USING TECHNOLOGY TO PRACTICE A BAXTER MODEL

OF PASTORAL CARE WITH FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AT

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN CORBIN, KENTUCKY

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Educational Ministry

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by

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May 2021

APPROVAL SHEET

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PREFACE

No project is accomplished alone. Many mentors, teachers, and friends have had a part in this project. Many have not directly influenced this work but have planted godly seeds in my heart that grew into this now completed project. My parents, Winford and Cherri Pollitt, have shown to me what it means to be faithful church members and followers of Christ. My childhood pastor through college, David Cheek, was the one to teach me what it meant to care for the flock of God. He faithfully allowed me to accompany him on countless hospital calls and visits to the members of Mays Lick Baptist Church. Countless others impacted me beyond what I can name in this preface.

The one to be thanked above all else is God Himself. In God alone do "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Furthermore, it is "from him and through him and to him are all things" (Rom 11:36). He indeed deserves to receive all glory for whatever good may be found in this work. Even more so, anything incorrect or unhelpful is to be solely laid at my own feet.

Without my precious and dedicated wife, Stephanie, this work would not have been completed. She encouraged me to begin this journey and has been one of the primary sustaining forces in completing this project. The month before our doctoral journey began, we were blessed to have our first child, Matthew. During this project, we were blessed to have our second child, Abigail. Stephanie sacrificed countless days and weeks to ensure I had the time necessary to accomplish this project. There is no possible way this work would be completed without her right by my side. She is indeed an encouragement and strong help to me. Her parents, Randy and Karen Lawless, stepped in countless times to help at home when I had to be away at Louisville or at the church writing long into the night. My gratitude for them can never be spoken in enough words.

The members and families of children at Central Baptist Church are to be especially thanked. I was able to spend much time away from the church to accomplish my studies and this work. It is my hope that the fruit of this project will bring spiritual vitality to every member of Central. In reading and studying Richard Baxter, my heart for ministry and for them has grown and will undoubtedly continue to grow. I will be a better pastor to them because of the time spent with the words left behind by Richard Baxter.

Finally, this project could not have been accomplished without my supervisor, Dr. Matthew Haste. His advice, encouragement, and edits added much value to this project. He pointed me to places and resources I would have not explored apart from him.

Joshua Pollitt

Corbin, Kentucky

May 2021

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A pastor's job is to tend the spiritual flock assigned to him by God. Richard Baxter championed this call of God in Acts 20:28 that demands all pastors to watch themselves and their flock. Baxter met with approximately fourteen families each week so he could personally visit all the families within his church.[1] He wanted to know how each person understood and applied his preaching. This resolve brought about tremendous fruit. J. I. Packer explains that a century later, George Whitefield said he was "greatly refreshed to find what a sweet savour of good Mr. Baxter's doctrine, works, and discipline remain to this day."[2] Baxter himself reflected at the end of his time at Kidderminster that "on the Lord's days . . . you might hear an hundred families singing psalms through the streets . . . when I came thither first there was about one family in a street worshipped God and called on his name."[3] Baxter was able to make an impact in Kidderminster in the 1600s without the modern conveniences of technology and transportation. This project aims to leverage technological advancements in communication to aid in the task of shepherding the flock of God.

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[1] Joseph Andrew Miller, "Establishing a Culture of Soul Care Based on a Baxter Model of Discipleship Counseling at Calvary Baptist Church, Joelton, Tennessee" (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 54.

[2] J. I. Packer, introduction to *The Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter, (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 12.

[3] Packer, introduction to Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor,* 12.

Context

Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky (CBC), was founded in 1921. The church saw significant growth in the twentieth century that resulted in three significant building additions. The congregation grew steadily until strife resulted in a church split in 1996. Approximately half the congregation left and formed another congregation. Amid losing half the congregation, God sustained and brought growth to CBC. As of 2021, both churches partner together for significant evangelistic efforts in Corbin. God has brought healing and has established two churches to carry on the work of the gospel.

The implementation of this project was done during unusual and unprecedented circumstances at CBC. In February 2020, the senior pastor was called to serve another church in the state. Then in March, the congregation of CBC began worshiping from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. All in person services were canceled until July 2020. Families viewed the worship services on CBC's website and other social media platforms. Additionally, all other pastoral positions at CBC besides the Children & Families' Pastor were vacant by the time this project was completed in January 2021. Comparably, CBC had five pastors on staff in July of 2019.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the children's department ceased having Sunday school and other discipleship programs. The project was initially to be implemented in CBC's Sunday school context. However, instead, a Family Devotion Box system was created that enabled CBC to deliver teaching content and stay connected to families of children. The teaching content was delivered in a box and through online videos. The physical box contained activity sheets, memory verse cards, Big Picture Question cards, and other toys and treats. The boxes were delivered each month by CBC volunteers. The Bible story videos were posted each week to go along with the physical devotion box.

Teachers within the children's ministry took on the role of "Devotion Coach" to assist in individual instruction. Each coach was assigned 3-5 kids. These coaches did

the following two tasks: (1) pray for one of their assigned children every day, and (2) assist their assigned children in completing the Challenge Card.[4]

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, CBC was driven by its calendar. That is, the church had many activities scheduled. The Children's ministry of CBC (Central Kids) was one of the busiest ministries within the church. The normal list of activities ranged from archery lessons, basketball leagues, fall carnivals, and Easter egg hunts to Vacation Bible School, day camp, and kids' choir. In addition, various fun trips were taken in the summer to the pool, skating rink, and trampoline park. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of the activities. In fact, God uses many of these activities to produce spiritual maturity and conversions. While a healthy church should be busy serving the community and serving one another in love, mere activity is a poor metric of spiritual maturity. A church must be busy about what God has commanded.

The number of activities on the calendar was concerning because Central Kids continually moved from one event to another while neglecting systematic pastoral care that would lead to spiritual growth and health. Hence, pastoral care for families with children was rarely considered until a crisis occurred. When a crisis hit, it was often discovered that the families were not practicing godly habits motivated by love for God.

In the past, as the Children & Families' Pastor I would conduct biblical counseling with those in crisis moments.[5] In these sessions it became evident that preventative work should be done in building habits and spiritual disciplines into CBC families. For example, a family struggling with various problems did not approach the pastoral staff for help until the problem had escalated. Furthermore, spiritually healthy families did not seek biblical counsel or help when they did face conflict. This need for

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[4] See appendix 1 for an explanation of the Baxter Model of pastoral care and the Family Devotion Box system. Ministry Boost, "A Ministry Box Strategy," accessed September 1, 2020, https://ministryboost.mykajabi.com/ministry-boxes.

[5] The church follows the standards of conduct established by the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC) and I am certified through ACBC.

preventative work coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 is what prompted the launch of this project. If from the pulpit the pastor regularly encourages families to approach the pastoral staff for help while also implementing an intentional plan of personal instruction, then a culture of openness and vulnerability will more likely develop.

<div align="center">

Rationale

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Families of CBC would benefit from a model of pastoral care based on the example of Richard Baxter. He regularly met with people face-to-face to teach them the catechism and make sure his congregation understood his sermons and teachings. He spent a vast amount of time meeting with the members of the congregation even to the neglect of his sermon preparation.[6] Out of these regular one-on-one meetings, Baxter was able to give biblical counsel to those in his community, which lead to spiritual maturity. Currently, few members and attendees of CBC come to the pastoral staff for counsel. A Baxterian model of soul care would create an environment where regular pastoral conversations occur with each person in the church.

Implementing the "Baxterian Model" of soul care would achieve three primary ends. First, the Baxter model would foster more pastoral care conversations. The beginning point of the conversation is the teaching of the church, not the personal problems and trials of the member. As the pastor talks with the individual and moves from comprehension of the material to application of the material, there is an opportunity to discuss personal problems and biblical solutions.

Second, the Baxter model enables the pastor to lovingly confront anti-biblical beliefs and habits that inhibit spiritual growth (Acts 20:31; Rom 15:14; 1 Thess 5:12). These confrontations can be done by asking questions that are kind and gracious, yet soul penetrating (Heb 4:12). The questions should lead the family to identify godly family

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[6] Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 259.

habits that should be encouraged and sinful family habits that should be changed.[7] After these pastoral care conversations, the family should think back on the encounter and see that they were both affirmed and challenged. Furthermore, they must see themselves as leading the change process. They must not perceive the pastor as domineering or forcing them to make changes they do not desire (1 Pet 5:3). When the family takes ownership of their discipleship journey while being affirmed and challenged by their pastor, they will be committed to the change that is initiated and completed by Jesus Christ (Phil 1:6).

Third, using technological advancements in communication results in more pastoral care conversations and enables the pastor to quickly follow up with previous conversations. This project combined technological advancements with the commitment to systematically counsel all families. The modern pastor has tools that Baxter did not have. He was unable to pick up the phone and call the person he met with the previous week to see how he was doing. Nor was he able to sit down at the computer and email an article or pick up his smart phone and quickly text a Bible passage that would speak directly to his parishioner's problem. If technology is utilized in practicing pastoral care, then the original conversation can be extended over a long period of time, which should result in substantial spiritual growth.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to effectively utilize modern technological advancements in communication to practice the pastoral care model of Richard Baxter with families of children (ages 5-11) at Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky.

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[7] The model of change followed closely in this project is that proposed by Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp in *How People Change* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2008).

Goals

The following three goals determined the success of this project.

1. The first goal was to initially assess parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC.

2. The second goal was to develop a strategic plan to utilize technological advancements in communication to implement and practice a Baxter model of pastoral care with families of children using CBC's Sunday school curriculum.

3. The third goal was to evaluate whether a Baxter model of pastoral care increased parental perceptions and practices of discipleship.

Research Methodology

This project would be considered successful if the three goals were accomplished. The first goal was to initially assess parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC. This goal was measured by administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey[8] to families of children that attend CBC's Sunday school program that volunteered to be involved in the project. This goal was considered successfully met when at least fifteen families chose to participate.

The second goal was to develop a strategic plan to utilize technological advancements in communication to implement and practice a Baxter model of soul care using CBC's Sunday School curriculum. The curriculum was transformed into the Family Devotion Box plan as described above in the context section. This goal was measured by a panel of three experts that work with children and/or families. This panel used a rubric to evaluate whether the communication tools and plan would increase the discipleship practices of families with children. This goal was considered successfully met when 90 percent of the rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If this benchmark was not initially met, then the plan was revised until the standard was met.

The third goal was to evaluate whether a Baxter model of pastoral care increased the discipleship practices of families with children. This third goal was measured by

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[8] Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011).

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administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey to participants after the eight-week intervention as a post-survey. This goal was considered successfully met when the results of the t-test for dependent samples was evaluated to see if there was a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores. Each family that I contacted was interviewed and those interviews were then evaluated. Themes from the interview were summarized resulting in additional insights into the factors that led to the changes in the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms are used in this ministry project:

Pastoral care. Pastoral care is the formal counseling advice given to believers and unbelievers by a pastor of a local church that intends to bring them to spiritual maturity. A person grows into spiritual maturity when his/her mind changes and becomes more like the mind of Christ (Col 1:28; Eph 4:13). The pastoral staff is responsible to oversee this change. Therefore, a pastor confronts the people with a biblical concept that they do not yet believe and/or practice in the hope that they will change their mind.[9] The attendees of a church are usually comprised of both Christians and non-Christians. Pastoral care conversations with non-Christians focus on their need to believe the gospel message and trust Christ. Pastoral care conversations with Christians focus on the spiritual disciplines or actions they must take to grow in spiritual maturity.

Baxter Model of Pastoral Care. Richard Baxter sought to provide pastoral care for each member of his flock by systematically catechizing each person. He wanted to make sure that his flock understood and applied the truths of Scripture as taught in the catechism and in his sermons. Therefore, a Baxter model of pastoral care is when the

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[9] Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986).

pastor systematically schedules conversations with the members of the congregation about church teachings that result in pastoral care conversations.[10]

Technological advancements in communication. The technological advancements in communication addressed by this project are the telephone, computer, mobile phone, internet, and various smart devices that connect to the internet. These technological advancements have removed numerous barriers to communication and can be leveraged by the pastor.

Three delimitations were placed on the project. First, this project focused exclusively on families with children from the ages of five to eleven. I am the Children and Families' Pastor and am directly responsible for these families. Second, the implementation period was limited to eight weeks. Third, the focus of this project was on Richard Baxter's methodology of pastoral care as found primarily in *The Reformed Pastor* and did not address his various theological teachings.

Conclusion

Numerous communication tools are available to the modern church. Richard Baxter was able to make the charge in the seventeenth century that "mere sloth ties the hands of many."[11] Unfortunately, mere sloth may be the greatest enemy a pastor will face.

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[10] Pastoral care conversations are understood as having two aspects. The first aspect involves the pastor confronting anti-biblical ideas, habits, and affections in the person. This confrontation must be spoken in truth and love (Eph 4:15). The second aspect involves helping the person understand the idea that a person is a sufferer, sinner and saint as discussed in Michael Emlet, *CrossTalk: Where Life and Scripture Meet* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2009), 73-78.

[11] Baxter, *Reformed Pastor*, 273.

CHAPTER 2

SCRIPTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR USING
TECHNOLOGY TO IMPLEMENT A BAXTER
MODEL OF PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is a unique calling upon the elders of the church. The three titles of ἐπίσκοπος, ποιμήν and πρεσβύτης are the primary terms used by the New Testament to describe the office of pastor.[1] All three of these terms are found in Acts 20:17-38 from which Richard Baxter bases his method of pastoral care. The verse that Baxter uses as his primary verse is 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (AV). In this verse Paul calls the gathered group of Ephesian elders *overseers* (ἐπισκόπους) and tells them to feed or shepherd (ποιμαίνειν) the church of God.[2] This chapter will set out to demonstrate that pastoral care uses the Scriptures to bring about spiritual maturity, should be practiced face-to-face, and can be enhanced by using technological advancements in communication to prepare for pastoral visits.

This chapter will first examine Acts 20:17-38 on which Baxter's perennially influential work, *Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor*, is based.[3] After looking closely

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[1] This paper will utilize the term *pastor* as the biblical office described by elder, overseer, and pastor. This decision is based upon the *Baptist Faith Message 2000* declaration that the church's "scriptural officers are pastors and deacons."

[2] When this project discusses Richard Baxter's interpretation of Scripture, it will utilize the 1611 Authorized Version (AV) which Baxter would have used (Baxter himself created a paraphrase of the New Testament in 1685). Otherwise, the Scriptures quoted are ESV unless indicated otherwise. The AV translates ποιμαίνειν as feed. On the other hand, the ESV translates it as "care," while the CSB translates it as "shepherd." This project will refer to Baxter's form of personal instruction as "pastoral care."

[3] This work includes the names of Gildas and Salvian who were ancient critics of the common departure from Christian living. Gildas was a monk in during the sixth century and Salvian was priest in the

at how Baxter's model of "personal catechizing" can be a reasonable application of the text, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5 will be examined. This passage demonstrates that the tasks required by the pastoral ministry cannot be accomplished without the Scriptures. Finally, the apostolic *parousia* will be examined to see how it can function as a model for using technological advancements in communication when preparing for a pastoral visit.

Acts 20:17-38

Acts 20:17-38 was the text Richard Baxter used to anchor his idea of what it meant to practice pastoral care. This passage was Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders and was in a sense a commissioning speech for the church at large.[4] This speech could even be understood as the qualities an exemplary pastor should have. Baxter himself wrote, "This one speech better deserves a twelvemonth's [*sic*] study, than most things that young students do lay out their time in."[5] Few other passages better describe the work of shepherding. Paul urged the Ephesian elders to diligently care for the church in order to protect it from false doctrine and build up the members of the church. Hence, this passage teaches that faithful pastoral care protects the church and builds up the church.

Paul's speech involves reflection on the past and anticipation of the future.[6] Paul goes back and forth in the speech. He reflects on how he carried out his ministry and then anticipates what will happen in the future. His anticipation is about the end of his own ministry (vv. 22-25), future threats on the church (vv. 29-30), and the ability of God and his Word to build up the church (v. 32). These three expectations are outnumbered and

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fifth century. Baxter quotes from Gildas in the preface and extols the godliness of Salvian. Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 12-17.

[4] Ernst Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 597.

[5] Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 310.

[6] C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 1998), 2:979.

surrounded by examples of Paul's past ministry: Paul ministered humbly (v. 19a) persevered through hardship (v. 19b), spoke difficult yet edifying truth (v. 20a), taught publicly and privately (v. 20b), testified to everyone about the doctrine of repentance and faith (v. 21), testified to the gospel of the grace of God (v. 24), proclaimed the kingdom of God (v. 25), taught all of God's counsel (v. 27), ministered night and day (v. 31a), passionately admonished everyone (v. 31b), was content with what he had (v. 33), and worked hard to provide for his own needs and those that were weak (vv. 34-35).

It is important not to misunderstand these numerous examples of Paul's ministry as being apologetic or defensive.[7] Rather, he (or Luke) is demonstrating what a good, faithful pastor does.[8] C. K. Barrett suggests that what unites both the reflection on the past and the anticipation of the future is the command found in verse 31 to "be alert." The speech is an "exhortation to responsible pastoral service, and this is reinforced both by the example given in the past and the warnings of future perils."[9] Paul is the example of a job well done. If the Ephesian elders are alert and follow Paul's model, then they will also be able to claim success and thereby be "innocent of the blood of all" (v. 26).

Paul does not only command the elders to be alert. The elders are told in verse 28 to pay careful attention to themselves and all the church of God by shepherding the members. This is the command that Baxter particularly focuses on in *The Reformed Pastor*. Barrett claims that this verse is the theological and practical center of the speech.[10] This command tells the Ephesian elders what they must be on the alert to do. They are to focus

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[7] Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles,* The Anchor Bible, vol. 31 (New York: Double Day, 1998), 676.

[8] Haenchen argues that this farewell speech only has value if understood as Luke's opinion of Paul. Otherwise, Paul would have been pointing to himself as the "exemplary model." Despite referencing other places where Paul describes himself as someone to be followed (Gal 4:12; 2 Cor 3:1; 1 Cor 4:16, 11:1), Haenchen believes it "strange" that Paul would have "extoll[ed] himself in such a manner before the elders of the congregation" that was so familiar with Paul. Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, 596.

[9] Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2:979.

[10] Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2:974.

on caring for the sheep. Paul's examples of faithful sacrifice, teaching, and perseverance mean nothing if the flock is not cared for.

