesiastical guidance for ministerial candidates. (2) During this century in which the churches were consolidating, expanding, and approaching their modern form as denominations, ministerial education played an especially prominent role in perpetuating a church's tradition and establishing its direction of development. (3) Reading divinity was also a way of mediating between the doctrinal standards of particular communions and the increasing denominational pluralism of the colleges. Ibid. 93-95. R. Albert Mohler, and D. G. Hart, *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996). "The forerunner of the seminary was the phenomenon of reading divinity, a form of theological education that prevailed in colonial America where college graduates intent upon ministry served as apprentices to senior clergy. Reading divinity not only included observation and participation in the daily parish ministry, but also included a more intensive study of the Bible and theology than obtained in the colleges." Ibid., 15.

latter, "Many frontier church communions returned to a context-relational model of leadership formation that recaptured the powers of intimacy, life-on-life and *mimetais* (imitation) type practices so evident in the apostolic and post-apostolic eras."[187] A less formal, hands-on approach to theological education served to balance the theory-based instruction of formal theological training.

The practical emphasis of reading divinity focused on character formation rather than scholarship. As an example, Cotton Mather and Samuel Willard followed the pattern, dividing theological education into four parts: Scripture, systematic divinity, polemic divinity, and casuistry. Describing this era of theological education Gilpin concludes:

> The eighteenth century left an ambiguous legacy to American theological education. Institutionally, rapid changes in the character of the churches and of the colleges made it impossible to maintain clear, mutual responsibilities for the preparation of clergy. And, although 'reading divinity' represented a workable interim device, its dependence upon the initiative of individual tutors made it too ephemeral to resolve the deeper issues of ecclesiastical and academic accountability for ministerial education.[188]

The individualized nature of reading divinity focused on personal piety, but it stood little chance of integrating into broader movements of the nineteenth century. The growth of institutionalism and academic models of theological education overlooked the personal touch of spiritual transformation for the objectives of academia.

Industrial Era: Professional Functionalist

Schleiermacher's curriculum solidified theological education's place in the German university. The clergy took a position among professional disciplines. The four-part curriculum included practical theology, philosophy, historical studies, and systematic theology. This four-fold approach defined theological education for 150 years until the mid-1950s.[189] Just as the industrial revolution systematized manufacturing and centralized

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[187]West, "Church-Based Theological Education," 128.

[188]Gilpin, "The Seminary Ideal," 103.

[189]David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene,

the population to urban centers, Schleiermacher's four-part scheme legitimized theological education as a research discipline and became an established norm in European universities followed by North American seminary education.[190]

The unavoidable consequence was that academic standards prevailed over personal spirituality. Information could be quantified and objectively reported whereas spiritual disciplines were personal and subjective. Theological education lacked a category for personal calling and spiritual formation. It morphed into a professional field of study. Character formation was assumed at best or ignored at worst. Pastoral ministry ceased to be a calling of God and yielded to a man-made process.

Formal theological education in America began with a clerical model of training that developed into seminaries. Hart and Mohler describe the shift in approach.

> The early model for theological education came from the great universities of western Europe where theological faculties, under the direction and patronage of the state, trained clergy for ministry in the national church . . . The pattern of making the theological curriculum and faculty part of the undergraduate education or including it within the university still prevails in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Europe. Seminaries, however, are a relatively recent phenomenon within the history of higher education and are particular to theological education in the United States. The forerunner of the seminary was the phenomenon of reading divinity, a form of theological education that prevailed in colonial America where college graduates intent upon ministry served as apprentices to senior clergy. Reading divinity not only included observation and participation in the daily parish ministry, but also included a more intensive study of the Bible and theology than obtained in the colleges.[191]

Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline of Theological Study* published in 1811 marks the beginning of the industrial era and its influence in North American theological education.

In this era, seminary education lost the identity of its name. The word, seminary, comes from Latin meaning a nursery for seeds planted, grown, and

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OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 89-93.

[190]West, "Church-Based Theological Education." "One could choose the ministry as a vocational choice, learn to think scientifically, speak classically, and be degreed appropriately to fill positions in the church." Ibid., 130.

[191]Mohler and Hart, *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, 15.

developed.[192] Randall Collins in *The Credential Society* writes that academia reduced theological education to accreditation, denomination, ethnic and gender discrimination, professionalization, and market development.[193]

Modern Era: A Return to Context

In *God in the Wasteland*, David Wells includes the chapter "The Coming Generation." He describes modernism's affect on students, "Yet it is clear that this new generation has been shaped by its passage through a deeply modernized as well as by its experiences in home and church. It has developed its own new agenda, been attuned to a new set of issues, and worked out its own ways of addressing those issues. Its new inclinations and strategies have a large potential to reshape the meaning as well as the direction of evangelical faith in the future."[194] Modernism's influence in theological education was threefold: (1) seminarians said that theology was very important to them, (2) they believed that the church lost its vision and that its theological character was crumbling, and (3) what seminarians said was important to them did not, in fact, intersect cogently with the world they inhabit mentally and practically.[195] Wells' analysis built on research from the Social Research Center at Calvin College.[196] It concluded that

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[192]Carnegie Samuel Calian, *The Ideal Seminary: Pursuing Excellence in Theological Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 1.

[193]Randall Collins, *The Credential Society: A Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification* (New York: Academic, 1979), 22-48.

[194]David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 186. David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth: Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994). David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). David F. Wells, *Above All Earthly Pow'rs: Christ in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005). David F. Wells, *The Courage to Be Protestant: Truth-Lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

[195]Ibid., 187.

[196]The seven participating seminaries included Asbury Theological Seminary, Bethel Theological Seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary, Denver Conservative Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Talbot School of Theology. It was compared to James Davison Hunter's 1982 research of similar theological education institutions. James Davison Hunter, *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1993).

theological education must reform in order to effectively educate in a culture influenced by modernity's shifts. To mitigate these deconstructions, Wells recommended three strategic agendas for theological education.

1. Education for ministry in the past, whether this was undertaken in seminaries or under the older apprentice model, was always education for a church, understood biblically and theologically. The church then called for a ministry that matched its own biblical and theological character. Today this character is eroding in the church and loud calls are now being made for a different kind of ministry for which a different kind of preparation will be necessary. So radical are the changes now afoot, that seminaries as we know them today may well disappear in a short period of time if the church is not able to recover its theological character.

2. As the West sinks into more pervasive and pernicious forms of modernity and postmodernity, the matter of Christ and culture looms larger and larger. We, today, are in a missionary context in which our host culture is alien to the interests of biblical faith and sometimes as hostile as are many societies in Africa and Asia....In the absence of a clear, sustainable insistence that what is normative in culture is by no means what is normative for the church, evangelical Christianity will become indistinguishable from modernized American culture and that is simply the back door into theological liberalism. The preservation of biblical Christianity in the coming years, I believe, will be directly tied to our ability to distinguish Christ from culture.

3. What is needed are not more specialists to break down further the coherence of what is learned, but for those who can once again build up this coherence within their own detailed knowledge of their specific field. The only way this coherence will be found again is if it is built upon biblical and theological foundations.[197]

Many established seminaries lacking theological and confessional convictions entered the post-modern era of theological education without boundaries, resulting in lost theological distinction in a world of religious ideas. For example, Don Messer called for "a new vision of the seminary" in *Calling Church and Seminary into the 21st Century*. "Seminaries now must have a vision of preparing persons for Christian ministry and other forms of religious leadership who have more than an Occidental or Western perspective. The canon or norm is now global and interreligious."[198] According to Messer, theological

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Findings from Rice's research were reported in chapter 8, "The Coming Generation," in Wells, *God in the Wasteland*, 186-213.

[197]David F. Wells, "Educating for a Countercultural Spirituality," in *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. R. Albert Mohler and D. G. Hart (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 297-99.

[198]Donald E. Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary into the 21st Century* (Nashville: Abingdon,

education in North America needs to liberate itself from "Aristotelian, Latin thought prisons" to create a global, ecumenical movement.[199] Messer points to nine trends in theological eduction leading toward a new form of seminary training.