These two commands to "be alert" and "pay careful attention to yourselves and the flock" surround the predication that wolves will come in and some of the elders will defect and teach false doctrine. The command to care for the flock comes immediately before the warning of false teachers; the command to be alert comes after. Therefore, Paul is emphasizing that if these pastors are alert and faithful to care for each church member, they will protect the church from spurious and destructive doctrine.

It is worth noting that a third command could possibly be found in the last sentence of Paul's speech. He says, "We must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus" (v. 35). This phrase is the capstone of the speech. It is not a direct command to the Ephesian elders. Rather, Paul says that they and he should help the weak. Paul as the model pastor here identifies himself with the Ephesian elders. Both he and they are to help the weak. Furthermore, he grounds their tireless and faithful work on the command of Christ.[11] Pastors help the weak because Jesus himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (v. 35). This is what pastors do because this is what the ultimate pastor, Christ, said to do.

Looking at the passage as an oscillation between past reflections and future anticipations is not the only way to analyze the passage. In fact, scholars have debated how to divide the text with multiple suggestions.[12] Some even relinquish in finding a clear structure to Paul's farewell speech.[13] While the specific way to analyze this passage is debatable, it is clear that Paul is warning these pastors that if they are not careful to

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[11] Albeit the command in v. 35 is not found in the gospels.

[12] Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 675.

[13] Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2:693.

fulfill their own ministry in the same way Paul did, the church will become the prey of false teachers.

This leads the reader to consider exactly how the pastor is to protect the church from false doctrine: the ministry of the Word of God. Paul commends the Ephesian elders to "God and to the word of his grace" (v. 32). If one reviews all the examples of Paul's ministry mentioned previously, it will be found that seven of the twelve examples of Paul in this passage involve him teaching and applying God's Word. Paul goes on to explain in verse 32 that this word is able to build up the church. Hence, pastors care for the church and build up the church by using the Word of God. F. F. Bruce observes, "Though Paul might go, God was with them still, and so was God's word."[14]

Barrett, along with Bruce, points out that the phrase "word of his grace" in verse 32 should be understood synonymously with "the gospel of the grace of God" in verse 24. If both these phrases are taken together, then Paul is telling the Ephesian elders that God is active in the very "word of grace" they proclaim. Barrett concludes that the speech is conveying that God is in his Word and is able to build up the elders and the church.[15]

The following two ideas have been demonstrated from Acts 20:17-38. First, teaching God's Word was primary in Paul's ministry. Second, he commended the Ephesian elders to the Word of God. It is undeniable that this passage teaches that a pastor should teach God's Word. What is perhaps more difficult to prove is Baxter's view that Paul intended for this teaching of God's Word to be done in a public setting and in a private

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[14] Bruce further points out that there is no distinction between the Word of God's grace used in v. 32 and the good news of the grace of God used in v. 24. F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 394.

[15] Barrett identifies this phenomenon as a *hendiadyoin*. That is, a rhetorical device that uses two nouns to describe a reality instead of using an adjective and a noun. It seems that *gospel* and *word* are interchangeable. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2:980-81.

setting with each person individually.[16] Baxter taught that the "place and manner of teaching" of the pastor was to be public and house to house (v. 20).[17] He understood house to house as describing private instruction given to each person. But in Baxter's day, several objected to this understanding. Some objectors claimed that "house to house" referred to the gathered assembly for public worship since the church in the New Testament would gather in homes.[18] Baxter recognized that they had a valid hermeneutical argument, but responded with this: "I confess myself somewhat inclinable to the exposition of the objectors, though I come not quite up to their sense."[19] Baxter insists that in verse 20 Paul is distinguishing between the teaching he did "house to house" and the teaching he did "publicly."[20]

While Baxter believes "house to house" means that Paul taught each family individually, he does not spend extensive time defending his stance from verse 20. Instead, he relies on the command in verse 28, "take heed therefore . . . to all the flock" (AV). One cannot take heed to all if one does not know all and spend time with all. For Baxter, the application of this command is crystal clear:

> The object of our pastoral care is, *all the flock*: that is, the church and every member of it. . . . But that which is less understood or considered of, is, that *all* the flock, even each individual member of our charge must be taken heed of, and watched over by us in our ministry. To which end it is to be presupposed necessary, that (unless where absolute necessity forbiddeth it, through the scarcity of pastors, and greatness of the flock,) we should *know* every person that belongeth to our charge; for how can we take heed to them if we do not know them?[21]

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[16] Zachary K. McCoy, "Acts 20:28 and the Scriptural Basis of Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor*" (ThM diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2012).

[17] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 311.

[18] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 361.

[19] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 361. Baxter spent time in his appendix defending the accusation that he was misinterpreting "house to house." See Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 361-64. See also McCoy, "Acts 20:28 and the Scriptural Basis," 19.

[20] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 83.

[21] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 82.

For Baxter, a pastor is disobedient if he does not take heed to each individual member. He was exasperated that some did not share his view that verse 28 commanded the pastor to instruct every individual. Baxter's stance can be seen in his following rebuttal:

> If there were nothing but the general command of taking heed to all the flock, and no more but your very Pastoral relation to each member . . . . what need there be more to convince you that you should take care of them, and help every one particularly as effectually as you can. In a word, the sum of the question is, whether you are bound to do the best you can to save the souls of all your Parishioners? Do this and I desire no more. Do you think in your conscience that you do the best you can, if you can exhort, instruct, or catechise [*sic*] them personally, and will not?[22]

While Baxter focuses on Acts 20:28, verse 31 suggests that Paul instructed individuals. He says that he "admonished every one with tears." That is, every member of the church was admonished.[23] Paul uses similar language in Colossians 1:28 where he says he and his team warn everyone so that they may present everyone mature in Christ. Even though Baxter does not cite verse 31 as support for individual instruction, Paul makes the claim that he admonished every single member there in Ephesus. Verse 31 along with Paul's statement of teaching "house to house" in verse 20 indicates that individualized instruction was conducted by Paul and hence modeled and commanded by Paul.

Therefore, Baxter's model of individual instruction is a reasonable application of the command in verse 28 to "take heed therefore . . . to all the flock."[24] While it may not be *the only* way to apply Acts 20:28, it is nonetheless *a* way to apply the command. This project takes Richard Baxter's stance that systematic personal instruction and consultation is the best way to care for each individual member of the church.

The next section will examine how the Word of God should be the primary tool

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[22] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 363-64.

[23] Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2:980.

[24] See McCoy, "Acts 20:28 and the Scriptural Basis." It is also worth noting that before Paul admonishes the elders to take heed to all the flock, he first tells them to take heed to themselves. Baxter himself pointed this out. If a pastor does not first take heed to his own soul and his own spiritual health, then he will not be equipped or able to care for the flock God has entrusted to him.

used in the pastoral ministry because it is useful to the pastor as he protects and teaches each individual member of the church.

Second Timothy 3:14 - 4:5

Paul encouraged Timothy to use the Scriptures to practice pastoral care. Paul explains the four practical uses of Scripture and then goes on to give Timothy five particular commands regarding how to minister the word (2 Tim 3:16-4:2). Prior to these instructions, Paul reminds Timothy of how powerful the Scriptures were in Timothy's formative years (2 Tim 3:14-15). Paul ends this passage by explaining that if Timothy uses Scripture appropriately, he will fulfill his ministry and prepare the church for difficult times (2 Tim 4:3-5). It will be seen from this passage that no matter the pastoral task, the Scriptures are the central tools.

Paul wanted Timothy to continue to teach correctly once he was gone. Timothy had his opponents, and they were more concerned about being novel. They wanted to teach something new. Paul wanted Timothy to steer clear of this error. Instead, he was to stand on tradition.[25] That tradition was ultimately found in the Scriptures, which refers to the Old Testament Scriptures (3:16).[26] Paul makes the claim that the Scriptures are "God breathed" or "inspired." Therefore, the Scriptures would be the ultimate source of tradition. God breathed these writings.

But Paul is not merely arguing that Scripture should be the source of all teaching. He wants Timothy to know that the Scriptures are useful because they are inspired. I. Howard Marshall puts it like this: "Whatever is inspired is therefore useful."[27] Luke Timothy Johnson agrees with Marshall in that the ultimate point of 2 Timothy 3:16

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[25] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 35a (New York: Double Day, 2001), 425.

[26] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 423.

[27] I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1999), 795.

is that Scripture is useful, but he claims that Paul is not concerned about the authority of Scriptures.[28] These two scholars disagree on what it means for the Scriptures to be inspired, yet still agree that the ultimate point is the usefulness of Scripture. No matter what one's view on the inspiration of Scripture, Paul is claiming that the Scriptures are useful.

Now to explain how the Scriptures are "useful" or "profitable." They are "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (3:16). Marshall sees a chiasmus in this construction.[29] Paul begins with teaching and then ends with "training in righteousness," which are both educational domains. In the middle of this list is reproof and correction, which are both concerned with identifying wrong behaviors and making change. Each of these four uses of Scripture will be briefly treated.

It makes sense for Paul to begin with teaching. He wants Timothy to continue in the teachings he has embraced as a young child (3:14-15). While the false teachers and "impostors" are "deceiving and being deceived," Timothy is to stand on the teachings given him by his mother, grandmother, and Paul (3:13). However, pastoral care involves much more than teaching. The pastor must equip the people of God to "be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (Jas 1:22). John Calvin observes that instruction by itself is "often of little avail."[30] Therefore, Calvin suggests that reproof and correction was added by Paul to clarify what additional actions should be done with the Scriptures. Pastoral care must be more than instruction.

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[28] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 423. Johnson bemoans that 2 Tim 3:16-17 has been systematically "tortured" by those desiring to show the Bible as the "exclusive source of divine revelation." Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 422. But that is the exact claim this chapter wishes to support.

[29] Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 795.

[30] John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus,* trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 250.

Second, Scripture is described as useful for reproof. This term has a nuanced range of meaning compounded by two variant readings within the manuscripts.[31] The first option is to understand reproof as punishment and chastisement (variant: ἐλεγμός). The second option is to understand reproof in a logical sense. That is, the logical process of proving a proposition true (variant: ἔλεγχος). These options can be resolved by understanding ἐλεγμός with the nuanced meaning of conviction.[32] Conviction captures both the idea of chastisement and a logical proof. Scripture is used to convict of sin in a legal sense. It clearly describes right and wrong and when one is confronted with the Scripture, he will be convicted and pronounced "guilty." In this way, the sinner is chastised and reproved. Though, Paul does not want Timothy to merely use the Scripture to convict, it also has restoration properties as described next.

Third, Scripture is described as useful for correction, which should be understood as "improving" or "setting right."[33] That is, Scripture can correct and point in the right direction after failing. It is right that correction comes after reproof (i.e., conviction). After being reproved, being charged as guilty before God, and experiencing a "godly grief that leads to repentance" (2 Cor 7:10), God offers correction. He gives an opportunity through the counsel of the Scriptures to make things right.

Finally, Scripture is described as useful for training in righteousness. Paul ends where he begins: the domain of education. I. Howard Marshall observes that the term

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[31] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 420-21. Friedrich Büchsel, "ἐλέγχω, ἔλεγξις, ἔλεγχος, ἐλεγμός." in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, and G. Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 2:476.

[32] Jay Adams, *How to Help People Change* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 107-18. Marshall points out that ἐλεγμός means "conviction," but also can carry the meaning of "reproof." Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 795. Quinn and Wacker are comfortable leaving the issue alone by explaining the words are cognates. They suggest looking at this word as "rebuke/correction/ proof" and consider it the same meaning when used in 2 Tim 4:2. Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, Critical Eerdmans Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 763.

[33] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 421.

"training" is a "strong element of discipline and correction."[34] The emphasis on discipline seems fitting regarding the progression of words Paul just used. The Scriptures are taught first and then bring about a conviction of sin. Hope is then offered in the form of correction, and finally accountability, training, and discipline is provided through the Scriptures. The correction made in one's life can stick because Scripture is useful to train one in righteous living.

The final goal of the Scripture is a fully equipped "man of God." The term "man of God" designates those especially set apart as God's representatives.[35] Therefore, the Scriptures are the very tool that equip God's representative to carry out God's work. This understanding is not fully agreed upon by scholars. Some understand it to mean that the Scriptures equip Christians to do good works. While both readings are valid ways of reading the text, the position taken in this project understands the "man of God" as God's representative.[36] Therefore, the "man of God" does the work of pastoral care and those specific tasks are to teach, reprove, correct, and train in righteousness.

After explaining the four tasks for which Scripture is useful, Paul goes on to give five commands.[37] Those commands are to preach the Word, be ready, reprove, rebuke, and exhort. These commands are proceeded by the solemn phrase, "I charge you." This phrase heightens the gravity of the five commands.[38] Paul takes it a step further by calling on the presence of God and Christ's role as coming judge. This is a serious calling Paul is placing on Timothy. In fact, it is not just Paul giving this charge, it is God.

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[34] Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 795.

[35] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 421.

[36] Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 781. Cf. p. 796.

[37] Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 769.

[38] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 427.

The first command is to "preach the word." The term "preach" does not mean a prepared speech that is orderly and delivered for a particular purpose and with a desired outcome. Instead, it carries the idea of declaring an event.[39] The event that needs to be declared is the "word." This at first can be puzzling. How can the word be an event? This is cleared up when it is understood that the term "word" builds on what Paul has already said about the word or "saying." That is, the message is not bound (2:9), it is faithful (2:11), and it is to be rightly handled (2:16).[40] In essence, it is the divine gospel message as given to Paul to preach.[41] The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:1-8). Paul is now giving Timothy a reminder of his primary responsibility to preach this gospel message.

The source of this gospel message is of course the Scriptures. In this context, it is specifically the Old Testament Scriptures (3:15-17). Timothy was able to understand salvation because he was acquainted with the Old Testament Scriptures since childhood (3:15). Calvin makes the point that the witness of the New Testament Scriptures added nothing substantial to the Old Testament Scriptures: "The writings of the apostles contain nothing else than a simple and natural explanation of the Law and the Prophets."[42] That is, the New Testament unveils and fulfills what the Old Testament taught. Both testaments substantially contain the same message.

The next four commands to the man of God regard how to preach this word of God. The first one is "be ready in season and out of season." Timothy is to be ready at all times. It does not matter if he is expected to teach or not, he must always be ready to preach

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[39] Gerhnard Friedrich, "κῆρυξ (ἱεροκῆρυξ), κηρύσσω, κήρυγμα, προκηρύσσω," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, and G. Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 3:703.

[40] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 428.

[41] William Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 600.

[42] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus,* 251.

God's Word. The next three commands describe the "modes of discourse" that the "man of God" uses in preaching the Word.[43] Those are the modes of reproof, rebuke, and exhortation. The word *reproof* appeared when describing the uses of Scripture. Here the reading is ἔλεγχος, and clearly means the idea of logically refuting a position and giving a proof.

Next comes the mode of "rebuke" and is much harsher and is only used here in the works of Paul. The term *rebuke* is found more often in the Gospels.[44] When found there, it is usually Jesus doing the rebuking. In fact, the disciples are often rebuked for rebuking. The only command that the disciples receive to rebuke is found in Luke 17:3 where they are told to rebuke their brother if he sins. Quinn and Wacker suggest that when the "man of God" rebukes, he should do it in the name of the Lord. Hence, "the rebuke is to come through a man indeed, but out of the word of God with the authority of the God who authored that Word."[45] That is, the only authority the "man of God" has is based on the Word of God.

Finally, the "man of God" is told to exhort. This exhortation comes with comfort. The range of meaning behind this word involves both inviting, exhorting, and comfort depending on the context.[46] The man of God must be able to comfort and exhort others to good works. After proving one guilty and rebuking improper behavior, the man of God must be able to encourage the people of God to continue on in righteous living.

Before Timothy was given the four uses of Scripture and the five commands regarding how to proclaim the message taught by the Scriptures, he was reminded by Paul that the Scriptures were formative in Timothy's own life. Timothy is told to "continue in"

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[43] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 428.

[44] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 428.

[45] Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 771.

[46] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 429.

the things he learned as a child (3:14-15). When believers are asked to do something, the language of continuing is often used. That is, they should follow an established pattern that.[47] That pattern was found in the Scriptures he was taught. Paul chooses to call the Scripture "sacred writings" in verse 15, which is literally "sacred letters." He may have chosen this word because young Israelites would learn how to read and write by studying the Old Testament Scriptures. These sacred letters that Timothy used to learn to read and write had the power to make Timothy wise for salvation. The word *power* (δύναμαι), is used by Paul in both 1 & 2 Timothy in reference to what a person, including God, can or cannot do. Here it is referring to the ability of Scripture to grant wisdom.[48]

The Scriptures are a powerful, God-given tool to the "man of God." They must be utilized within the context of pastoral care. Paul finishes this section by explaining that a time is coming when people will not want to hear healthy teaching from the Scriptures. Because of this, Timothy should endeavor to use the powerful Scriptures while his audience is willing to receive them (4:3-4). Despite his audience, Timothy is encouraged to be "sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill [his] ministry" (4:5). He should faithfully proclaim the good news found in the Scriptures while keeping a clear head, despite all attack and opposition against him. If he does this, he will fulfill his ministry. That is, he will fully complete the commission given him by God.[49]

Richard Baxter's method of pastoral care involved teaching God's Word. In fact, he said that God would be pleased if "every shop, and every house, were busied in learning Catechisms, and speaking of the word and works of God."[50] He wanted the Word of God used by every pastor as he conducted individualized instruction. His method

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[47] Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 787.

[48] Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 758-59.

[49] Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 431.

[50] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 278.

embraced the idea that the pastoral ministry cannot be accomplished without the Scriptures. Now it will be examined how the apostolic *parousia* as found in the Pauline Epistles can be a model for using technology when preparing for the pastoral visits that Baxter's model of pastoral care requires.

Apostolic *Parousia* as Model for the Use of Technology in the Preparation of Pastoral Visits

From time to time, Paul mentions to his readers that he will be visiting them at some point in the future. By referencing his own coming, Paul gives a sense of being present with the recipients. It produces anticipation or even dread that the apostle is going to visit. The thought that Paul will visit soon can have the effect of spurring the congregation to obedience. However, Paul is not always able to come, or perhaps in the case of the Corinthians, may not desire to come. When this is the case, instead of focusing on his own coming he makes one of two comments. He either references the fact that he himself is writing the letter they received, or he references how the emissaries bringing the letter have been sent by him. In this way, Paul makes his apostolic presence felt while he is absent from the congregation.[51]

This peculiar literary device found in the Pauline letters was first identified by Robert W. Funk in 1967, and has been termed the "apostolic *parousia*."[52] While his model has been revised and criticized, two helpful features are pertinent to this project.[53] First,

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[51] Jeffrey A. D. Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians,* Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 189-90.

[52] Robert Funk, "The Apostolic Parousia: Form and Significance," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1967), 249-68.

[53] See footnotes in following sources for a detailed list of critiques and revisions of Funk's work: Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians*, 189; Lee A. Johnson, "Paul's Epistolary Presence in Corinth: A New Look at Robert Funk's "Apostolic Parousia," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (July 2006): 481-82. The key critiques of Funk are by David E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 190; L. Ann Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans: A Comparative Letter Structure Investigation* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991), 110-31; Margaret Mitchell, *Paul and the*

Funk clearly identifies thirteen passages where Paul explicitly mentions his presence or *parousia* in a letter. Second, he points out that Paul emphasizes his presence to the recipients of the letter for a particular purpose.[54]

This project attempts to enhance the practice of pastoral care by using technological advancements in communication. If Paul used the idea of his coming or his presence in his letter, then technology today can give a heightened sense of the presence of the pastor. While pastors as "men of God" do not have the same apostolic authority of Paul, as noted in 2 Timothy 4, the pastor is tasked with reproofing, rebuking, and exhorting the congregation.

Five of the thirteen passages analyzed by Funk will now be examined.[55] First Thessalonians 2:17-3:13 is examined first because it best displays Paul's longing to see a group of people. Paul was quickly torn away from the Thessalonians due to persecution. Then the apostolic *parousia* as found in Romans 1:11-13 and 15:14-33 is examined because Funk used Romans 15:14-33 as the primary example of the apostolic *parousia*. Furthermore, the two uses of the aposotolic *parousia* in the Roman epistle frame Paul's preaching of the gospel. Philemon 22 is then examined because the letter is address to one individual which best mimics what would be done in a Baxter model of pastoral care. Finally, 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 is examined because it is the first of many uses of the apostolic *parousia* within the Corinthian correspondence. The peculiar use of the apostolic *parousia* in each passage will be analyzed to see how it contributes to the overall point of the passage.

Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 197-98.

[54] Johnson, "Paul's Epistolary Presence in Corinth," 481-86.

[55] Those thirteen passages are Rom 15:14-33; Rom 1:8ff.; Phlm 21f.; 1 Cor 4:14-21; 1 Thess 2:17-3:13; Phil 2:19-24; 1 Cor 16:1-11; 2 Cor 8:16-23; 2 Cor 9:1-5; 2 Cor 12:14-13:13; Gal 4:12-20; Phil 2:25-30; 1 Cor 16:12. See Johnson, "Paul's Epistolary Presence in Corinth," 484-85.

First Thessalonians 2:17-3:13

In 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13 Paul is concerned about two things: his separation from the Thessalonians (2:17-20) and the persecution the church was facing in Thessalonica (3:1-5). Paul senses strongly the attack of Satan in his separation from the Thessalonians (cf. 2:18; 3:5). Paul's fears and concern for the church are relieved when he receives the good news from Timothy (3:6-10). Timothy reports that the Thessalonica church has "faith and love" while also longing to see Paul and his team.[56]

Jane Heath observes the ancient Greek construction of "*enargeia*" in 1 Thessalonians 1-3. She introduces this term not to complicated matters, but because it captures the idea of making something that is absent feel as if it is vividly present. In this way, the term is closely related to Funk's apostolic *parousia*. She explains, "*Enargeia* is not a structural element but a feature of style."[57] Paul uses his written words to vividly remind the Thessalonians of his past visit so that they will look forward to another visit.[58]

Paul specifically uses this technique in this passage.[59] In 2:17, Paul mentions that he desires to see the Thessalonians face to face. While he has been torn away in person, he has not been torn away in heart. He then paints the picture of the Thessalonians experiencing the same longings (3:6). This is based on Timothy's report. The resolution of Paul's concerns about the Thessalonians are wrapped up in his and their desire to be together. On top of all that, the desire to be together is couched in the language of Christ's own coming (2:19; 3:9). Any reunion Paul will have with the Thessalonians will be overshadowed by the final reunion when Christ returns.

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[56] Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians*, 192-94.

[57] Jane M. F. Heath, "Absent Presences of Paul and Christ: *Enargeia* in 1 Thessalonians 1-3," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no. 1 (2009): 7.

[58] Heath, "Absent Presences of Paul and Christ," 1-7.

[59] Heath, "Absent Presences of Paul and Christ," 23-24.

Paul uses the apostolic *parousia* to give comfort to the Thessalonians.[60] Paul is not attempting to reprove or rebuke the congregation. He is not needing to emphasize his authority as an apostle. He longs to see them and they long to be with him and the reason they cannot be together is because of the work of Satan in bringing about the persecution which abruptly tore Paul from their presence.

Romans 1:11-13

In Romans 1:11-13, Paul is longing for the Romans in the same way he was longing to see the Thessalonians. Noteworthy in this passage is that Paul had never met this congregation before, yet he was able to have the same affection for them as the Thessalonians. Early Christians showed extreme affection for one another because of the hope that they would all be united in Christ. This was expressed even between those who had never met. Second Corinthians 9:14 demonstrates this well where Paul tells the Corinthians that those with him long for the Christians in Corinth because of the "surpassing grace of God" upon them.[61]

Paul wants to see the Romans so that he can give them "some spiritual gift to strengthen" them (1:11). This spiritual gift that Paul desires to give the Romans is the gospel.[62] Paul does not want to only win converts through this preaching of the gospel; he hopes the preaching will also strengthen those who currently believe. Strengthening comes from this proclamation. Interestingly, because Paul was unable to visit Rome, he was then able to give them (and the world!) the gospel in written form. Joseph Fitzmyer

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[60] Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians*, 190.

[61] Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 123.

[62] Thomas Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 60; Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 248.

rightly makes a note on 1:11 that Paul "is sharing the gospel, as he says in 1 Thess 2:8, and in due time he will share himself."[63]

It is here where the purpose of the apostolic *parousia* in this passage is seen. Paul wants to be with the Romans so he can proclaim the gospel, but he is prevented. Therefore, he positions himself as being present in the letter as he preaches the gospel in written form (1:15). This comes with the assumption that one day Paul will visit the Roman church.

Romans 15:14-33

Paul ends his letter similar to how he begins the letter. In a sense, Paul has framed the preaching of the gospel with discussions about his travel plans and how those plans will affect his visit to the Romans. In verse 14 he addresses them as brothers with an apologetic tone. He does not want to offend the church he has never met. Rather, he hopes to establish a good relationship with them. To that end he says he is "satisfied" with them and believes they are "full of goodness . . . knowledge, and able to instruct one another." This is not an empty compliment. Paul has a close relationship with Prisca and Aquilla and apparently several other members (16:3-16). This honest compliment sets the stage for his claim to be the apostle to the Gentiles and hence an apostle to Rome.[64]

Paul's use of the apostolic *parousia* at the end of the letter to the Romans is to underscore his apostleship to them. He wants them to recognize the truth of the gospel preached to them in the letter and thereby accept him as an apostle of God to the Gentiles. This can be seen specifically in verse 18. Paul points out that he will not speak of anything unless it is from Christ, hence emphasizing his role in bringing the gospel to the Romans.

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[63] Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 248.

[64] Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 349-51.

Weima points out, "If the Roman readers do not wish to reject Christ, they must accept Paul (and his gospel) as the one through whom Christ is working."[65]

Paul further appeals to the Romans to pray for him. Paul evokes Christ and his salvific work in the Roman church as well as the love of the Spirit that has been poured into the believer's hearts (Rom 5:5). Paul wants them to strive together with him in prayer. To strive in prayer means that the Christian should not pray haphazardly or sluggishly. Instead, right prayer involves "discipline, energy, and earnestness."[66]

The apostolic *parousia* attempts to connect the Roman believers with Paul with the expectation that their current prayers will bring about Paul's speedy arrival to Rome.

Philemon 22

There is an apostolic *parousia* in the short letter to Philemon regarding his slave, Onesimus. Apparently, Onesimus came across Paul in his imprisonment. Paul is now sending Onesimus back to Philemon with the letter, but the letter comes with a request: be reconciled with Onesimus (vv. 10-12, 16, 17).

In addition, Paul may very well be asking for Philemon to send Onesimus back to Paul as a fellow worker in the gospel ministry. One can see this in verse 17 where Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would Paul. That is, Philemon should view his slave, Onesimus, as a partner. But this would require some sort of monetary restitution. Onesimus at the least stole from his master by running away, or at the most defrauded Philemon in some greater way. Either way, Philemon needed repayment and Paul offers to pay him for any loss Onesimus caused to Philemon (v. 18). Paul writes with his own

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[65] Jeffrey A.D. Weima, "The Reason for Romans: The Evidence of Its Epistolary Framework (1:1-15; 15:14-16:27)," *Review and Expositor* 111 (Winter 2003): 26.

[66] Schreiner, *Romans*, 721-22.

hand in verse 19 that he would repay Philemon and then describes his desire to benefit from Philemon and be refreshed.[67]

This is where one sees the apostolic *parousia* begin. The very act of writing with his own hand rather than through the amanuensis hints at Paul's desire to make his presence known. Furthermore, Paul tells Philemon in verse 21 that he is confident he will obey Paul's instruction to reconcile with his slave. He goes on to say he is confident that Philemon will do even more than Paul asked. N. T. Wright sees this as a hint that Paul would have Philemon free his slave, Onesimus, and receive him as he would Paul (cf. v. 17). Paul then, almost as an aside, says, "Prepare a guest room for me" (v. 22). Paul intends to visit Philemon. Paul references Philemon's prayers for him that he will be released from prison and be "graciously given to you." Paul's description of a future visit is not a threat, but a fulfillment of Philemon's prayers. Paul seems very confident that his eventual visit to Philemon will reveal Philemon's obedience. This is in contrast to how Paul speaks about his visit to the Corinthians.[68]

First Corinthians 4:14-21

Paul spends the first part of the letter rebuking the Corinthians about their divisions over ministers. He spends much time attempting to correct their ungodly and worldly thinking. A cursory look at the first four chapters reveals a tone of rebuke that even involves sarcasm (vv. 8-13). It is after this sarcastic rebuke regarding the Corinthians desire to live like kings while the people of God often suffer for Christ that Paul reminds the Corinthians that he loves them.[69]

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[67] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 107-8.

[68] N. T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon,* Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 12 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), 195-97.

[69] Thomas Schreiner, *1 Corinthians,* Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 7 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018), 60, 104-5.

Indeed, after such a rebuke they need to hear that Paul is still affectionate toward them. It is here where the apostolic *parousia* is used. Paul makes his presence felt by referring to his role as father to the Corinthians, Timothy as his emissary, his coming visit, and how he will deal with those that are arrogant. In fact, as Schreiner notes, "Paul has written this entire section to induce the Corinthians to repent of their divisions and pride."[70]

The image of father and child is the metaphor most suited for Paul's purpose. As father, Paul founded the church and has the authority to admonish and correct the Corinthians. Furthermore, he is able to call on them to imitate him and put off their arrogant attitudes. Paul's hope is that the Corinthians will respond to his letter with repentance.[71] To ensure that they will obey, Paul promises to visit soon (v. 19). This is not a temporal claim. It may be a while before Paul gets there, but Paul *will* come none the less. Paul is emphasizing the certainty of his coming and the sovereignty of God in regard to when he arrives.[72]

When Paul arrives, it will be to inspect the Corinthians. If they have not corrected their behavior, then he will use the rod of discipline (v. 21). Gordon Fee points out that Paul is continuing his father-child metaphor. Furthermore, one should not read the "threat" as pointing the finger at only the arrogant ringleaders. Instead, Paul is concerned that the Corinthian community as a whole is not exercising proper discipline. Fee emphasizes that verse 21 is meant to transition to the two following chapters where it is clear the congregation is not exercising any form of discipline.[73]

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[70] Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 106.

[71] Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 199-200.

[72] Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 207-8.

[73] Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 209.

In contrast to Fee, Paul Gardner suggests that 4:21 should be seen as "compassionate humor." Paul is giving them an option: is his visit going to involve discipline or will it involve gentleness? Of course, everyone would prefer the later. Gardner also mentions Paul's reference to himself as their father in verse 15. Though, Gardner focuses on the fact that Paul says the Corinthians have many "guides" or pedagogues, but only one father. In that time, the pedagogue would often be the one with the rod. They have a choice: will they obey the admonishment of their father as found in this letter, or does Paul have to degrade himself and become a guide in order to discipline them?[74]

However one views Paul's closing comment, it is clear Paul is coming in person to deal with the matter. Paul implores the use of the apostolic *parousia* to spur the congregation to action and self-discipline. If they do not respond in repentance and obedience then Paul will have to exercise his apostolic authority through discipline.

Application

The apostolic *parousia* was a unique literary device Paul used to make his presence felt among the recipients of his letters. A literary device usually encouraged them to obey specific commands and applications from Scripture. By using technological advancements in communication, the modern pastor can more readily make his presence felt in the lives of his congregation. A phone or video call can immediately transport the pastor into the same room as the congregant. But the apostolic *parousia* also involved the recipients being held accountable by Paul due to some future meeting. Technology can be useful to quickly check in on the progress of a member. Paul would have had to wait months or even years before he visited the congregation. Baxter would see the member every week at public worship, but even in this case he would not be able to have a true in-depth conversation. Baxter planned such conversations with each member one to two

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[74] Paul Gardner, *1 Corinthians,* Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 218.

times a year. With modern technology, the pastor can be a consistent part of the member's life.

Summary

Since this project proposes to implement Richard Baxter's model of pastoral care as found in *Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor*, the text on which this book was based was examined (Acts 20:17-38). The conclusion was reached that Richard Baxter's model of "personal catechizing" can be a reasonable application of the text. Second, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5 was examined, and it was demonstrated from this passage that the tasks required by the pastoral ministry cannot be accomplished without the Scriptures. Third, Paul's use of the apostolic *parousia* was examined to demonstrate how it encouraged obedience. The chapter concluded by briefly examining how the apostolic *parousia* can function as a model for using technological advancements in communication when preparing for a pastoral visit.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR USING
TECHNOLOGY TO IMPLEMENT A BAXTER MODEL OF
PASTORAL CARE WITH FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

All the methods used by Richard Baxter cannot be implemented by the modern

pastor. Charles Kemp observed in 1948,

> Some of his thoughts we have outgrown; some of his concepts must be changed and
> modified; in some areas we can go far beyond anything he was able to do but,
> recognizing all this, we still have much to learn from him, and a study of his life has
> much to offer the pastor in the modern world, especially the one who is concerned
> about the personal problems of specific people whom he has the privilege and
> responsibility to serve.[1]

This statement is still true today. Pastors have much to learn from Baxter, but his

methods should be enhanced by the revolutionary advancements in communication that

have occurred since the seventeenth century. This chapter will make the case that Richard

Baxter's model of pastoral care of families and his particular goals of conversion and

sanctification can be enhanced with technological advancements in communication.

Baxter's Model of Pastoral Care

Richard Baxter's model of pastoral care hinged on having a personal conference

with every family in his parish once a year. He described his model of pastoral care in his

book, *The Reformed Pastor.* This work was initially a sermon to pastors. Baxter planned

to preach this sermon at a gathering of the ministers of the Worcestershire association in

December 1655. These ministers had already pledged themselves to personally instruct

every member in their parish, which Baxter considered an awakening work of God. The

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[1] Charles F. Kemp, *A Pastoral Triumph: The Story of Richard Baxter & His Ministry at Kidderminster* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 84.

ministers planned to use that gathering to confess their lack of devotion to the work of individualized instruction and thereby humble themselves before God.

Unfortunately, Baxter became ill and was unable to deliver the sermon. After being encouraged by the association, he published *The Reformed Pastor* in the spring of 1656. A year later, Baxter released a second edition with an appendix addressing various objections.[2] This second edition, republished by William Orme in 1830, is the text used to evaluate Baxter's model of pastoral care.[3] While *The Reformed Pastor* is one of Baxter's earliest printed works, it encapsulates Baxter's understanding of the pastor's duty.[4]

Baxter wrote The *Reformed Pastor* while he served as pastor in the English town of Kidderminster. He initially served there for fifteen months (April 1641–July 1642) and had to leave for five years because of the English Civil War. He accepted the call to return after receiving a letter of invitation from the congregation in the spring of 1647. Baxter then served the congregation until April 1660. The end of Baxter's service to the congregation of Kidderminster ended abruptly as he was on a trip to London "working

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[2] Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 3-4; J. William Black, *Reformation Pastors: Richard Baxter and the Ideal of the Reformed Pastor* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 81-83, 263, 266.

[3] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*; David S. Systma, "Richard Baxter Conformed to Nonconformity: The Reception of Baxter as a Practical Theologian" (paper presented at the annual Andrew Fuller Conference, Louisville, September 19-21, 2016); David S. Systma, *Richard Baxter and the Mechanical Philosophers*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). David Sytsma argues that there was a philosophical bias against Baxter's scholastic philosophy and metaphysics. The mechanical philosophy of Descartes and others was accepted by Phillip Doddridge and other admirers and popularizers of Baxter's practical works. Hence, Baxter's practical works were abridged in a way to exclude the philosophical assumptions that Baxter used to support many of his claims. Systma in particular points out how *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* was edited to remove the excurses Baxter takes in explaining an Aristotelian philosophy of motion. The abridged texts of *The Reformed Pastor* that have become popular are those done by Samuel Palmer (1766) and William Brown (1829). Instead, this project uses the unabridged edition published by William Orme.

[4] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Part III Christian Ecclesiastics*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 5, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 1. Seventeen years after writing *The Reformed Pastor*, Baxter in the *Christian Directory* (1673) refers his reader to *The Reformed Pastor* if they needed clarification regarding pastoral duty.

for religious reconciliation and concord."[5] On May 1, the monarchy was restored in England as King Charles II took the throne and Baxter was appointed one of his royal chaplains. Hence his pulpit ministry in Kidderminster ended.[6]

Baxter's model of pastoral care is dedicated to individualized catechesis, conversion, and sanctification. Any method modeled after Baxter's Kidderminster ministry should contain all three elements. Baxter's method was grounded in personally teaching the catechism by either the pastor himself or by pastoral assistants. The end goal of his instruction was the conversion of the lost and the sanctification of the believer.