1. The gender barrier has been broken and women students have been welcomed into the seminaries in increasing numbers
2. Women are emerging as tenured faculty, senior administrators, and influential trustees
3. The number of persons of color as students and faculty is slowly changing
4. Today's seminary students are older than in previous generations
5. Seminary curriculum is being revised to reflect more global and ecumenical perspectives
6. In the past twenty years, as the world has become more of a neighborhood, theological schools unfortunately have tended to become more regional in their student bodies
7. The inclusion of persons of other faiths on the faculty promotes the religious diversity of faculty
8. The presence of openly gay and lesbian students in seminary
9. Students enter seminary with limited previous studies in religion and tend to study on a part-time basis, as they seek to earn enough money to pay for their seminary education[200]

The shift from the modern and post-modern era recognized the task of theological education without the confessional faith to support the task. The dysphoria led to a hollow academic pursuit, which in turn led to declining student numbers. Shifts in beliefs among faculties, students, and ministry leaders created a bleak picture for survival rates among many institutions.[201] The future of theological education requires a

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1995), 56.

[199]Messer, *Calling Church & Seminary*, 61.

[200]Ibid., 65-71.

[201]R. Albert Mohler, "Thinking of the Future: Evangelical Theological Education in a New Age," in *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. R. Albert Mohler and D. G. Hart (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 278.

theological pivot in order to avoid the destructive consequences of theological liberalism.

Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, recommended a theologically and confessionally conservative approach as the only means of survival.[202] Evangelical theological institutions should recover and reaffirm the essentially theological character of theological education by being confessional in character, forging new working relationship with churches learning from the congregations, setting to regain curricular focus, and avoiding conceiving themselves as mere professional schools.[203]

West describes the effect of post-modernism on theological education: "In this era, seminaries which were geared to answer the questions of yester-year, in the manner of yester-year, will be by-passed for those options which are relational, meaningful, contextual and nurturing. These emerging realities within the market place of theological education may explain why church-based models are making more and more sense than 'leave-home and read books about the past' models of seminary."[204] As Mohler and West address, evangelical theological education's fidelity to theological and confessional orthodoxy is determined by its relationship to the church.

Theological education must find its way by returning to its roots, the local church, as the soil in which theological education grows. David Wells gives direction: "The church needs as its leaders not simply those who are proficient in the language and interests of the learning guild, but those who can think biblically and theologically about

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[202]See David S. Dockery, ed., *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 16-17. David S. Dockery, "Southern Seminary and the Theological Heritage of Southern Baptists," *Southern Seminary Magazine*, 1995.

[203]Mohler, "Thinking of the Future," 278-82. Mohler affirms the relationship between church and seminary, writing, "For evangelical institutions, distance from the churches means abstraction from the task and risks alienation from the faith," adding, "Over the past two centuries, theological education has been increasingly removed from the congregation to the seminary." Mohler acknowledges, "New models of congregational theological education and ministerial preparation are emerging." Ibid., 280. See also Albert Mohler, “Training Pastors in Church,” *Ligonier Ministries*, n.d., accessed August 12, 2017, http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/training-pastors-church/.

[204]West, "Church-Based Theological Education," 132.

themselves and their world, and to do so out of godly commitment."[205] Russell West gives the destination, "Seminary seems to be making a return to context, the context of the local church from whence it came. If my accounting of dominant patterns is correct, leadership formation comes full circle in the present era. The life-on-life tutorship, on-the-job training, church-on-mission approach, so evident in the New Testament, is being preferred by some over traditional seminary options."[206] Church-based theological education (CBTE), as defined in this research study, developed into a movement from 1980-2017 amid growing calls to reform theological education and calls to return theological education to the local church.

[205]Wells, "Educating for a Countercultural Spirituality," 299.

[206]West, "Church-Based Theological Education," 133.

APPENDIX 3

EXPERT PANEL

Expert Panel Participants

1. Linda Cannell
   Former Dean of North Park Seminary

2. John Frame
   Emeritus Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary

3. Paul Holritz
   Academic Vice President of National Theological College and Graduate School

4. Stephen Kemp
   Academic Dean of The Antioch School
   Former Vice President at Moody Bible Institute

5. John F. Klem
   Former President of Clearwater Christian College

6. Jeff McCann
   Retired Vice President of Academic and Institutional Effectiveness at Luther Rice College and Seminary
   Former Associate Executive Director of Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools

7. Doug Smith
   Instructor at The Cumberland Area Pulpit Supply

Coding of Expert Panel Qualifications

An academic expert in the field of theological education

A. Experience as a graduate-level instructor in theological education
B. Holds a terminal degree from a nationally or regionally accredited institution

A practitioner with experience in theological education

C. Experience leading theological education in a church-based environment

A published author within the field of theological education

D. Author of popular level journal articles or blog posts on church-based theological education

E. Author of academic level journal articles or published books on church-based theological education

Table A1. Expert panel coding criterion

Panelist	*Qualification Codes*
Dr. Linda Cannell	A, B, D, E
Dr. John Frame	A, B, D, E
Dr. Paul Holritz	A, B, C
Dr. Stephen Kemp	A, B, C, D
Dr. John F. Klem	A, B, C, D
Dr. Jeff McCann	A, B
Rev. Doug Smith	C, D

APPENDIX 4

EXPERT PANEL EMAIL REQUEST

Dear [name of participant],

As a graduate and trustee of a church-based seminary, I am passionate about the complementary relationship between church and seminary. This commitment to Church-Based Theological Education (CBTE) led me to pursue a Ph.D. degree in leadership and higher education at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. By definition, a CBTE institution is under a church's influence and on a church's property. My dissertation research focuses on the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE institutions.

Church-based seminaries are a growing trend in theological education.

Because you are recognized as a leader with significant background and influence in theological education, I would like to include you in my expert panel for preparation of an interview protocol. My research will utilize a semi-structured process. Your expertise in preparing the interview will significantly enhance the study. Attached is a list of interview questions regarding educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards. I am asking for your input in two ways: (1) Please review the questions, noting changes or additions you would recommend. Feedback will improve the protocol. (2) Please list any institutions that you believe would qualify as a CBTE institution. Please respond to this email within the next 7 days.

Thank you for reading and considering this appeal. Inclusive of all this, please pray that the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, would be pleased with this research study. May it contribute to a renewed complementary relationship between church and seminary within theological education.

Blessings,

Rev. Michael L. Wilburn
Senior Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Richmond, VA
Trustee, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Student, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

APPENDIX 5

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT PROTOCOL

Interview Questions

Preliminary Questions
1. What is your name and age?
2. What is your denominational affiliation?
3. What is your position and responsibilities at the institution?
4. How long have you been serving at the institution?

Educational Philosophy Questions
1. What is the history of your institution and why was it started?
2. What is the mission or vision of the institution?
3. Please explain the basic structure of your programs. What are your institutional objectives? Do you use a specific model for achieving the institutional objectives?

Academic Standards Questions
1. What steps has the institution taken to develop academic standards? What could be done to strengthen the academic standards in your institution?
2. What regional or national accreditation does the institution currently maintain? What is the desired next step for your institution's accreditation?
3. What potential do you see for church's creating a self-assessment agency for CBTE institutions?

Church Proximity Questions
1. Please describe the relationship between the church and seminary—formal or informal, friendly or adversarial, and convenient or strategic.
2. How does the close proximity to the church influence the educational philosophy and academic standards of the institution?
3. What intangible influences effect your institution positively and negatively because of being tied to a single local church?

Concluding Questions
1. What has been the most significant challenge to CBTE, in your circumstance?
2. Overall, how do you evaluate the effectiveness of your education? Looking to the future, how do believe the institution can improve its effectiveness?
3. Is there anything else you would like me to know about your educational philosophy that will help me grasp it more fully?
4. Who else would your recommend to participate in this research study?

Thank you for your time and for providing valuable information for this research project.

APPENDIX 6

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE

Preliminary Questionnaire

1. Theology can be described in many ways. Which one of these statements would you place first in your prioritized list of what it involves?