Dedication to Individual Catechesis

Richard Baxter was dedicated to individualized instruction that used a catechism. Baxter believed that the Bible clearly taught that the pastor should teach every person within his parish. He says that the Bible itself would "condemn the lazy and unprofitable servants."[7] The servants Baxter is referring to are ministers that choose not to use the helps of catechisms in teaching the people within their congregation. To better comprehend Baxter's vehement declaration of condemnation, one would do well to understand the following six things about Baxter's dedication to individual catechesis.

First, Baxter was *radically* dedicated to individual catechesis. The core of his pastoral care model was one-on-one instruction that used a catechism. His devotion to this method can be seen in the following excerpt from *The Reformed Pastor:*

> Before we undertook this work that we are now upon [that is, individual instruction], our hands were full, and now we are engaged to set apart two days every week from morning to night for private Catechising and instruction; so that any man may see that we must leave undone all that other work that we were wont to do at that time:

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[5] Timothy Beougher, *Richard Baxter and Conversion: A Study of the Puritan Concept of Becoming a Christian* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2007), 28.

[6] Frederick J. Powicke, *A Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter 1615-1691* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1924), 81, 86. Powicke further mentions that Baxter is "is often rather astray in his time-references" (107). Beougher, *Baxter and Conversion,* 24, 28.

[7] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 287.

and we are necessitated to run upon the Public work of preaching with small preparation, and so must deliver the message of God in such a raw and confused manner, and unanswerably to its dignity, and the needs of men's souls, that it is a great trouble to our minds to consider it, and a greater trouble to us when we are doing it. And yet it must be so: there is no remedy. Unless we will omit this personal instruction, we must needs run thus unprepared into the pulpit; and to omit this we dare not, it is so great and necessary a work.[8]

This quote illustrates two ways Baxter radically prioritized individualized instruction. First, he set aside two full days each week to be absolutely focused on private instruction and catechizing. Baxter and his assistants began this work in the early morning and went well into the evening. This time of personal instruction was an unmovable slot in his calendar. Also, individualized instruction surpassed preaching preparation on Baxter's list of priorities.[9] He counted the cost and decided he would rather step "unprepared into the pulpit" rather than omit the "great and necessary work" of personal instruction.

Second, Baxter practiced his model of pastoral care in his own parish ministry at Kidderminster for at least seven years. He modeled and tested what he urged others to do. Powicke suggests that the moment *The Reformed Pastor* was published in December of 1655 Baxter and his assistants were "systematic catechizers and instructors of the people—young and old—week by week, for the next five years."[10] But Baxter had already been convicted of the need of personal instruction and therefore devoted himself to this practice two years earlier in 1653.[11] Hence, by the time his clarion call in *The Reformed Pastor* was published in 1655, Baxter had a tested method that he was convinced was a mandate from God.

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[8] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 259.

[9] Indeed, Baxter believed that individualized instruction actually was a form of preaching preparation. See Baxter's response to the objection of "backward minds" that practicing individualized instruction would prevent the minister from studying in *The Reformed Pastor*, 296-98.

[10] Powicke, *A Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter*, 129.

[11] Powicke, *A Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter*, 105; William Orme, *The Life and Times of Richard Baxter*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 1, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 126. Baxter himself says that he knows by experience that an "ignorant sot that hath been an unprofitable hearer so long, hath got more knowledge and remorse of conscience in half an hour's close discourse, than they did from ten year's public preaching." Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 276.

Third, Baxter valued the method of catechesis over unity on secondary and tertiary doctrines. Even though the individualized instruction conducted by Baxter and his assistants was based around a catechism, he did not insist on a particular catechism. Nor did he believe a minister should make all people within his parish use the same catechism. This is of importance for it shows that Baxter was more concerned about the method of catechesis and pastoral care than he was about the fine points of doctrine. This is not to say that Baxter was unconcerned about doctrine, which is evidenced by his numerous books and treatises on various doctrinal issues.[12] Baxter indeed had a staunch opinion on almost every theological topic. However, when it came to catechesis, all that mattered to Baxter was that the catechism was orthodox.[13]

Fourth, Baxter argued that every person should be given a catechism. Beyond that, he believed it would be best if the catechism was personally placed in the hand of each person by the minister himself. If the pastor distributed the catechisms by going house to house, he would have the opportunity to encourage them to learn the catechism. Not only should the minister deliver the catechism himself, but Baxter believed the pastor should incur the cost if possible. If the pastor was unable to provide the catechisms out of his own money, then Baxter suggests two options. Someone blessed with financial resources could provide the money or the congregation could take up a collection to purchase the catechisms. No matter what, the minister should endeavor to supply the catechisms and not sell them. Baxter believed that if every person in the parish was given a catechism then they would not have any excuses for not learning them. If the people were not given a catechism, then the majority would not go and purchase one themselves.[14]

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[12] William Orme, *Chronological List of The Works of Richard Baxter*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 1, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 793-99.

[13] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 20-21, 317.

[14] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor,* 229, 316-17.

Fifth, Baxter was systematic in his catechesis. Once the catechisms were delivered to his people, Baxter had his clerk scheduled the families that would meet with him the next week on Mondays and Tuesdays. He attempted to meet with a family every hour. This resulted in meeting with fourteen to sixteen families each week, which enabled Baxter and his assistants to personally instruct each family every year. Being systematic ensured that not one of his flock was overlooked in his pastoral care.[15]

Sixth, Baxter believed that teaching the catechism was a means of making the pastor wise. Some objected that if they dedicated themselves to personal instruction two days a week, then they would not have enough time to study and learn themselves. Baxter immediately cries foul and points out that those in the university of his day had four days to prepare for lectures. Why would a pastor need more than four days to study and prepare? Furthermore, Baxter argues that teaching the catechism or creed to the members of the parish will make a minister wiser than he would be if he spent his time studying other material. He believed that the pastor was more effective when he actually practiced and taught the doctrines he studied. Otherwise, the pastor would be useless if he merely studied and never cared for the flock.[16]

Baxter was radically devoted to individual catechesis because he believed it was the best means of conversion and sanctification. He knew it would be difficult and would require much diligence, but the reward of seeing people converted and sanctified was worth the cost. Conversion and sanctification are essential elements in a Baxter model of pastoral care because these are the very two outcomes that Baxter pursued.

Dedication to Conversion

Conversion is the first of the two primary goals of Richard Baxter's method of pastoral care (i.e., individual catechesis). William Black observes, "Baxter was utterly

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[15] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 21-22.

[16] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor,* 298, 364-65.

persuaded that the pastor's primary task was evangelistic in nature, and that failure at this point meant the shipwreck of God's purposes for the Church and eternal disaster for untold thousands of souls."[17]

Timothy Beougher also points out that Baxter thought personal instruction or individual catechesis would lead to the salvation of souls. Conversion was so much on Baxter's heart that he thought that minsters should spend extensive time learning how to properly instruct each individual in such a way that would lead to conversion. Baxter understood that taking the time to learn the method of personal instruction would take the minister away from his studies. While he valued the pastor's time studying, he believed that the salvation of souls was more important.[18]

In *The Reformed Pastor*, Baxter defended the use of catechisms as the tool a minister should use as a means for conversion. Baxter believed that conversion demanded two conditions: (1) a person must clearly comprehend and understand the gospel truths, and (2) the will must be affected and changed. Baxter argued that individual instruction accomplished both goals.[19] He believed that having the basic truths of Christianity summarized in a catechism made it easier for people to understand the gospel message. He said that anyone who derides the usefulness of the catechism in this regard should "deride themselves for talking and using the form of their own words to make known their minds to others."[20] If God used the preacher to make God's words understandable, then there is nothing harmful about writing down words that clarify the great truths of God.

For Baxter, the great difficulty of pastoral work was persuading the lost sinner to be converted. This technique of moral persuasion was present in both Baxter's preaching

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[17] J. William Black, *Richard Baxter and the Ideal of the Reformed Pastor* (Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster, 2004), 88.

[18] Beougher, *Baxter and Conversion,* 108.

[19] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 248.

[20] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 96.

and individual instruction. Baxter argued that if the minister is not skilled in persuasion and applying the words of God to each individual, then the person may become hardened against God instead of being converted.[21]

The role of moral suasion and careful catechesis can be seen in Baxter's *A Treatise of Conversion* and *A Call to the Unconverted*.[22] Both works were published in 1657, one year after *The Reformed Pastor*. Hence, they should be understood as examples of Baxter's method of personal instruction and public preaching during his Kidderminster ministry. In the preface to *A Treatise of Conversion,* Baxter tells the congregation that the work "is the same that you heard preached: and the reasons that moved me to preach it, do move me now to publish it."[23] He makes a similar remark in *A Call to the Unconverted* when he writes his dedication: "To all Unsanctified Persons that shall read this Book; especially my Hearers in the Parish of Kidderminster."[24] These works are examples of Baxter's technique of moral suasion. William Orme describes in almost poetic form Baxter's technique of persuading the unconverted to turn to God:

> [Baxter's] object was to gain his attention, to convince his understanding, and to impress his heart. For this purpose he describes, he reasons, he expostulates, he threatens, he implores. He avails himself of every topic calculated to alarm or to allure. The character of God—the responsibility of man—the uncertainty of time—the misery of hell—the glory of heaven—are all brought forward and urged with an irresistible force of language, and in the tenderest appeals to the conscience and the heart.[25]

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[21] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 56-58. Hans Boersma, *A Hot Pepper Corn: Richard Baxter's Doctrine of Justification in Its Seventeenth-Century Context of Controversy* (Zoetmeer, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1993), 343-44.

[22] Richard Baxter, *A Treatise of Conversion*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, ed. William Orme, vol. 7 (London: Paternoster, 1830), 1-328. Richard Baxter, *A Call to the Unconverted*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 7, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 329-470.

[23] Baxter, *A Treatise of Conversion,* 1.

[24] Baxter, *A Call to the Unconverted*, 333.

[25] William Orme, *The Life and Writings of Richard Baxter*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 1, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 494-95.

For Baxter, the relentless use of the catechism and personal instruction aided him the most in converting the lost sinner. As can be seen from the table of contents to both *A Treatise of Conversion* and *A Call to the Unconverted*, there was a catechetical structure to his writings and preaching. He defends and expounds seven doctrines and then provides ten directions on what to do if one desires to be converted in *A Call to the Unconverted.* In *A Treatise of Conversion,* he systematically describes conversion and gives twenty benefits and twenty hindrances of conversion. The catechism provided the form and structure from which Baxter attempted to persuade his people to be converted.

While the conversion of the lost was a prime goal of Baxter, there were not many converts at the beginning of his ministry at Kidderminster. As time went on, there was an exponential growth in conversions. Powicke observes, "There is no evidence that his success at first was sensational. It was real and encouraging; but not the marvel it afterwards became." [26] Baxter's early underwhelming success can be seen in his ability to count and observe the change that happened to his early converts. Later in his Kidderminster ministry there were so many converts that he was unable to track the change personally.

Baxter's method of personal catechesis encouraged conversion. His preaching and writing are full of persuasive language to the unconverted. He wanted to see all forsake their sins and turn to God. After one is converted, a Christian should grow in holiness and sanctification. This second goal of Baxter's method will next be examined.

Dedication to Sanctification

When the pastor is not converting the lost, then he is helping the flock grow in sanctification. According to Black, Baxter advocated a "complex of pastoral tasks designed specifically to give pastors the opportunity to confront each parishioner personally with the claims of the gospel. The goal was a converted parish, which thereby

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[26] Powicke, *A Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter*, 52.

enabled it to become a 'godly' or reformed parish."[27] In this way, the community grows in sanctification as each person is individually established in the fundamentals of Christianity. The very system proposed and practiced by Baxter guaranteed each person would be spurred to grow in holiness.

For Baxter, catechesis was the ideal way to bring about this growth in holiness. Baxter was concerned that many people attempt to learn second order doctrines before the primary ones. Some prefer to begin teaching and preaching without first being established in the essentials. He argues that dedication to catechesis results in proper sanctification. That is, new converts will be established in the essential doctrines if a systematic method of instruction and discipleship is followed. If one commits to catechesis in the way Baxter proposes, then new Christians will be built up in an "orderly way."[28]

One of the ways Baxter built up his flock in an orderly way was through dividing his flock into categories. In *The Reformed Pastor,* Baxter discusses six types of Christians that uniquely need the pastor's help in sanctification: (1) those that are new and weak Christians, (2) those that struggle with particular temptations, (3) those that are declining or backsliding, (4) those that have given into temptation, (5) those that need comforting, and (6) those that are strong in the faith.[29] It can be seen from this list that Baxter carefully segmented his flock. He identified particular needs and struggles that would be faced by each "type" of Christian. In this way, Baxter was able to diagnose the condition of a believer's soul and then begin offering help through biblical instruction.

For Baxter, all of life was sacred. There was no dividing line between sacred and secular. Essentially, all of life was to be lived before God because it is to him that all

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[27] Black, *Reformation Pastors,* 74.

[28] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 250.

[29] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 89-94.

people will give an account. [30] Therefore, Baxter saw no aspect of life that was outside the scope of holy living. This belief spurred most of Baxter's practical works of which he is most known. In particular, *The Christian Directory* is Baxter's attempt to give an all-encompassing work on holy living. The subtitle describes his aim: "directing Christians, how to use their knowledge and faith; how to improve all helps and means, and to perform all duties; how to overcome temptations, and to escape or mortify every sin."[31] One should note Baxter's use of "all" and "every." His work was intended to address all of life from ethics to economics and from church to family life. Every aspect of life was meant to be lived before God in a holy way, and Baxter was determined to both teach and train his congregation to live holy lives.

While *The Christian Directory* was composed after Baxter's Kidderminster ministry, there are examples of Baxter's approach to sanctification during his time at Kidderminster. The *Directions to the Converted for their Establishment, Growth, and Perseverance* was published in 1668, but it was preached by Baxter in Kidderminster ten years earlier.[32] One can see Baxter's catechetical method in the following excerpt from this work:

> The whole life of a Christian being divided into these two parts, Receiving Christ, and, Walking in him. Here are these several terms therefore briefly to be opened. 1. What is meant by, "receiving Christ Jesus the Lord." 2. What is meant by "walking in him." 3. What by "being rooted in him." 4. What by "being built up in him." 5. What by "being confirmed or stablished in the faith." 6. What by this directive limitation, "as ye have been taught." 7. What by "abounding therein with thanksgiving."[33]

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[30] Vance Salisbury, *Good Mister Baxter* (Nevada City, CA: Piety Hill Press, 2015), 15.

[31] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: Part I Christian Ethics*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 2, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), i-v.

[32] Orme, *The Life and Writings of Richard Baxter,* 497.

[33] Richard Baxter, *Directions to the Converted for their Establishment, Growth, and Perseverance*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 8, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 268.

One can hear the catechetical rhythm to Baxter's list. He is outlining his teaching with questions. The hearers and readers are confronted with the questions he will soon answer. Baxter then goes on to explicitly demonstrate how to grow in sanctification by giving twenty directions to believers. [34] This extensive and detailed list demonstrates how intense and straightforward Baxter's teaching was on sanctification. His lists of instructions were long and detailed. He left no doubt in the minds of his people what they ought to do.

A final word about Baxter's dedication to sanctification involves his belief that a pastor should not be admitted to the pastoral office unless he dedicates his life to achieving the sanctification of God's people:

> The ultimate end of our pastoral oversight, is that which is the ultimate end of our whole lives; even the pleasing and glorifying of God, to which is connexed [sic] the glory of the human nature also of Christ, and the glorification of his church, and of ourselves in particular: and the nearer ends of our office, are the sanctification and holy obedience of the people of our charge; their unity, order, beauty, strength, preservation and increase; and the right worshipping of God, especially in the solemn assemblies. [35]

Indeed, Baxter was committed to seeing his people grow in holiness and he lifted up that expectation for any minister that desired the office of pastor. He believed the best means of sanctification was systematic catechesis of which the first step was conversion. Baxter's dedication to catechesis, conversion, and sanctification has been briefly examined. The following section will examine how Baxter's model of pastoral care can be implemented and enhanced with technological advancements in communication.

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[34] Baxter, *Directions to the Converted*, 265-370.

[35] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor,* 79.

Technology and Baxter's Model of Pastoral Care

Seth Osborne observes that Baxter's method of pastoral care "placed incredibly taxing burdens on ministers and particularly married clergymen."[36] He further points out that scholars often do not address the connection between Baxter's demanding pastoral care model and the fact that he was celibate during its implementation.[37] This burdensome nature of Baxter's pastoral care model can be relieved by technological advancements in communication. This section will argue that technology can enhance a Baxter model of pastoral care.

First, the concept of pastoral care and presence will be examined—it is possible to practice pastoral care while being physically absent. Second, a small sample of the educational literature will demonstrate that there is an existing pedagogical foundation for theological education at a distance.

Pastoral Care and Presence

The importance of in-person pastoral care is described by Doug Self. He was writing in 1990, a year before the world wide web went public. He contemplated the pastoral role amid technological advancements. He viewed pastoral visitation as one of his top priorities. He argued that personal in-home visitation should be a part of every pastoral ministry because (1) it is central to the pastoral call, (2) people need pastoral contact, and (3) it is a primary way to love incarnationally. [38] He quotes Thomas Oden as saying, "Shepherding cannot be done at a sterile distance. . . . By definition there cannot be an absentee shepherd."[39] One should notice the word Oden uses: sterile. Oden is

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[36] Seth DeShields Osborne, "The Reformed and Celibate Pastor: Richard Baxter's Argument for Clerical Celibacy" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 112.

[37] Osborne, "The Reformed and Celibate Pastor," 171.

[38] Doug Self, "Home Visitation in an Age of Teleconferencing," in *Mastering Pastoral Care,* ed. Bruce Larson, Paul Anderson, and Doug Self (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1990), 17-18.

[39] Self, "Home Visitation," 17.

conflating the two ideas of distance and sterile. He assumes that distance equals sterile and thereby impersonal. Is there such a thing as a warm and personal distance? This project answers that question in the affirmative. By being intentional, the shepherd can be experienced as present even though he is physically absent.

Baxter's pastoral care through writing. Baxter created a sense of his presence in his writings. He translated his tone of individual instruction to his written works. He even understood his writings as a replacement for preaching after the ejection of 1662.[40] N. H. Keeble observed that Baxter wrote the same way he ministered: "If the method of the Kidderminster ministry was '*solus cum solo*, one with one, face to face,' that also is precisely the method of the books in which Baxter figures as an individual who cares passionately about the reader as an individual."[41] Just as Baxter spent his time in Kidderminster ministering one on one, his writing is direct and personable. That is, one senses that Baxter cares for each and every person reading his written works.

Keeble also describes Baxter's ability to communicate passionately and individually in *The Reformed Pastor*: "[He] frames his argument as an exhortation from one individual to the individual consciences of his readers."[42] This observation is of particular interest because *The Reformed Pastor* was written because Baxter could not personally attend the Worcestershire Association meeting. Baxter's famous pastoral care work came about because he was forced to be absent due to sickness. It is only fitting that the presence of Baxter, the force of his arguments, and his care for the flock is felt as one reads *The Reformed Pastor.*

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[40] Simon J. G. Burton, *The Hallowing of Logic: The Trinitarian Method of Richard Baxter's Methodus Theologiae*, Brills Series in Church History 57 (Boston: Brill, 2012), 28.

[41] N. H. Keeble, *Richard Baxter: Puritan Man of Letters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 86.

[42] Keeble, *Richard Baxter*, 87.

Indeed, Baxter was a unique communicator in his day. His style differed from his pastoral peers. Keeble compares Baxter's work on pastoral care to two of his contemporaries: William Perkins and Gilbert Burnet. Perkins focused on the Scripture without passionate pleas while Burnet drew from the Church Fathers. Neither treated the subject of pastoral care in the same manner as Baxter who was able to passionately apply the Scriptures and reference the Church Fathers.[43]

As one of Baxter's readers in 1699 said, Baxter's writings touched to the "very quick."[44] He had the ability to communicate his passionate care for the individual reader through his written words. Even though he was physically absent, he was felt as present. Today he even speaks through his writings.

Simulated presence: *enargeia*. The ancient rhetorical device of *enargeia* helps one understand how someone can simulate presence in the midst of absence. Jane Heath discusses the use of *enargeia* by artists in ancient Greece:

> Artists and their audiences were alert to the effects of *enargeia*, which turned on two interrelated "moments": the "ontological moment" of *enargeia* persuades the audience that what is absent is really present; the 'affective moment' of *enargeia* makes the audience aware of the tension between seeming presence and real absence. Longing for real presence ensues.[45]

In the ancient use of *enargeia*, the absent object or person is experienced as present when language is used to paint a vivid mental image. At the same time, the realization that the object or person is truly absent creates a sense of longing. Therefore, with strong emotive and even personal language, a writer can give the sense of being present while being absent.

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[43] Keeble, *Richard Baxter*, 86-87.

[44] Keeble, *Richard Baxter*, 87.

[45] Jane M. F. Heath, "Absent Presences of Paul and Christ: Enargeia in 1 Thessalonians 1-3," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no. 1 (2009): 5.

A video call or phone call today produces this effect of *enargeia*. In a sense, technology is able to transport a person to the location of the other immediately. Emotive and personal written words are not needed because the actual voice of the person is heard, or their face is seen. While both individuals have the sense that they are in the same location, they are still separated. The technological machinery is producing the ancient rhetorical device of *enargeia.* Persons today can have a strong sense of each other's presence through technology while being absent. Before the current technological age, a present absence was communicated through the written word.

Anticipated presence: apostolic *parousia.* However, for pastoral care to occur, there must be more than a simulated presence. There must be a promise of a future reunion or at least the possibility of a meeting (even if done by a proxy). The communicator must be able to exert temporal influence over the audience by reacting to their response to the message. In this way, the audience anticipates further action from the communicator.

This idea of an anticipated presence is found in the peculiar literary device of the apostolic *parousia* found in the Pauline letters.[46] Robert Funk gives a summary statement of this device:

> Paul regarded his apostolic presence to his congregations under three different but related aspects at once: the aspect of the letter, the apostolic emissary, and his own personal presence. All of these are media by which Paul makes his apostolic authority effective in the churches. The underlying theme is therefore the apostolic *parousia*— the presence of apostolic authority and power.[47]

Paul intentionally made his presence felt with the congregation even while absent. He wanted his apostolic authority to be recognized and followed. In short, he wanted to influence the churches. By using what Funk coined the apostolic *parousia*, Paul gave a tangible token of his ability to influence the churches. Those tangible tokens or "media"

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[46] Robert Funk, "The Apostolic *Parousia*: Form and Significance," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1967), 249-68.

[47] Funk, "The Apostolic *Parousia*," 249.

as outlined by Funk were (1) the letter itself, (2) emissaries bringing the letter, and (3) a future personal presence. Jeffrey Weima further expands on this concept as he describes the appearance of the apostolic *parousia* in the closing of Romans:

> The apostle, of course, is already present in some sense through the letter, which is a substitute for his actual presence. Yet there is often found in his letters a distinct section where Paul attempts to make his presence more powerfully felt by the recipients by referring either to a future visit that he himself hopes to make to the readers, to the sending of one of his emissaries for a visit, or to the act of his writing the letter.[48]

Paul influenced the churches from a distance. He used words in his letters to vividly communicate his presence. He also influenced them by referring to a future visit from him or others. In the same way, technological communication enables the pastor to influence his congregation from a distance.

The pastor can be present to a member immediately through a phone or video call and give comfort to a weary heart or offer biblical instruction to an inquisitive mind. These advancements enable instantaneous feedback and discussion. Also, scheduling a future call or meeting during the call mimics what Paul did when he references a future visit. The reason for scheduling a future call may be to simply check to see how the member is grieving or to hold him accountable to obey a particular biblical command. It should also be pointed out that Baxter in his day achieved the same affect when his clerks scheduled meetings for personal instruction.

Technology empowers the pastor to do far more that Baxter. Baxter or his assistants had to personally visit each person within the parish and instruct them. Technology enables today's pastor to visit each person through a video or phone call.

It is possible to practice pastoral care in a warm, and personal way while being physically absent. Baxter did so through his writings as did the apostle Paul through what has been called the apostolic *parousia*. Furthermore, the use of the rhetorical device of

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[48] Jeffrey A. D. Weima, "The Reason for Romans: The Evidence of Its Epistolary Framework (1:1-15; 15:14-16:27)," *Review and Expositor* 111 (Winter 2003): 25.

enargeia can be used to communicate a present absence. While it is possible to practice personalized pastoral care even while absent, a Baxter model of pastoral care is dedicated to individual catechesis or instruction. Therefore, a small sample of the educational literature will be surveyed to demonstrate that there is an existing pedagogical foundation for theological instruction at a distance.

Distance Theological Education

Educators have long struggled with the problem of distance communication and the use of technology to bridge that gap. Before the wave of social media platforms, Alan M. Schwitzer, Julie R. Ancis, and Nina Brown recognized that distance created problems and barriers to education and the entire college experience. They concluded in 2001 that "new methods are needed for creating community at a distance."[49]

Any new educational method must address this problem of "transactional distance." This is not mere geographical distance between the learner and teacher. Rather, it is the various barriers that hinder the learning process despite physical proximity. These barriers between student and teacher can be the amount and types of dialogue that occur in class, or differences/similarities in interests and background. The room in which instruction happens and the scope and sequence of the course are also potential barriers the teacher must cross. These barriers to student learning exist whether the student and teacher are in the same room or if they are separated by hundreds or thousands of miles. It may be the temperature of the room if physically together or the grainy visual images if done by virtual communication. Therefore, the question that educators must ask is not whether education should occur in person or through technology. Instead, the proper

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[49] Alan M. Schwitzer, Julie R. Ancis, and Nina Brown, *Promoting Student Learning and Student Development at a Distance* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), 103.

question to answer is how much transactional space (despite physical proximity) must the teacher traverse to teach the student?[50]

But creating a method to overcome transactional distance becomes problematic when applied to theological education. The search to provide a theological basis for online education aids in formulating a pastoral care model that seeks to leverage technological advancements in communication. A Baxter model of pastoral care and theological education seeks to teach biblical content while also attempting spiritual formation of the learner. There have been various attempts to ground online theological education on a sound theological foundation.[51]

One such attempt is by Roger White, who argues for a biblical precedent for online education based on Roy Zuck's examination of the apostle Paul's use of language in his epistles.[52] Furthermore, he favorably supports an incarnational approach to teaching, which is "an agape motivation expressed in a willingness to reduce transactional distance between persons."[53] This incarnational approach seeks to model Jesus' incarnation in the way he traversed a great distance to reach and redeem fallen humanity.

John Gresham also focuses on the relationship between God and humanity to provide a basis for distance communication.[54] He draws upon Catholic arguments that

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[50] Benjamin K. Forrest and Mark A. Lamport, "Modeling Spiritual Formation from a Distance: Paul's Formation Transactions with the Roman Christians," *Christian Education Journal* 10, no. 1 (2013): 112. See also Michael G. Moore and Greg Kearsley, *Distance Education: A Systems View of Online Learning* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2012). Michael G. Moore, "Theory of Transactional Distance," in *Theoretical Principles of Distance Education,* ed. Desmond Keegan (London: Routledge, 1993), 22-38.

[51] Forrest and Lamport, "Modeling Spiritual Formation," 113-14. Gabriel Benjamin Etzel, "Implications of Theological Anthropology for Online Pedagogy in Graduate-Level Ministerial Training" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 51-55.

[52] Roger White, "Promoting Spiritual Formation in Distance Education," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 2 (2006): 303-15. Roy B. Zuck, *Teaching as Paul Taught* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

[53] White, "Promoting Spiritual Formation," 305.

[54] John Gresham, "The Divine Pedagogy as a Model for Online Education," *Teaching Theology and Religion,* 9, no. 1 (2006): 24-28.

present the way God teaches humanity as a basis for catechesis. Since God is not physically present with humanity (albeit there are scriptural exceptions to this case, the incarnation of Christ being one), a sort of spiritual instruction occurs between God and humans. God is not physically present with humanity and yet instructs them.

Benjamin K. Forrest and Mark A. Lamport suggest that the approach taken by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans can be adapted and used as a template for long distant relationships that intend to contribute to spiritual formation. The apostle Paul was able to add to the spiritual formation of the Romans even though he was at a distance. They also differentiate between two sources of spiritual formation: the professor and traditional spiritual disciplines. The student can be involved in spiritual disciplines without a professor, but Forrest and Lamport argue that the student-faculty relationship is unique in spiritual formation. Spiritual formation with a mature believer leading the process is more effective than if the student goes the journey alone.[55]

Annang Asumang agrees with Forrest and Lamport that Paul is attempting to contribute to the spiritual formation of the Romans through his letter to them. Though, he disagrees that this is sufficient for a biblical basis for distant theological education. Asumang argues that Paul's letter to the Romans is not a substitute for Paul's actual in-person teaching and therefore is not a model of distant theological education. Instead, he argues that Paul's goals are much broader.[56] Therefore, Asumang turns to the Pastoral Epistles as the biblical basis for theological education at a distance. Asumang presents the case that the pastoral epistles alone provide the biblical basis for using technology for spiritual formation in theological education. He argues that this portion of Scripture

[55] Forrest and Lamport, "Modeling Spiritual Formation," 110-24.

[56] Annag Asumang, "Fostering Spiritual Formation at a Distance: Review of the Current Debates, and a Biblically Grounded Proposal for Maximizing Its Effectiveness as Part of Ministerial Formation," *Conspectus* 22, no. 9 (2016): 23.

provides both a mandate and model for the formation of ministers through distance education.[57]

Stephen and Mary Lowe propose an ecological model of spiritual formation.[58] This model is influenced by Urie Bronfenbenner's theory of ecological human development. Lowe and Lowe begin with Bronfenbenner's theory and then ground his idea of "reciprocal development" in the one another passages of Scripture and the concept of Christian fellowship (*koinonia*).[59] They summarize the application of the approach to online theological education:

> What Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecology of human development model suggests is that whole person human development (intellectual, social, moral, emotional, psychological, and spiritual) is instigated through reciprocal social interactions of limitless varieties that take place across the spectrum of our social ecosystems. His model opens the possibility of envisioning all types of human development, including Christian development as the process of sanctification, unfolding across a variety of social contexts and settings including online social interactions that are part of an online course.[60]

There are problems with the theological foundation of contemporary models for online theological education. Gabriel Etzel identifies three primary weaknesses.[61] While his critique aims at graduate level training institutions, the same critique needs to be considered in the formation of a pastoral care model that leverages technological advancements. The three critiques are as follows: (1) professors are reduced to facilitators,

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[57] Asumang, "Fostering Spiritual Formation," 2-38.

[58] Stephen Lowe and Mary Lowe, "Spiritual Formation in Theological Distance Education: An Ecosystems Model," *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (2010): 85-102. Stephen Lowe and Mary Lowe, *Ecologies of Faith in a Digital Age: Spiritual Growth Through Online Education* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018).

[59] Lowe and Lowe, "Spiritual Formation," 94-95.

[60] Lowe and Lowe, "Spiritual Formation," 95.

[61] Etzel, "Implications of Theological Anthropology," 103-34. Etzel primarily critiques Mark A. Maddix, Mary E. Lowe, and James R. Estep, eds., *Best Practices of Online Education* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age, 2012).

(2) the goal of each course is merely the dispensation of knowledge, and (3) the teaching institutions are meant to provide tools and methods that efficiently teach students.

Etzel points out that what is primarily lacking in contemporary models for online education is the emphasis that the institution and faculty should be *primarily* committed to making their students like Christ. There *should be* a distinct sanctifying role played by the institution and professors. Instead, spiritual formation is a secondary thought in contemporary models of online theological education.

The same problems identified by Etzel with online theological education could be faced by a pastor seeking to use technology as a tool for pastoral care and discipleship.[62] First, the pastor could merely become a facilitator of Bible study instead of a model of Christian living. Second, the pastor could also get lost in dispensing biblical knowledge. This is especially the case in a Baxter model of pastoral care that emphasizes the use of a catechism. Third, the church could fall into the trap of merely providing digital tools and social platforms for people to help themselves. The danger of using technology is that managing the technological platform becomes the goal of the church. Instead of sanctification and conversion being the goal of the pastor and the church, the various engagement metrics provided by social media and digital marketing platforms determine the success of a ministry. Technology should be an aid in pastoral care and never usurp the primary goal of sanctification and conversion.

Furthermore, in these models is a spectrum of dependence upon Scripture and the social sciences. Lowe and Lowe foundationally depend on the work of Bronfenbenner, while Asumang and Forrest and Lamport ground their proposals on the examples of Scripture. Each author takes a different approach in their case for online theological education. Each contributor draws upon biblical and theological reflection as well as educational, social, and psychological studies and theories. This small sample demonstrates

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[62] Etzel, "Implications of Theological Anthropology," 103-34.

that there is an existing pedagogical foundation for theological instruction at a distance within the educational literature.

So, would Richard Baxter utilize all the technological advancements in communication that exist today to connect with his flock and the general Christian community? Granted, this is an anachronistic question, but surely the answer would be yes. Baxter was a voluminous writer. As Keeble puts it, Baxter's "vast mass on our library shelves is more than a little daunting."[63] Many of Baxter's works were produced in response to some particular problem, issue, or crisis and were "unpremeditated reactions to an immediate situation." [64] One can only assume that Baxter would have utilized every communication tool at his disposal in the contemporary world, including texting, email, and social media.

This section argued that pastoral care can be done in a warm personal way during physical absence. This care can be implemented by technology as it mimics *enargeia* and the apostolic *parousia.* Also, a survey of a small sample of the educational literature demonstrated that there is an existing pedagogical foundation for theological education at a distance. The next section will describe how to apply a Baxter model of pastoral care to the family.

The Family and Baxter's Model of Pastoral Care

The final element of this project involves practicing pastoral care with families with children. Two questions should be answered: (1) what peculiar elements of family ministry would be found in a Baxterian approach to pastoral care? and (2) how does a pastor use technology to practice this Baxter model of pastoral care with a family with children?

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[63] Keeble, *Richard Baxter*, v.

[64] Keeble, *Richard Baxter*, 3-8.

In observation of Richard Baxter's directions about ministering to the family in *The Reformed Pastor,* Paul Tautges makes the following observation:

> It is my conviction that churches that will concentrate a good amount of their discipleship energy on the heads of households will not only perform God's will, but will also end up cutting their "crisis counseling" load by a large percentage. This is not to say, of course, that well-ordered families are the solution to all our woes, but we would be exceedingly foolish to ignore the priority that God Himself has placed on them and their tremendous help to further the work of His church.[65]

The family should not be neglected. In fact, there needs to be proactive work among families so that crises that come about because of sin and neglect will be prevented. Furthermore, a family not devoted to basic spiritual disciplines and worship at home can ruin the good work of God in the church. As Baxter said, "If any good be begun by the ministry in any soul in a family, a careless, prayerless, worldly family is almost sure to stifle it, or at least very much hinder it."[66]

Therefore, the pastor must partner with the parents. Baxter advised pastors to practice the following seven directions:

1. The pastor should learn the habits and routines of each family.

2. The pastor should ask how the family worships and then model prayer or Scripture reading at the end of a pastoral visit. Baxter also encouraged the pastor to spend time convincing the family that neglecting family worship is sin.

3. The pastor should encourage those who cannot pray to spend time with those who can pray and use a written prayer if needed.

4. The pastor should make sure that the families have good books to read that will help in their spiritual life.

5. The pastor should encourage everyone to learn to read.

6. The pastor should spend time teaching the family how to spend the Lord's day in rest while also having conversations about God, the Bible, and the sermon.

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[65] Paul Tautges, *Counsel One Another: A Theology of Personal Discipleship* (Leominster, UK: Day One, 2009), 52-53. Baxter, *Reformed Pastor*, 97.

[66] Baxter, *Reformed Pastor*, 97.

7.   The pastor should point out to the master of the family if any member is blatantly disobeying God. The pastor should emphasize that they should not overlook disobedience, but rather address the problem.[67]

From these seven directions, a Baxter model of pastoral care with families of children will seek to (1) learn the daily and weekly routines of the family, (2) teach the family how to pray and conduct family worship, (3) provide good age appropriate books and videos, and (4) encourage faithful discipline that is rooted in restoration.