   - □ Theology is wisdom, knowing God
   - □ Theology is a tool, a way of thinking about the world
   - □ Theology is developing a knowledge of God
   - □ Theology is missiology
   - □ Theology involves all of these above and any separation is entirely arbitrary and unhelpful
   - □ Theology is . . . (if you don't choose one of the above please complete the sentence yourself)

2. Theological education also involves a number of dimensions, but which of these do you think best describes its goal for a student?

   - □ Personal, spiritual, moral growth and transformation of life and character
   - □ Vocational, ministry training to strengthen the church
   - □ Growth in the knowledge of God and the ability to think theologically
   - □ Enhancement of missiological knowledge and abilities
   - □ This is another false forced choice; it has to be all of them
   - □ None of the above, rather it is . . . (if you don't choose one of the above please complete the sentence yourself)

3. Which of the following statements best describes the role of the teacher/professor/ lecturer/educator?

   - □ Model and provide the student with access to, and teaching concerning, the intellectual, spiritual and moral disciplines needed in the Christian life
   - □ Be an experienced and knowledgeable researcher who works with the student to enhance their knowledge of particular areas of study and the related research and analytical skills
   - □ Demonstrate the life of one who knows God and is able to stimulate and help students think theologically
   - □ Be an experienced practitioner who is able to share in and actively help students develop their gifts for ministry and mission
   - □ They have to be all of the above
   - □ My alternative, preferred definition in twenty words or less is...(if you don't choose one of the above please complete the sentence yourself)

4. Many things are learnt in theological education. Some of them are probably helpful. Which of the following statements would you rate as most important?

   - □ It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to be personally transformed
   - □ It is important for students to develop the skills to be able to examine, critique, understand, and teach the Scriptures
   - □ It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to discover the character and nature of God
   - □ It is important for students to study the Scriptures in order to understand the ministry of the church and to be able to apply Scriptural principles in their own ministry
   - □ Not only are all of the above needed, but none of them has any priority
   - □ It is important for students to study Scripture because . . . (if you don't choose one of the above please complete the sentence yourself)

APPENDIX 7

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of church-based theological education (CBTE). For the purpose of this research study, CBTE is being defined as a theological education institution located on a church's property and under a church's influence.

This research study is being conducted by Michael L. Wilburn for the purposes of completion of a dissertation for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In this research study, you will participate in a 45 minute to an hour-long interview that will be captured via video (or audio captured if video capability is not available) to assist the researcher to understand your responses and take adequate notes. The main purpose of the interview is to help the researcher investigate your involvement in a CBTE institution and understand your personal opinion regarding the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards of CBTE. Your responses will provide valuable information for this research study.

In this research, you will participate in a semi-structured interview, and by participating in the interview you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research study. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this interview, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

APPENDIX 8

INTERVIEW INVITATION LETTER

Dear [name of participant],

As a graduate and trustee of a church-based seminary, I am passionate about the complementary relationship between church and seminary. This commitment to Church-Based Theological Education (CBTE) led me to pursue a Ph.D. degree in leadership and higher education at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Over the next 4-6 weeks, I will be researching aggregate views among seminary administrators regarding the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE institutions.

[Paragraph specialized to the institution]

Preliminary to the research, I noted that, due to your role at [name of CBTE institution], you are committed to seminary education and the local church. Because you are recognized as a leader with knowledge and influence in theological education and an advocate for the church's place in theological education, please accept my invitation to participate in this significant research study.

Briefly described, your involvement would include responding to a preliminary questionnaire and participating in a single, hour-long interview. That's it. Interview questions will be provided in advance allowing you to reflect on answers ahead of time. By participating, you are offering critical information shaping the future of the CBTE model—input that you and [name of participant's institution] are uniquely qualified to give.

Included is a copy of John Frame's *Theology in Three Dimensions*. Please accept it as a gift for reading and considering this invitation. Dr. Frame's advocacy for theological education in the church (most notably his 1978 article "Proposal for a New Seminary") encouraged developing CBTE institutions for the past 40 years.

I will touch base with you in a few days. Thank you for considering this opportunity.