These four principles of pastoral care with families should be understood in relation to the three main perspectives of family ministry: (1) family-integrated, (2) family-based, and (3) family-equipping. The family-integrated model avoids any age graded ministries and seeks to do all family ministry together. The family-based model separates ages but seeks to incorporate the entire family into its ministry. Finally, the family-equipping model maintains the distinct age/grades but reorients the church to foster partnerships with the family.[68]

Central Baptist Church (CBC) currently utilizes the family-based model. There are clear age/graded ministries within the church and there is an attempt to involve the family while doing kids ministry events. By implementing a Baxter model of pastoral care, the children's ministry will shift toward a family-equipping model. The Baxter model of pastoral care will strategically equip parents by actively teaching them to lead family worship and review the content they are learning within the children's ministry.

Technological advancements in communication will encourage the completion of the regular assignments of CBC's Sunday School literature. Those assignments include memorizing "Big Picture Questions and Answers" as well as a memory verse for each unit. At home activities also include review of the Bible story for that week and family discussion starters.

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[67] Baxter, *Reformed Pastor,* 97-99.

[68] Paul Renfro, Brandon Shields, and Jay Strother, *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009).

The pastor can use phone and video calls with kids and parents to quickly check in on the family and ask if they have any questions regarding the material. This pastoral "check-in" via technology can also provide an opportunity for the parents or children to discuss other problems that may be occurring in the home. Furthermore, "check-ins" can provide opportunities to discuss the gospel and the child's response to the gospel in faith and repentance. In this way, the pastor will practice individual catechesis and be devoted to conversion and sanctification. The use of technological advancements in communication allows the pastor to be present in the homes of families while being absent.

Summary

This chapter argued that Richard Baxter's model of pastoral care of families can be enhanced with technological advancements in communication. It was demonstrated that Baxter's model of pastoral care is dedicated to individualized catechesis, conversion, and sanctification. The case was also made that a Baxter model of pastoral care can be done in a warm personal way at a distance. Finally, it was described how to apply a Baxter model of pastoral care to the family with children. In the following chapter, the use of technology in the implementation of a Baxter model of pastoral care with families of children at CBC will be described.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF A BAXTER MODEL OF
PASTORAL CARE WITH TECHNOLOGY

Introduction

While answering objections to his method of personal instruction, Richard

Baxter asked, "Do you think in your conscience that you do the best you can, if you can

exhort, instruct, or catechise them personally, and will not?"[1] This question strikes at the

pastoral heart. If the pastor can do something, but chooses not to, then he is not doing his

best. Today, the pastor is even more equipped to efficiently and effectively instruct

members personally due to advancements in communication. Therefore, this project

sought to make personal instruction of each individual achievable with the intentional use

of technological advancements in communication. Furthermore, the target group was

families with children.

Three goals were set for this project. The first goal was to initially assess

parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC. This goal was measured by

administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey[2] to families of

children that attend CBC's Sunday School program that volunteered to be involved in the

project. This was completed during the first month of implementation.

The second goal was to develop a strategic plan to utilize technological

advancements in communication to implement and practice a Baxter model of pastoral

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[1] Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 354.

[2] Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing, 2011), 201-3.

care with families of children using CBC's Sunday School curriculum. The formation of this plan was completed during the preparation phase.

The third goal was to evaluate whether a Baxter model of pastoral care increased parental perceptions and practices of discipleship. This third goal was measured by administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey to participants after the three-month intervention as a post-survey. This evaluation was completed during the evaluation phase. This chapter will give details of the preparation, implementation, and evaluation phases of this project.

Preparation Phase

Family Devotion Boxes

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, CBC's children's ministry transitioned to using ministry boxes during the fall of 2020. The leadership of CBC chose to not have regular Sunday School classes in the beginning of the fall semester due to the recommendations by the state of Kentucky and the size of CBC's classrooms. Since the children's ministry was not gathering in Sunday School, the curriculum was distributed through "Devotion Boxes." The curriculum used in CBC's children's ministry is LifeWay's *The Gospel Project.* A box was delivered to families of CBC during the months of October, November, and December, and each box contained material for four lessons in their own envelope.

Each box contained the physical handouts children would have normally received at Sunday School. Those handouts included an activity sheet and a "Big Picture Card" for each lesson. The activity sheets contained fun activities that were themed with the Bible lesson. The "Big Picture Card" had the Bible story picture with the Big Picture Question and Answer (Big Picture QA) along with a statement connecting the story to Christ. There were also two memory cards provided in the box that were to be memorized by the children during the entire month: (1) the Big Picture QA card and (2) the memory

verse card. In addition to the physical handouts from LifeWay's *The Gospel Project,* there were also fun toys, candy and a challenge card.

Challenge Cards

The challenge cards included in the devotion boxes were used by the children and families to keep track of their progress.[3] Five primary tasks were tracked on the challenge card: (1) watching a short devotion video at CBC's website, which included the Bible story video provided by LifeWay, (2) reciting both the Big Picture QA and memory verse to their parents, (3) completing the activity sheets, (4) talking with a devotion coach, and (5) learning extra Bible verses and Big Picture QA if they wanted.

Also, there was a place for the children to mark on the challenge card when they took the "Bro. Josh Quiz." This was to be a time of pastoral care conversation between each family and myself as the Children & Families' Pastor. The intention was that the children would want their parents to contact me and initiate the conversation. The conversation would be a quiz about the Bible stories, memory verse, and "Big Picture Questions and Answers." The goal was for me to help the children apply the Bible lessons to their lives.

The challenge cards were also used to motivate the children to complete the tasks tracked by the challenge cards. Normally, CBC's Children's Ministry has an AWANA program on Wednesday nights. In this program, children memorize Scripture and are rewarded with AWANA bucks. Kids collect these AWANA bucks and then redeem them at the AWANA store periodically through the fall and spring semester. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AWAWA was not occurring. The Children's ministry volunteers decided that children could redeem completed challenge cards at the AWANA store. I then assigned a point value to each star and children redeemed their cards during the month of December.

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[3] See appendix 2 for the challenge cards used by CBC families.

Devotion Coaches

        Richard Baxter utilized assistants as he committed himself to individualized instruction. Our Sunday School teachers transitioned into the role of devotion coaches during the fall of 2020. These coaches were asked to follow-up with 3-5 children on a weekly basis. Each coach was given a sheet of questions each month to help them interact with the children and test their comprehension of the month's material.[4]

Volunteer Training

        Because the implementation of this project involved a substantial shift in how volunteers served, I sent a series of emails from August 13-August 21 explaining the change. After these series of emails, the volunteers of CBC's children's ministry met via a virtual conference call to discuss the devotion box system on August 23.

        After this training and discussion, suggestions and input from the volunteers were used to adjust the devotion box program. While the devotion box program had elements of Richard Baxter's model of pastoral care, a few elements needed to be added. In particular, the sheets that were created to help guide the conversations between the devotion coach and the child were not created until after this volunteer meeting.[5]

Expert Panel Evaluation of Baxter Pastoral Care Model

        After this meeting with volunteers, the strategic ministry plan was formulated. This plan was called the Baxter Model of Pastoral Care and was sent to an expert panel on September 4, 2020 via email.[6] The expert panel consisted of three individuals that had experience in educational ministry and children's ministry. The panel consisted of (1) the

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[4] See appendix 4 for the Devotion Coach Cards.

[5] See appendix 4.

[6] See appendix 1 for the ministry plan overview that the expert panel received. The panel also received a version of the lesson plan. They were also given copies of sample devotion coach sheets (appendix 4) and challenge cards (appendix 2).

Director of Preschool and Children's Ministries at First Baptist Church of Richmond, (2) the Kentucky Children and Student Ministry Consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and (3) the Director of Biblical Counseling and Discipleship at Grace Bible Church in Bend, Oregon, who was also formerly a teacher. The ministry plan was approved by this expert panel on September 18, 2020. The expert panel evaluated the ministry plan by completing an online form through Google Forms. The rubric along with the expert panel responses can be viewed in appendix 6. The creation of this ministry plan and the evaluation by an expert panel fulfilled the second goal of this project.

**The Family Discipleship Perceptions
and Practices Survey**

The Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey was used to assess parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC.[7] This inventory was chosen because it is a standard survey used by church leaders and it evaluates perceptions separately from practices. The initial plan was to investigate whether a Baxter model of pastoral care would affect both perceptions and practices of discipleship, or only one. The anticipated and desired result from this project was that both parental practices and parental perceptions of discipleship would increase as a result of utilizing a Baxter model of pastoral care.

The survey was administered during the initial month of devotion boxes in October. Fifteen families completed the online survey using Google Forms. For each participant, the sum of scores was calculated for perceptions of discipleship and practices of discipleship. The mean score of discipleship *perceptions* for all participants was 39.4 with a median of 40. The mean score of discipleship *practices* for all participants was 34 with a median of 34. A perfect score on both parts of the instrument would be 48. The

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[7] Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 201-3. See appendix 5.

completion of the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices fulfilled the first goal of this project.

Implementation Phase

Utilization of Technology

Originally the teaching material was to be taught in person on Sunday mornings prior to the worship service during Sunday school. CBC's children's ministry has one hour of Sunday school classes before the church gathers for worship. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, these classes were not meeting in person. Therefore, the content had to be delivered through technology. Children were filmed introducing the Bible story videos provided by LifeWay's *The Gospel Project*. These videos were then posted to CBC's website each week to be viewed by families. While this was not the intended way the project was to be implemented, it provided another opportunity to use technology.

The advancements in technology used was primarily the smart phone. Text messages, emails, video calls and phone calls were utilized to connect with families. Text message and email reminders were used to remind parents and guardians of posted content to the church's website. This method of communication was also used by me as the Children & Families' Pastor to communicate to devotion coaches.

The devotion coaches used both video calls and phone calls when talking with their assigned families each week. This provided an opportunity for kids to see ministry volunteers and teachers they would have normally seen and talked to on a regular basis. I also used video and phone calls the final three weeks of the project when contacting families. While the phone may not seem to be an advancement in technology to the contemporary Christian, Richard Baxter and his pastoral assistants would not have had such a luxury.

Teaching Unit Overview

This project utilized three teaching units of LifeWay's *The Gospel Project*. The first unit in October covered four miracle stories of Jesus that culminated in Jesus' transfiguration. The October unit taught the reason for Jesus' miracles: to glorify God, to show Jesus was the Son of God, and to care for people. The second unit in November covered four healing stories of Jesus. This November unit taught the reason God created people: to worship him, love him, and show his glory. The third unit in December covered the Christmas story as well as three stories within the early church. The December unit taught the way the Holy Spirit helps Christians: he comforts them, shows them their sin, and guides them as they live for God's glory.

Month 1 of Implementation: October

The Devotion Box method was launched in October. Volunteers gathered to pack the boxes with the curriculum materials needed by the children. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this had to be done with volunteers wearing masks and sitting more than six feet apart. After boxes were put together, parents came to the church office to pick up their devotion boxes. Twenty-two families participated in the October devotion boxes with a total of forty-six children receiving a box in October. Of the forty-six children that received a devotion box, thirty-seven requested to be assigned to a devotion coach.

The devotion coaches were tasked with the responsibility to follow-up with 3-5 children each week. They utilized the Devotion Coach Card found in appendix 4. Coaches were instructed to give parents time to contact them first. If the coaches did not receive initial contact from the parents, then they were to follow-up with a text asking if the child would like to have their devotion coach call that week. The challenge cards included in the devotion boxes encouraged these conversations to take place. When children had a

conversation with their devotion coaches, they got to fill out a star on their challenge cards.[8]

Furthermore, each week children were asked to come in and be filmed. Kids of the children's ministry introduced the Bible story videos provided by the curriculum. They also read the Big Picture QA along with the memory verse. This provided an opportunity for me to observe how well the children were working on memorization. Children were eager to participate in the videos and several reported that they enjoyed getting to see their friends in the weekly videos.

Month 2 of Implementation: November

Throughout November the devotion coaches continued to contact their assigned children. The coaches continued to use the devotion card sheets as they contacted each family. A new set of boxes was put together with the November unit materials. This time volunteers delivered boxes to the children's homes rather than having the parents pick up the boxes at the church. Because of this, the number of families receiving a box increased to forty-three. A total of sixty-eight children received boxes.

During the first week of November, children came to the church to be filmed for the introduction to week 1's video. During week 2, CBC reopened their Kids Church during the worship service. Normally, this is an extended time of teaching the Sunday school curriculum. Children would normally participate during the first part of the worship service and then be dismissed immediately prior to the sermon. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, kids arrived at kid's church at the beginning of the worship service rather than being dismissed right before the sermon. Since there were kids attending in person, this gathering was filmed. Clips from each kid's church service were edited together to form a short introduction to the Bible story videos of weeks 2-4.

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[8] See appendix 2 for the challenge cards used by CBC families.

It became evident during this month that unless I contacted the family, the children would not participate in the "Bro. Josh Quiz" found on the challenge cards. While the children assigned a devotion coach still had conversations about the Bible lessons, the purpose of the project was to have me engage in pastoral care conversations with the children and their families. At the end of this month, I decided that during the last weeks of the December project, I would schedule calls with those who participated in the initial survey.

Month 3 of Implementation: December

The final month of implementation continued as the previous. New boxes were put together and delivered to sixty-eight children. Clips from the kid's church services were edited together each week. The videos introduced the Bible story video. Devotion coaches continued to contact their assigned children using the provided devotion coach card. The week before Christmas, children were able to come to the AWANA store and redeem their challenge cards for prizes. Finally, I scheduled calls with families for the last three weeks of the third month.

**Pastoral Care Calls by Children
and Families' Pastor**

No families of their own volition contacted me to conduct the "Bro. Josh Quiz." This slot on the provided challenge cards was to encourage the children to initiate a conversation with me as the Children & Families' Pastor. Therefore, during the last three weeks of the project, I contacted eleven families for three consecutive weeks to conduct individualized instruction. Originally, children were to contact me once each month, but instead the children were contacted for three consecutive weeks.

First pastoral conversation. The first conversation with each of the eleven children involved them answering eleven questions. Each conversation took approximately ten minutes and was conducted either by video call or phone call. The first three questions

were the Big Picture QA studied by the child during each month during the implementation phase. The other five Big Picture QA were additional questions asked of the children. The final three questions were designed to probe the desires of the heart. These questions were adapted from David Powlison's "X-Ray Questions.[9]" The goal of the first conversation was to test comprehension of the three Big Picture QA while also asking questions about what made them happy or disappointed recently. The children's responses were recorded, and it was planned to discuss their answers more in the next conversation.

Second pastoral conversation. The second call followed up with the joys and disappointments shared in the first conversation. I connected their answers with the Bible stories they had learned or a Big Picture QA. After discussing these desires of the heart, the children were quizzed again on four other Big Picture QA. Any correct answer was encouraged, and incorrect answers were corrected.

For example, one child discussed not getting along with his sister and fighting with her. We discussed how the Holy Spirit helps Christians by showing them the way to live for God's glory. This was part of the Big Picture QA for December. We talked more in depth about ways he could show his love for his sister.

Another child talked about not wanting to clean his room when asked by his parents. We discussed how we were made to give God glory and when he cleaned his room and obeyed his parents he was giving God glory through obedience.

Third pastoral conversation. The third call involved reviewing the three Big Picture QA that they learned in addition to four other Big Picture QA. Applications to their current lives were made as various Big Picture QA were discussed. Each child was

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[9] David Powlison, "X-Ray Questions: Drawing Out the Whys and Wherefores of Human Behavior," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 18, no. 1 (1999): 2-9. See also appendix 9.

also asked the follow-up interview questions regarding the devotion boxes and their interactions with their devotion coaches.[10]

Evaluation Phase

Once the implementation phase ended, The Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey[11] was administered to fourteen of the fifteen families. One of the families elected not to participate in the post survey. The sum score of each participant was calculated which produced a discipleship perception sum and a discipleship practice sum for each participant.[12] A *t*-test for dependent samples was conducted on the pre- and post-survey scores of both the perceptions and practices of discipleship. There was no significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 0.24$, $p = .4055$) in the discipleship perceptions but there was a statistically significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 1.88$, $p = .0411$) in the discipleship practices between the pre- and post-survey scores. From this test, it appears that the Baxter model of pastoral care had a positive effect on the discipleship practices of those that participated in the survey. As the effect of the Baxter model of pastoral care on parental perceptions and practices was evaluated, the third goal of this project was accomplished.

A *t*-test for dependent samples was conducted on each individual question. Only two of the questions produced a significant difference between the pre- and post-survey. Question 3 had a significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 1.88$, $p = .0411$) between the pre- and post-survey. The scores decreased for this statement which said, "The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching." A possible explanation for this result is that the intentional intervention during a time when the church was not meeting as normal caused this affect. Question 8 also had a significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 2.51$,

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[10] It is important to note that through these pastoral conversations, the pastor or teacher must be cautious against falling into moralism. The child must know that nothing of their own doing can justify them before God. Therefore, all obedience should be done because of love for God and others.

[11] Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 201-3.

[12] See appendix 7.

p = .0130) between the pre- and post-test survey. The scores increased for this statement which said, "My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my child's spiritual growth." When the t-test for dependent samples was conducted on the other questions, no other question produced a significant difference.

Interestingly, two of the questions measuring discipleship perceptions had a significant difference despite the overall perception sum not changing significantly. These two questions concerned the view of the parent of the church's role in the families' life. It appears that the Baxter model of soul care increased participants' appreciation for their church and even believed that the devotion boxes and follow-up calls by devotion coaches and myself helped them plan for their child's spiritual growth.

From the interviews with each child, the devotion coach participation was excellent among the participants in the pre- and post-survey. Children reported having regular conversations with their coaches even if they were not every week. The children reported looking forward to the calls and one said, "It was good just to hear their voices." The younger children found the challenge cards to be more helpful in keeping track of their progress throughout the week. When it came to evaluating the devotion videos, almost every kid reported that the best part of each video was seeing other kids and their friends introducing the video. Again, this longing to see familiar faces is mostly a result of this project being completed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One child professed faith in Jesus Christ during the project. The devotion coach and I were a part of those conversations with the child. Two other children had extensive discussions about salvation and what Jesus did to save them from their sins. Seeing transformation in the life of another person makes all the work much more bearable and enjoyable. It is good to see fruit from the labor of love that CBC volunteers put into the implementation of this project.

Conclusion

The Baxter model of pastoral care was implemented, and the three goals set for this project were achieved. Parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC were initially assessed. A strategic plan that utilized technological advancements in communication to implement and practice a Baxter model of pastoral care using CBC's Sunday school curriculum was evaluated and implemented. Finally, the Baxter model of pastoral care was found to increase the discipleship practices of families with children, but parental perceptions did not have a significant difference between the pre- and post-survey scores.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF PROJECT

Richard Baxter had great hopes for the future of his method of pastoral care when he said, "What a happy thing would it be if you might live to see the day that it should be as ordinary for people of all ages to come in course to their Teachers for personal advice and help for their salvation, as it is now usual for them to come to the Church, or as it is for them to send their children thither to be catechised."[1] He hoped that these times of personal instruction would be as normal as going to church or having children taught. The evaluation of this project will demonstrate that using advancements in communication to implement a Baxter model of pastoral care can be used with other age groups besides children. This chapter sets out to evaluate the purpose and goals of the project while identifying strengths and weaknesses during implementation. After suggesting changes, I consider the theological and personal implications of the project.

Evaluation of the Purpose

The purpose of this project was to effectively utilize modern technological advancements in communication to practice the pastoral care model of Richard Baxter with families of children (ages 5-11) at Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky. The purpose was achieved despite the parental discipleship perceptions and practices not increasing as anticipated.

Modern technological advancements were used to practice a Baxter model of pastoral care. The COVID-19 pandemic forced CBC's children's ministry to use more

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[1] Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vol. 14, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830), 257.

technology in the implementation of the project. Both smart phones and computer devices were used to deliver teaching content even though this was not the initial plan. Communication between children and their devotion coaches utilized both virtual calls as well as phone calls. Furthermore, the Baxter model of pastoral care was approved by the expert panel and received overall ratings at or above the sufficiency level.[2] The model was also effectively carried out within CBC's children's ministry among those that desired to participate.

Evaluation of the Goals

The first goal of the project was to initially assess parental perceptions and practices of discipleship at CBC. This goal was measured by administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey[3] to families of children that attend CBC's Sunday school program that volunteered to be involved in the project. As fifteen families responded by completing the survey, this first goal was achieved.

The second goal was to develop a strategic plan that utilized technological advancements in communication to implement and practice a Baxter model of soul care using CBC's Sunday school curriculum. This goal was measured by a panel of three experts that have experience working with children and/or families. This panel used a rubric to evaluate whether the communication tools and plan would increase the discipleship practices of families with children. As 90 percent of the rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level, this second goal was achieved.

The third goal was to evaluate whether a Baxter model of pastoral care increased the discipleship practices of families with children. This goal was measured by administering the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey to participants

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[2] See appendix 6.

[3] Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing, 2011), 201-3. See appendix 5.

after the three-month intervention as a post-survey. The post-survey was administered to fourteen of the fifteen families. One family elected not to participate in the post survey. There was no significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 0.24$, $p = .4055$) in the discipleship perceptions but there was a statistically significant difference ($t_{(13)} = 1.88$, $p = .0411$) in the discipleship practices. As the effect of the Baxter model of pastoral care on parental perceptions and practices was evaluated, this third goal was achieved.

Strengths of the Project

There were four noteworthy strengths of this project. First, a reproducible pastoral care plan based on the model of Richard Baxter was created. The ability to use technology and strategically use devotion coaches made this model possible to implement in other settings. The model is also flexible enough to handle an increase in volume of families needing individualized instruction. Whereas Richard Baxter's original plan involved spending time physically with each person, the model proposed by this project provides great flexibility to the pastor. Furthermore, the use of devotion coaches or pastoral assistants to carry out the individualized instruction makes the model scalable. That is, as more families or individuals need to be contacted, additional coaches or assistants should be trained and utilized.

The second strength of this project was the focus on using technology to communicate during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was unforeseen but a part of God's providential plan. Because there was a period when no in person gathering or instruction was happening in the children's department, this ministry model provided a perfect avenue to establish discipleship relationships with children and their families.

The third strength of this project was the efficiency caused by focused calls. That is, when the purpose of the conversation was clarified and time set aside to make the calls, I talked to more children within a short period than he would have during an entire workday when there were no meetings. Even more so, the depth of the conversations was much better. The children and parents shared stories of their days that the pastor would

not have normally heard. Therefore, the project affirmed the principle that when blocks of time are set aside to contact families, the quantity of families and the quality of conversation increase.

A final strength is that the model encouraged conversations about salvation. One child confessed his faith in Jesus and was baptized during the implementation of the project. This story testifies to the strength of the pastoral model and both the devotion coach and I were talking to the family during the week. Furthermore, because I, as the Children & Families' Pastor, was able to provide material for the family to read with their child, they had the privilege of leading their child to Christ. In addition to the one child who experienced salvation, two other children had significant discussions about salvation with me during the last three weeks of the project.

Weaknesses of the Project

There were several weaknesses of this project. This first weakness was the sample size. More families should have been involved in the pre- and post-surveys. While the minimum number of participants for the project was set at fifteen, a larger sample size would have provided stronger confidence in the evaluation of the t-test for dependent samples. That is, while there was a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores regarding parental practices, a larger sample would have added confidence in the results.

The second weakness was the focus on recitation of scriptural truths. While the model set by Richard Baxter focuses heavily on the ability to recall biblical truth, a pastoral care model that incorporates biblical counseling models would be more effective. For instance, the root to fruit model found in *How People Change* would have been helpful to

incorporate throughout the project.[4] While I utilized that model when having conversations with children, it was not included in the devotion coach's responsibilities.

The third weakness of the project was the use of the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey.[5] The survey focused on discipleship practices and perceptions. Having an instrument that measured behavioral change rather than the practices of the spiritual disciplines would have been more pertinent to the study. Or, rather than discipleship practices and perceptions and inventory testing, comprehension of the Big Picture QA would have been adequate.

The fourth weakness was the focus on the creation and delivery of the devotion boxes. While they were a great way to deliver the physical content to the children, it did not aid the ultimate purpose of this project. This providential change had to occur, but excessive time was spent sending material to families that were not participating with a devotion coach. The benefit of these deliveries was that CBC was making contact with families that were becoming disconnected from the church, but this was a goal outside the scope of the project.

Suggested Changes

After analyzing the strengths and weakness of this project, the following changes should be implemented if it was to be repeated. First, there should be extensive effort to recruit more participants in the initial survey. This could have been solved in two ways: (1) spend more dedicated time to promoting the project and (2) ask families multiple times to participate in the survey. One problem was that an extensive amount of time focused on creating the devotion boxes, which took time away that could have been spent

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[4] Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp, *How People Change* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2008), 193-222.

[5] Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 201-3. See appendix 5.

asking for participation in the survey. Also, if families were asked more than one time to fill out the short survey, it is likely more would have participated.

Second, the devotion coach cards should include the concept of root to fruit as found in the work *How People Change*.[6] This would have enabled these assistants to have clear and targeted discussions about change. Lane and Tripp give an extensive model of change that discusses how the root desires found in the heart give rise to behavioral change or fruit.[7] While Baxter's method of care focuses on personal instruction, a more robust way to structure the devotion coach conversations that engendered biblical change was needed. That is, the conversation guides given to the coaches needed to have questions and prompts that encouraged discussions about motivations of the heart and how such motivations lead to behavioral change. I utilized this framework when talking with children, but it was not embedded in the conversation guides given to the devotion coaches. Baxter had a deep desire to see practical change happen in the believer as evidenced in his massive *A Christian Directory*.[8] Therefore, it would not be outside of the scope of Baxter's method to incorporate biblical counseling models of change.

Third, a different instrument should be created to measure behavioral change. If the second change mentioned above is done, then a new instrument should be considered. That instrument should seek to evaluate heart change as well as behavior change. While perceptions and practices of discipleship are important, pastoral care ultimately seeks a change in the believer's life. A Christian's perception of discipleship and the practice of spiritual disciplines are metrics that would affect spiritual growth and maturity. Measuring change in heart attitudes and behavior would give a better

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[6] Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 193-222.

[7] Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 193-222. Using the term "fruit" is truer to Scripture and the words of Jesus as found in Matt 3:8, 7:16; Luke 8:15; Rom 6:21-22; Gal 5:22-23; Heb 13:15. Furthermore, the scriptural usage of "fruit" captures both the idea of heart change *and* behavioral change.

[8] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory*, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, vols. 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, ed. William Orme (London: Paternoster, 1830).

understanding of the effect of a Baxter model of pastoral care. Creating such an instrument would be difficult for two primary reasons: (1) it is difficult to objectively measure godly behavior and (2) measuring the heart attitudes and desires of children in particular would be difficult to encapsulate in a battery of questions.

The fourth suggested change is to use the entire list of Big Picture QA created by LifeWay, rather than using the current teaching units from *The Gospel Project*.[9] If this is adjusted, then the pastoral care model would not be tied directly to the lesson each week. In fact, it would be a great ancillary ministry to CBC's regular Sunday school discipleship ministry. If the entire set of Big Picture QA is used, then the pastor, Sunday school teacher, or devotion coach could begin at the very beginning of this modern child's catechism and systematically instruct the children.

Theological Reflections

The subjective feedback received from both families and devotion coaches suggests that this model achieves something that is lacking in normal instructional settings. This is more than likely due to two reasons. First, the COVID-19 pandemic caused many families to be isolated from their normal social circles including their church family. Parents were thankful for the opportunity for their child to talk with a familiar person from church. The pandemic removed an essential part of the Christian life: the gathering of God's people (Heb 10:25; 1 Cor 16:2; Rev 1:10). The ability to meet individually by video or phone call gave a semblance of that gathering. These calls did not substitute for gathering in person, but each call seemed to cause families to long for the time they could be physically present with their church family. Second, individualized instruction gave targeted instruction and attention to each child. The children would not have received such targeted individualized instruction in the normal Sunday school

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[9] LifeWay, "Big Picture Questions and Answers," accessed January 15, 2021, https://www.lifeway.com/en/special-emphasis/big-picture-questions-and-answers.

program. This individualized nature of the instruction provided targeted care for each child and created an opportunity for the volunteer to know the child better.

While training devotion coaches took time, having these volunteers connect with families greatly increased the number of families that were served. This is the true fulfillment of the direction given by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:12, "equip the saints for the work of ministry." Taking time to diligently train devotion coaches to individually instruct others will only increase the church's ability to do the work of God.

Upon deeper reflection, adopting a Baxter model of pastoral care equates to managing time better (Eph 5:16; Col 4:5). This was an unexpected benefit of the Baxter model of pastoral care. Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* chastises the pastor to work harder by diligently caring for each member. He powerfully and persuasively removes all excuses for not participating in individualized instruction. In this way, he makes the personal work of the pastor the number one priority. Because of the elevated status of this task, if one commits to follow Baxter's example, large amounts of focused time would need to be given to this work. Baxter himself dedicated two days a week to carry out this work.[10] This pressure causes the pastor to clarify who he is talking to and when the conversations will occur. Also, the specific questions and scope of the conversation is already outlined due to the use of a catechism. When a pastor decides that he will be about the work of individualized instruction, as this project showed, more work is done with God's people because it was set as a priority.

Personal Reflections

After this project, I am even more convinced of the value of individualized instruction. I want to dedicate more time to personally instructing and caring for CBC members as well as equipping others to do it. Spending such extensive time with Baxter by reading the unabridged version of *The Reformed Pastor* reignited my desire to

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[10] Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 259.

individualized care and instruction. Also, the concept of having pastoral assistants that are trained to both instruct and care for members was an enlightening concept. Before examining the *Reformed Pastor* in depth, it appeared that Baxter intended the pastor to personally care for every person by visiting them in their home. The two realizations that he had pastoral assistants and normally required parishioners to come to him made the monumental task of individual instruction attainable. It is my conviction that a wise use of the phone, text messages, email, and future advancements in communication will only make it easier to do individualized instruction.

As I was writing this final chapter, I was called to be senior pastor of CBC. I hope to extend the fruit of this project to the care of all ages of the congregation. The sermon I preached in view of a call was from Acts 20:26-28 and I articulated my desire and sincere belief that God has called me to declare the entire counsel of God while caring for each member. I intend to be about training pastoral assistants that will enable pastoral leadership care for each member. With the current advancements in technology the statement by Jay Adams is even more true: "The pastor must not think of the phone as his master, but rather as his servant."[11] If used well, the phone can be very beneficial to the pastor.

I personally will be committing to dividing my ministry time into two parts: (1) prayer and study of Bible in preparation to preach and (2) meeting with people. Administrative tasks must not subvert the personalized instruction and care of each member. Upon completing the project, I came across the concept of "one-on-ones." This concept is utilized in the management world and explained by Andy Grove.[12] The essential concept is that the manager regularly schedules time with direct reports to ensure proper communication is occurring. I could not help but think that employing these "one-on-

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[11] Jay E. Adams, *Shepherding God's Flock* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 48.

[12] Andy Grove, *High Output Management* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2015), 72-78.

ones" with pastoral staff, administrative staff, and lay leadership would be a way to conduct pastoral care and individualized instruction with the CBC leadership. I intend to explore how I can care specifically for those in lay leadership at CBC.

Conclusion

This project has been intellectually and personal rewarding. While there were weaknesses in the project, it still testified to the ingenuity and obedience of Richard Baxter. His fervor for the lost soul and the redeemed soul is needed among pastoral leadership today. May God be so kind to grant each pastor of contemporary churches a passion for the pastoral care of the soul. If pastors can combine Baxter's zeal and determination with the vast number of technological resources at their fingertips, then perhaps God in his grace will bring about great spiritual renewal in churches.

APPENDIX 1

BAXTER MODEL OF PASTORAL CARE
MINISTRY PLAN OVERVIEW

The following is summary of the Baxter Model of Pastoral Care Ministry Plan.

The curriculum used is LifeWay's *The Gospel Project.*

MINISTRY PLAN OVERVIEW /////////////

BAXTER MODEL OF PASTORAL CARE

Richard Baxter's model of pastoral care hinges on having a one on one meeting with every family in the congregation. He described his model of pastoral care in his book, *The Reformed Pastor* (1656). Baxter's model focused on three essential principles: (1) individual instruction, (2) a call to salvation, and (3) spiritual growth. Since Baxter was a pastor in the 17th century, he did not have access to the technological resources we have today. This ministry plan attempts to implement Baxter's model with families of children while using technology to communicate with families.

GOSPEL PROJECT

BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The Big Picture Questions & Answers provided by Lifeway's Gospel Project for Kids is used as the curriculum basis for individual instruction. The hope is for children to learn many of these Questions & Answers.

DEVOTION COACHES

Richard Baxter had pastoral assistants help with individual instruction. Teachers within Central Kids children's ministry will take on the role of "Devotion Coach" to assist in individual instruction. Each Coach is assigned 3-5 kids. These coaches will do the following:

1. Pray for one of their assigned children every day.
2. Assist their assigned children in completing the Challenge Card. (**see page 3**).

CHALLENGE CARD
CHILDREN COMPLETE 3 TASKS EACH WEEK

01 WATCH
The child watches a 7-9 minute devotion video.

02 CHALLENGE
The child attempts to complete *three* challenges for each lesson.

03 BONUSES
The child has the opportunity to learn answers to other Big Picture Questions and other memory verses. Furthermore, the children's pastor will conduct one fun 15 minute "quiz" with each child each month.

APPENDIX 2

CHALLENGE CARDS

The following is a sample challenge card with the various elements explained.

CHALLENGE CARDS

EACH STAR IS 1 POINT ON THE FRONT!

Watch: Kids watch a 5-9 minute Devotion Video which includes the Bible Story video provided by Lifeway. The link to the video is texted every week and the videos cane be found at gocentral.org/box

Quiz: Schedule a 15 minute quiz with Bro Josh. **This is worth 25 points!!**

Extra Big Picture Questions: Children can learn extra questions and recite to their parent/guardian. Look at the Level-up sheet in your box!

Challenges: For every lesson there are three challenges:

1. Kids will say the Big Picture Question and Answer and the memory verse with parent/guardian. They can use provided memory cards in the Devotion Box to help them memorize.
2. Kids will complete the accompanying activity page for the lesson.
3. Kids will contact their Devotion Coach by video chat or phone call to complete their final challenge. Devotion Coaches will follow-up with parents via text if the family does not contact the Coach.

Extra Memory Verses: Children can learn extra memory verses and recite to their parent/guardian. Look at the Level-up sheet in your box!

APPENDIX 3

INSTRUCTIONAL FLYER FOR FAMILY
DEVOTION BOXES

The following is a one-page instructional flyer for how to complete the

devotion boxes.

Family Devotion Box

01
Watch the Devotion Video at gocentral.org/box

02
Complete the Challenge Card & Get Points

03
Call Your Devotion Coach

04
Use Your Points to Purchase Prizes

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

Get Kids Sunday School Material At Home!

GoCentral.org/box

APPENDIX 4

DEVOTION COACH CARDS

The following sheets are what the Devotion Coaches used as they have conversations with the children assigned to them.

OCTOBER
DEVOTION COACH CARD

Child's Name

Why did Jesus perform miracles?

Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.

You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you! I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.
Psalm 40:5

WEEK ONE

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ Do you like to draw? What did you draw for the "Sea Scenes"?

☐ Why did Jesus perform miracles?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What did Jesus do when the disciples woke him up?

☐ Do you have any questions about the story or God or the Bible?

☐ What is your favorite candy?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

Notes

WEEK TWO

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ How long did it take you to do the Fish and Loaves Sudoku puzzle?

☐ Why did Jesus perform miracles?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ How did Jesus solve the problem of the crowd's hunger?

☐ DO you have any questions about the story or God or the Bible?

☐ Have you ever gone fishing?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK THREE

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What was the "Sea Point?"

☐ Why did Jesus perform miracles?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
    ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ When Jesus saved Peter, what did He ask Peter?

☐ DOyou have any questions about the story?   ☐ Have you ever broken a bone?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK FOUR

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ Did you have a hard time doing the "Up on a Mountain" activity?

☐ Why did Jesus perform miracles?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
    ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What did Jesus look like when He transformed?

☐ DOyou have any questions about the story?   ☐ What do you want to be when you grow up?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

CONVERSATION TIPS

- Be energetic and friendly.
- Smile when you talk.
- They may not talk much, that's okay. Don't take it personal.
- Remember, the kids are learning how to communicate.
- Ask questions about what the child says. For instance, if the child says, *"I like to play video games,"* then respond with an open ended question that asks them to explain: *"Oh! What games do you play?"* You could go the extra mile by looking up that game and mentioning it in your next conversation.
- Send a text or call Pastor Josh (606) 584-5070, if there is anything that is concerning or you encounter questions that he would be better answering.

NOVEMBER
DEVOTION COACH CARD

Child's Name

Why did God create people?