Blessings,

Rev. Michael L. Wilburn
Senior Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Richmond, VA
Trustee, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Student, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

APPENDIX 9

INTERVIEW SETUP EMAIL

Subject: CBTE Research Interview

Dear [name of interviewee],

I'm looking forward to our upcoming interview on Church-Based Theological Education (CBTE) scheduled for [interview date & time] (EST). Attached is a copy of the interview questions. These questions will serve as a guide to our conversation. You do not need to answer them in written form. Please complete the Preliminary Questionnaire on CBTE, which was sent to you in a separate email, prior to our interview. I expect the interview to last about an hour. Thank you for kindly participating.

Here is the Zoom meeting information:

[Add Zoom meeting information]

Blessings,

Michael Wilburn
Trustee, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Student, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Senior Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Richmond, VA

APPENDIX 10

INTERVIEW REMINDER EMAIL

Subject: CBTE Interview

Dear [name of interviewee],

I'm looking forward to our conversation today/tomorrow at [time of interview]. Thank you for completing the preliminary questionnaire. If you encounter any trouble joining the zoom meeting, please respond to this email or call/text me at (804) 426-4400.

Blessings,

Michael Wilburn
Trustee, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Student, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Senior Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Richmond, VA

APPENDIX 11

CBTE INSTITUTIONS AND INTERVIEWEES

Table A2. CBTE institution and interviewee list

CBTE Institution	*Address*	*Interviewee*	*Interviewee Position*
Apex School of Theology	1701 T. W. Alexander Dr Durham, NC 27703	J. E. Perkins, Sr.	Founding President and Pastor
Bethlehem College and Seminary	720 13th Ave. South Minneapolis, MN 55415	Tom Steller	Founding Academic Dean
		Brian Tabb	Academic Dean
Birmingham Theological Seminary	2200 Briarwood Way Birmingham, AL 35243	Howard Eyrich	President Emeritus
		Thaddeus James, Jr.	VP of Academic Affairs
Cascade School of Theology	102 Avenue D Snohomish, WA 98290	Andrew Pack	Provost
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	900 Foreview Ln North Plymouth, MN 55441	Jon Pratt	VP of Academics
		Brett Williams	Provost and Executive VP
Chafer Theological Seminary	PO Box 93580 Albuquerque, NM 87199	Andrew Woods	President
Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary	1501 East 26th St Owensboro, KY 42303	Sam Waldron	Founding Academic Dean
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary	4801 Allen Rd Allen Park, MI 48101	David Doran	President and Pastor
		Benjamine Edwards	Academic Dean
Faith Bible Seminary	5526 State Road 26 East Lafayette, IN 47905	Brent Aucoin	President
Geneva Reformed Seminary	1207 Haywood Rd Greenville, SC 29615	Mark Allison	President
		Alan Cairns	Founding President and Pastor
International Baptist College and Seminary	2211 West Germann Rd Chandler, AZ 85286	David Shumate	Chief Academic Officer
Knox Theological Seminary	5555 N Federal Hwy Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308	Samuel Lamerson	President
		Scott Manor	VP of Academic Affairs

Table A2 continued

CBTE Institution	*Address*	*Interviewee*	*Interviewee Position*
Metro Atlanta Seminary	1700 N Brown Rd Suit 202 Lawrenceville, GA 30043	Dennis Bennett	Dean of Academics
Rockbridge Seminary	3111 East Battlefield Rd Springfield, MO 65804	Daryl Eldridge	Cofounding President
		Mark Simpson	Chief Academic Officer
Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary	3190 South Grant St Englewood, CO 80113	Michael Thompson	Academic Dean
Shepherds Theological Seminary	6051 Tryon Rd Cary, NC 27518	Stephen Davey	Founding President and Pastor
		Larry Pettegrew	Executive VP and Dean
Southern California Seminary	2075 East Madison Ave El Cajon, CA 92019	Gino Pasquariello	Provost and Chief Academic Officer
The Antioch School	2400 Oakwood Rd Ames, IA 50014	Randy Beckett	Academic Dean
		Caleb Keller	Program Trainer and Facilitator
The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary	710 Broadway St Vallejo, CA 94590	Todd Tristan Bolton	Assistant Dean
The Expositor's Seminary	17475 Jonathan Dr Jupiter, FL 33477	Jerry Wragg	Founding Pastor
		George Zemek	Academic Dean
The Master's Seminary	13248 Roscoe Blvd Los Angeles, CA 91352	Irv Busenitz	Founding Academic Dean
Tyndale Theological Seminary	710 West Pipeline Rd Hurst, TX 76053	Josh Bailey	VP of Academics
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary	2221 Centerville Tpke Virginia Beach, VA 23464	Daniel Davey	Founding President and Pastor
		Eric Lehner	Academic Dean
Whitefield Theological Seminary	PO Box 6321 Lakeland, FL 33807	Kenneth Talbot	Founding President

APPENDIX 12

CHURCH PROXIMITY CRITERION

Content Analysis for Church Proximity

In this research study church proximity defined the relationship between the local church and the CBTE institution in three areas including doctrinal statement, church funding, and institutional relationship. During the research analysis phase, content analysis was used to score each coded interview excerpts. The sum averaged number yielded a total score per area as well as a total church proximity score. The following shows the total number of excerpts coded per area.

Table A3. Church proximity excerpt and score totals

Church Proximity Area	*Total Excerpts*	*Average Score among CBTE Institutions*
Doctrinal Statement	97	2.26
Church Funding	51	2.06 (3.44)
Institutional Relationship	150	2.39

Coding Criterion for Church Proximity

Coding factors included constituent parts taken into consideration when scoring coded excerpts in the content analysis phase. The following represents a list of coding factors that surfaced during the research interviews.

Table A4. Church proximity coding criterion

Church Proximity Area	*Coding criterion*
Doctrinal Statement	1. Comparison of the church's and the institution's doctrinal statement as to the exact replication or compatibility between them 2. The method of affirmation to the doctrinal statement required by faculty 3. The acknowledgement of the doctrinal statement by students 4. The doctrinal statement's overall influence in the institution's academic pursuits

Table A4 continued

Church Funding	1. Finances given as a specific part of the church's budget 2. Designated church offerings 3. Overlapping donor pools 4. Unified health and retirement benefit groups 5. Shared physical plant costs 6. Shared technological costs 7. Shared human resources such as pastoral staff who teach specific classes 8. Specifically funded positions as part of the church's financial commitment
Institutional Relationship	1. Governance structure 2. Shared facilities 3. Scheduling of events 4. Involvement of the congregation 5. The nature of the church-institution relationship described as formal, informal, convenient, or strategic

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ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, CHURCH PROXIMITY,
AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN CHURCH-BASED
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Michael Lee Wilburn, Ph.D.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018
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The history of theological education in North America is a study of the complementary relationship between church and seminary. Theological education between 1980-2017 produced developing partnerships between churches and seminaries as extension centers, teaching sites, and branch campuses. In a select number of instances, a local church began a seminary under the church's influence and on the church's property. This study investigated these institutions of church-based theological education (CBTE) as a model of theological education and as a movement of institutions from 1980-2017.

This qualitative phenomenological research study explored the educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards in CBTE. For the purpose of this study, educational philosophy was narrowly classified as a classical, vocational, confessional, or missional model. Church proximity was measured by the closeness of the doctrinal statement, financial support, and institutional relationship. Academic standards were determined by submission to academic accreditation standards or recognition among similar theological education institutions.

An expert panel assisted by reviewing an interview protocol from which 35 interviews were conducted. The 35 interviewees represented all 24 CBTE institutions qualifying for the study. Twenty-four interviewees were senior-level administrators

representing the institution. Eleven additional interviews provided a historical perspective from a founding pastor, president, or administrator where accessible. Each interviewee completed a preliminary questionnaire related to educational philosophy prior to a semi-structured interview.

The findings include individualized institution-by-institution profiles and aggregate views regarding educational philosophy, church proximity, and academic standards among CBTE institutions. The research study concludes with an analysis of results and implications for CBTE including specific areas of strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat.

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