God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.
Isaiah 53:4-5

WEEK ONE

- [ ] Child contacted me. [ ] I contacted parents via text.
- [ ] What did you like about the activity sheet?
- [ ] Why did God create people?
- [ ] Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  - [ ] No. [ ] Said some. [ ] Said all w/ mistakes. [ ] Said all.
- [ ] How was the woman healed?
- [ ] Do you have any questions about the story or God or the Bible?   [ ] Have you ever been to the hospital?

- [ ] is there anything you want me pray for this week?

Notes

WEEK TWO

- [ ] Child contacted me. [ ] I contacted parents via text.
- [ ] What did you like about the activity sheet?
- [ ] Why did God create people?
- [ ] Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  - [ ] No. [ ] Said some. [ ] Said all w/ mistakes. [ ] Said all.
- [ ] What did Jesus tell the man to do to be healed?
- [ ] DO you have any questions about the story or God or the Bible?   [ ] What is your middle name?

- [ ] is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK THREE

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why did God create people?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ Why were the leaders upset with Jesus for healing the man?

☐ DOyou have any questions about the story?   ☐ What is your favorite movie?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK FOUR

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why did God create people?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
  ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ How many people came back and thanked Jesus?

☐ DOyou have any questions about the story?   ☐ What are you thankful for?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

CONVERSATION TIPS

- Be energetic and friendly.
- Smile when you talk.
- They may not talk much, that's okay. Don't take it personal.
- Remember, the kids are learning how to communicate.
- Ask questions about what the child says. For instance, if the child says, *"I like to play video games,"* then respond with an open ended question that asks them to explain: *"Oh! What games do you play?"* You could go the extra mile by looking up that game and mentioning it in your next conversation.
- Send a text or call Pastor Josh (606) 584-5070, if there is anything that is concerning or you encounter questions that he would be better answering.

DECEMBER
DEVOTION COACH CARD

Child's Name

How does the
Holy Spirit help
Christians?

The Holy Spirit comforts
us, shows us our sin, and
guides us as we live for
God's glory.

His divine power has granted
to us all things that pertain to
life and godliness, through the
knowledge of him who called us
to his own glory and excellence.
2 Peter 1:3

WEEK ONE

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What was the sound like when the Holy Spirit came?

☐ Do you have any questions about   ☐ What do you not like about waiting?
the story or God or the Bible?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

Notes

WEEK TWO

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What did Peter say to the man who asked for money?

☐ DO you have any questions about   ☐ What makes you REALLY happy?
the story or God or the Bible?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK THREE

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
   ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What is Jesus called in John 1?

☐ DO you have any questions about the story?   ☐ What do you want for Christmas?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

WEEK FOUR

☐ Child contacted me. ☐ I contacted parents via text.

☐ What did you like about the activity sheet?

☐ Why does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

☐ Do you want to try to say the memory verse?
   ☐ No. ☐ Said some. ☐ Said all w/ mistakes. ☐ Said all.

☐ What did Peter do to encourage the Christians who were persecuted?

☐ DO you have any questions about the story?   ☐ What do you do when you are sad?

☐ is there anything you want me pray for this week?

CONVERSATION TIPS

- Be energetic and friendly.
- Smile when you talk.
- They may not talk much, that's okay. Don't take it personal.
- Remember, the kids are learning how to communicate.
- Ask questions about what the child says. For instance, if the child says, *"I like to play video games,"* then respond with an open ended question that asks them to explain: *"Oh! What games do you play?"* You could go the extra mile by looking up that game and mentioning it in your next conversation.
- Send a text or call Pastor Josh (606) 584-5070, if there is anything that is concerning or you encounter questions that he would be better answering.

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APPENDIX 5

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP PERCEPTIONS
AND PRACTICES SURVEY

The following inventory was used to assess family discipleship perceptions and practices by members and attenders of the children's ministry at Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky.

Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey

Agreement to Participate
You are being requested to give permission for a minor or member of a vulnerable population under your legal supervision to participate in a study designed to measure whether individualized pastoral care and teaching will increase the discipleship perceptions and practices of your family. This research is being conducted by Joshua Pollitt for purposes of his dissertation research. In this research, you will be asked to provide information regarding discipleship practices of your family before and after the pastoral care intervention. Any information provided will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will a person's name be reported, or a person's name identified with his or her responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and the person you are giving approval to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the designated minor or member of a vulnerable population to participate in this research if he or she desires.

Participant Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS This survey is intended for parents with children living at home. If your children are too young to participate in an activity that is described, please honestly assess what you anticipate doing when your children become old enough to participate. For the purposes of this survey, "church leaders" include pastors, elders, ministers, deacons, teachers, or small group leaders.

The following survey is copied from *Family Ministry Field Guide* by Timothy Paul Jones and used by permission.[1]

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[1] Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing, 2011), 201-3.

Part 1: Parental Perceptions

Respond to the statements using the following scale:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

1. I prioritize consistent family devotional or worship times in my family's schedule.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

2. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible reading in our home, but my family is just too busy for that right now. It will probably be that way for quite a while. [REVERSE SCORED]   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

3. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching. [REVERSE SCORED]   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

4. When my child spontaneously asks a biblical or theological question, I really wish that my child would have asked a minister or other church leader instead of me. [REVERSE SCORED]   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

5. I want to do whatever it takes for my child to succeed in certain sports or school activities—even if that means my family is too busy some weeks to eat any meals together. [REVERSE SCORED]   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

6. Parents, and particularly fathers, have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

7. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others. [REVERSE SCORED]   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

8. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my child's spiritual growth.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Part 2: Parental Practices

Respond to the statements using the following scale:

Never	Once	A Couple Times	Three or Four Times	Five or Six Times	Seven or More Times
0	**1**	**2**	**3-4**	**5-6**	**7+**

9. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past week have I prayed aloud with any of my children?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

10. How many times in the past week has my family eaten a meal together with television, music, and other similar media turned off?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

11. How many times in the past month have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

12. How many times in the past month have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

13. How many times in the past two months has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

14. How many times in the past two months have I talked with my spouse or with a close friend about my children's spiritual development?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

15. How many times in the past year have I intentionally participated with one or more of my children in witnessing to a non-Christian or inviting a non-Christian to church?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

16. How often in the past year has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?   0 1 2 3-4 5-6 7+

Copied from Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing, 2011), 201-3. Used by permission.

APPENDIX 6

EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR BAXTER
MODEL OF PASTORAL CARE

       The following rubric was used to evaluate the Baxter Model of Soul Care. A panel of three experts in family/children discipleship evaluated the viability of the Baxter model of pastoral care and whether it can be effectively practiced with technological advancements in communication.

Name of Evaluator: _____   Date:_____

STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN EVALUATION					
1 = insufficient; 2 = requires attention; 3 = sufficient; 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
1. Ministry plan evaluates comprehension of Bible story and Big Picture Questions.					
2. Ministry plan allows opportunities for pastoral care conversations.					
3. Ministry plan integrates technological advancements in communication.					
4. Ministry plan effectively sends learning material via digital form.					
5. Ministry plan regularly presents the gospel and calls for response.					
6. Ministry plan encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines.					
7. Ministry plan encourages family conversations about God and the Bible.					
8. Ministry plan holds participants accountable, while not be overbearing or intrusive.					
9. Ministry plan is understandable and can be replicated with appropriate technological equipment.					

Other Comments:

Name of Evaluator: ███████   Date: September 13, 2020

STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN EVALUATION					
1 = insufficient; 2 = requires attention; 3 = sufficient; 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
1. Ministry plan evaluates comprehension of Bible story and Big Picture Questions.			X		The focus I see here is on memory and repetition of the Bible story and Big Picture Questions. I didn't see as many elements that would find out comprehension or understanding, but maybe the quiz with the Children's Pastor fulfills this?
2. Ministry plan allows opportunities for pastoral care conversations.				X	Both the interaction with the children's pastor and the devotion coach looks very pastoral.
3. Ministry plan integrates technological advancements in communication.				X	The use of the Gospel Project, which is already a great use of technology and helps in communication, plus the video and text options are fantastic.
4. Ministry plan effectively sends learning material via digital form.			X		I'm very curious what the challenge cards delivery looks like. Is that an app, or web based (from ministry boost.org)?
5. Ministry plan regularly presents the gospel and calls for response.				X	The Gospel Project is very gospel and response oriented, so using it is fantastic.
6. Ministry plan encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines.			X		Bible study is clearly going to be encouraged in listening format and memory work, although maybe you could do more to encourage personal reading. Prayer is also asked for on the coach cards (and is really well encouraged for the coaches by asking them to pray for one of their kids a day), but I don't see as much encouragement for the kids to actually be praying themselves. Maybe encourage the kids to pray before doing any of the memory, video watching, or meeting with a coach, and then have coaches ask that as an accountability question?

7. Ministry plan encourages family conversations about God and the Bible.			X		Love how kids are saying the memory verse and big question and answer with parents. One concern I did have was with all the direct communication with devotion coaches from a liability/abuse standpoint. What is the vehicle to keep parents aware of what that conversation is like, prevent any inappropriate one on one conversations (including over text), and bring parents into that moment instead of keeping them out of it?
8. Ministry plan holds participants accountable, while not be overbearing or intrusive.				X	Appreciate the fun and relational elements that keep this from being overly academic or overbearing.
9. Ministry plan is understandable and can be replicated with appropriate technological equipment.				X	It's laid out well, and I want our church to get to use it! Only thing unclear for me is how the challenge cards and questions and answers are actually delivered to the parents.

Other Comments:

Name of Evaluator: ███████   Date: September 14, 2020

STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN EVALUATION					
1 = insufficient; 2 = requires attention; 3 = sufficient; 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
1. Ministry plan evaluates comprehension of Bible story and Big Picture Questions.			X		The weekly check-ins are great ways of building relationships and assessing understanding of the lesson. However, the questions are asking for low level responses; the recall of facts. For deeper levels of comprehension maybe a add a couple questions for understanding (What do you think it means?) or application (How might this impact your life?).
2. Ministry plan allows opportunities for pastoral care conversations.				X	Totally. Check-ins by video-chat are wonderful. The audio plus the picture makes for more meaningful conversations. Be interesting to see how consistently these meetings actually take place. It's not clear to me; are the weekly check-ins with the Devotional Coach, and monthly check-ins with the children's pastor?
3. Ministry plan integrates technological advancements in communication.			X		Yes. On-demand video and video-chat integrate technology and instruction well. This plan is especially effective during this pandemic where church and Sunday school opportunities are limited. I can't tell from the plan what form the challenge cards are distributed. Are they electronically interactive? Emailed to parents at the beginning of the week? How to kids see the video, challenges, memory cards, extra questions and verses, and activity pages? If they simply click the icons (I assume that's the case) that will be fun and engaging. Does the Devotion Coach Card allow for electronic note taking?
4. Ministry plan effectively sends learning material via digital form.		X			I'm assuming this is the case but can't find where the plan indicates how parents and children receive the materials every week.

5. Ministry plan regularly presents the gospel and calls for response.			X		Not explicit but it sounds like that's the case; especially if the curriculum does a good job of presenting the gospel and asking for a response, and the devotional coaches and children's pastor do the same during their meetings with students.
6. Ministry plan encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines.			X		I'm assuming the videos and weekly lessons emphasize the need for personal bible intake, prayer, and fellowship? The memory verses are good for bible intake and meditation. Hopefully the students are encouraged to discuss what they mean and how they apply to their lives. The weekly meetings with coaches encourages fellowship. What about a Zoom call with all the coach's kids once a month for same-age fellowship?
7. Ministry plan encourages family conversations about God and the Bible.			X		Curriculum content lends itself to spiritual conversations. Hope the parents watch and discuss the videos and interact with the challenges and the kids. Are there other places in the plan that encourages family conversations?
8. Ministry plan holds participants accountable, while not be overbearing or intrusive.				X	Weekly, in-person accountability is awesome. Effectiveness will depend on the devotional coach's approach and attitude with the kids. I like the way the memory verse assessment doesn't demand perfection and leaves room for partial credit. Training the coaches to be empathetic and encouraging will be important.
9. Ministry plan is understandable and can be replicated with appropriate technological equipment.				X	This part of the plan is fairly understandable. Still curious about the form of the materials and the different roles of devotional coaches and the children's pastor. Not clear who would replicate the plan? Different age levels? Other churches? Overall, it seems like an engaging on-line learning system with good content, accountability, and encouragement from important adults in the children's lives. Great job.

Other Comments:

Name of Evaluator: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮   Date: September 18, 2020

STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN EVALUATION					
1 = insufficient; 2 = requires attention; 3 = sufficient; 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
1. Ministry plan evaluates comprehension of Bible story and Big Picture Questions.			X		While the ministry plan focuses on the key truths on the Bible story and Big Picture Questions, I would consider adding a question that applies this truth into the child's world, helping them develop the necessary skills to understand the world through a Scriptural lens.
2. Ministry plan allows opportunities for pastoral care conversations.			X		Most ministry coaches would naturally lead from questions about the Bible story into pastoral care conversations; however, this is not explicitly detailed in the plan. I would suggest more of the questions investigate "why" and "how" rather than "what" or "do."
3. Ministry plan integrates technological advancements in communication.			X		This ministry plan utilizes appropriate communication advancements to implement this discipleship strategy that is dependent on individual instruction and weekly conversations.
4. Ministry plan effectively sends learning material via digital form.				X	This plan does effectively deliver material via digital form.
5. Ministry plan regularly presents the gospel and calls for response.				X	The plan's utilization of the Gospel Project keeps the gospel in focus! I would suggest leading the devotional coaches to ask questions on the gospel on a consistent basis.
6. Ministry plan encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines.				X	The child will be engaging in Bible reading, prayer, memorizing Scripture, and more which will all lead toward the third aspect of the model: spiritual growth.

7. Ministry plan encourages family conversations about God and the Bible.			X	I believe the plan will certainly encourage conversations within families about God and the Bible; however, this is not one of the three weekly challenges. It would be possible for a child and family to feel as though they are succeeding in the plan while never having conversations as a family.
8. Ministry plan holds participants accountable, while not be overbearing or intrusive.			X	The use of the challenges and scorecards will be both an encouraging and instructive way to build accountability with families and kids; while also connecting this accountability to devotion coaches and the children's pastor.
9. Ministry plan is understandable and can be replicated with appropriate technological equipment.			X	The instructions and graphics are both clear and engaging. This plan could be transferred to other settings with quick and immediate understanding.

Other Comments:

APPENDIX 7

PRE- AND POST-TEST RESULTS OF THE FAMILY
DISCIPLESHIP PERCEPTIONS AND
PRACTICES SURVEY

The following are the of the pre- and post-survey sums of both discipleship

perceptions and discipleship practices.

Table A1. Discipleship perceptions pre- and post-test

Discipleship Perceptions	
Pre-Test	Post-Test
42	39
33	34
43	43
41	39
35	45
45	45
37	38
38	35
43	44
40	42
44	41
40	39
40	41
40	39
30	N/A

Table A2. Discipleship practices pre- and post-test

Discipleship Practices	
Pre-Test	Post-Test
34	43
25	29
41	40
31	35
43	41
46	46
27	33
22	28
41	43
40	35
34	36
30	28
34	38
34	34
27	N/A

APPENDIX 8

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW FOR FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP
PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES SURVEY

The following interview questions were used with the five families that
demonstrated the greatest increase between pre- and post-survey on the Family
Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey.

Follow-Up Interview for Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey

Agreement to Participate
You are being requested to give permission for a minor or member of a vulnerable population under your legal supervision to participate in a study designed to measure whether individualized pastoral care and teaching increased the discipleship perceptions and practices of your family. This research is being conducted by Joshua Pollitt for purposes of his dissertation research. In this research, you will be asked to provide information regarding discipleship practices of your family before and after the pastoral care intervention. Any information provided will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will a person's name be reported, or a person's name identified with his or her responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and the person you are giving approval to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the designated minor or member of a vulnerable population to participate in this research if he or she desires.

Participant Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Follow-Up Interview for Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey

1. Before the project began, what did your family do to grow spiritually?

2. What did you like about the Devotion videos?

3. What did you **not** like about the Devotion videos?

4. What did you like about having conversations about the Bible with a Devotion Coach every week?

5. Did the Challenge Cards help you talk about the Bible and God as a family?

6. What did you like about having a set time to talk with your Children's Pastor each month?

7. What did you **not** like about having a set time to talk with your Children's Pastor each month?

8. Your answer to question ____ increased from ___ to ___. Why do you think that happen?

APPENDIX 9

PASTORAL CARE QUESTIONS FOR
FIRST CONVERSATION

The following questions were used in the first pastoral care conversation with

the Children & Families' Pastor.

Big Picture Questions
1. **October – Why did Jesus perform miracles?** Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.
2. **November – Why did God create people?** God created people to worship Him, love Him and show His glory.
3. **December – How does the Holy Spirit help Christians?** The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.
4. 5 Big Picture Questions that they have not seen in the Devotion Box lessons.

Desires of the Heart Questions
1. Has anything happened recently that you wish did not happen?
   a. EXAMPLE: I got in trouble for fighting with my sister.
   b. EXAMPLE: My Nintendo Switch stopped working.
   c. EXAMPLE: I was supposed to play a game, but it got canceled.
   d. EXAMPLE: I had to wear a mask and I didn't want to.
   e. EXAMPLE: My dog ran away.
2. Has anything happened that you were really happy about? **_OR_** What would make you really, really happy?
3. What is something your parents asked you to do today or yesterday, **_BUT_** you did not want to do? What did you want to do instead?

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ABSTRACT

USING TECHNOLOGY TO PRACTICE A BAXTER MODEL
OF PASTORAL CARE WITH FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AT
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN CORBIN, KENTUCKY

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This project sought to effectively utilize modern technological advancements in communication to practice the pastoral care model of Richard Baxter with families of children (ages 5-11) at Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky. Chapter 1 presents the ministry context, rationale, and methodology for this project. Chapter 2 examines the scriptural and theological basis for using technology to implement a Baxter model of pastoral care. First, Acts 20:17-38 and 2 Timothy 3:14– 4:5 are examined to address pastoral care. Then, the concept of the apostolic *parousia* is examined as a model for the use of technology in the preparation of pastoral visits. Chapter 3 explores the historical and philosophical basis for using technology to implement a Baxter model of pastoral care with families with children. Chapter 4 describes the project in detail, covering the methodology and curriculum used in this project. Chapter 5 evaluates the effectiveness of the project based upon the completion of three set goals.

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