

CHOSEN GENERATION COMMUNITY CHURCH:
EXPLORING INDISPENSIBLE FACTORS IN LIVING AN EFFECTIVE
CHRISTIAN LIFE

A professional project submitted to the Theological School of
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ABSTRACT

CHOSEN GENERATION COMMUNITY CHURCH

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This project sought to explore and identify those indispensable factors that would empower Christian believers to live an effective and victorious Christian life. The researcher believed that the development and utilization of a healthy discipleship model, integrating those indispensable factors, would provide agency to healthy Christian identity and healthy spiritual formation. This project was an attempt to fulfill the biblical mandate of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

The Methodology for this project consisted of four phases: (1) Review of the Literature; (2) Creation of an anonymous, empirical, objective, self-report Survey; (3) Selection, development and training of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC); and (4) Survey distribution and collection. The research explored five parachurch movements: Renewal Movement; Spiritual Formations Movement; Small Group/ Pastoral Care Movement; Lay Renewal Movement; and Church Growth Movement. Five indispensable factors were identified and employed. They were: Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism – referred as the Chief Paradigm.

This project was introduced and outlined to the leadership and congregants of four selected churches within Northern New Jersey. The anonymous survey was distributed

and collected over a three week period. The sampling selection was voluntary. The respondents were eighty adult men and women from the four selected churches membership rosters.

The outcome was favorable and supported the initial belief that the development and utilization of a healthy discipleship model would provide agency to healthy Christian identity and healthy spiritual formation. Findings discovered the impact of discipleship models on the current social theory of change. This research opened up a way to discuss shortcomings and strengths of the discipleship process of struggling urban churches and offers them suggestions on what to work on. Survey results were used to create a working Discipleship Model to be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church of Plainfield, New Jersey.

DEDICATION

I would like to first give honor to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is the head of my life; the author and finisher of my faith. I would like to thank and dedicate this work to the late Mother Dorothy Beatrice Moody, for her unselfish love and support throughout my life and the wonderful Christian example she provided for me and my family. I would like to thank my wife, Pastor Sharon E. Moody, for her love and support throughout this process. I would like to thank the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and the selected churches for this project: Rose of Sharon Community Church, Bishop LaVerne M. Ball, Senior Pastor and Reverend Kyshon Mitchell; Beth-El International Ministries, Dr. Gloria Harris, Senior Pastor and Reverend Cynthia Shefton; Closer Walk Ministries, Reverend Robert Goldson, Senior Pastor and Reverend Charnette Bryant; and Grace Apostolic Church, Bishop Ronnie Amos, Jr., Senior Pastor and Evangelist Doretha Moody. I would like to thank the congregation of Chosen Generation Community Church for their love, support and patience.

I would like to thank the Drew University staff: Dr. Carl Savage & Gloria Kovach, DMIN Administration, and Dean Dr. Morris Davis & Alma Tuitt, Theological School Administration. Special thanks to Rev. Kandice Joyce, Financial Advisor, Dr. Tanya Linn Bennett, Tutorial Advisor, Dr. Ernst Rubenstein, Dr. Jesse Mann & Dr. Liana Piehler, Annotation Advisors, Verna Holcomb, Formatting Advisor and especially Dr. Melinda Contreas-Byrd, Thesis Advisor, for her spectacular oversight and wonderful sense of humor throughout this process. This research is dedicated to Christian believers throughout the world in their quest for wholeness, happiness and purpose. It is my prayer that none should perish after having sought the Christian faith for the saving of their souls.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I believe Christianity is important! It serves as a viable resource to navigate people through the vicissitudes of life. Christianity matters because it offers a blueprint that explores the spiritual dimension and answers humanity's innermost quest for wholeness, purpose and happiness. With an increased incidence of defeated and unfulfilled Christians being recognized and reported in data from Christian researchers, the need for a healthy Discipleship Model has become apparent.¹ A new Pew Research Center Survey records, "We've known for some time that the number of Americans who say they have no religion has been growing. But while this group does not identify with a specific religious tradition or denomination, the "nones" are not uniformly against religion having a role in society."² The Pew Research Center also reports the following data:

We asked all respondents whether religion is gaining or losing influence in American life, and 72% of U.S. adults (including 70% of the religiously unaffiliated) said religion is losing influence. We then asked whether this is a good thing or a bad thing, and, not surprisingly, "nones" were much more likely than other major religious groups to say that the declining influence of religion in American life is a good thing. The results, however, were not completely one-sided. In fact, religiously unaffiliated people who perceive religion's influence as declining was split on whether this is a good thing or a bad thing. About a third of "nones" overall (34%) said it is

¹ Ronald Richardson, *Creating a Healthier Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 25.

² Pew Research Center, "Is Religion's Declining Influence Good or Bad? Those without Religious Affiliation are Divided," accessed September 23, 2014, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/09/23/is-religions-declining-influence-good-or-bad-those-without-religious-affiliation-are-divided>.

good that religion is losing influence, while a similar share (30%) said this is bad. “Nones” include atheists and agnostics as well as people who have no religion in particular. Among only atheists and agnostics, half (50%) see religion’s influence as declining and see this as a good thing, while only 12% say it’s a bad thing. But among those who say their religion is “nothing in particular,” 37% say religion’s declining influence is a bad thing and 27% say it’s a good thing.³

The report also states:

We found in 2012 that 14% of “nones” said religion is very important in their lives, and another 19% said it is somewhat important. About two-thirds of the unaffiliated (68%) believe in God – 30% said they’re “absolutely certain” about God’s existence – and 21% reported praying daily. Only one-in-ten people whose religion is “nothing in particular” said they are looking for a religion that is right for them, but there appears to be a significant subset of Americans who are comfortable with religion having a role in their life even without having an official religious affiliation.⁴

Mark Shaw posits, “I maintain that the evangelical church is weak, self-indulgent, and superficial. While evangelical churches are filling up with spectators, they are emptying out of disciples. I propose the solution to be the obedience to Christ’s commission to ‘make disciples,’ to teach Christians to obey everything Christ commanded.”⁵ I believe a commercialized and compromised gospel within a culture of narcissism, materialism and apathy provides an unhealthy congregational context for respondents to achieve the victorious Christian life offered freely by God. “While mainline Protestant denominations hemorrhaged members during the 1970’s – the largest Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Methodist denominations all lost at least 10 percent of their members between 1965 and 1975 – many suburban evangelical churches began the rapid

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Mark Shaw, *10 Great Ideas from Church History: A Decision-Makers Guide to Shaping Your Church* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 135.

growth that would make them the megachurches of subsequent decades.”⁶ The Spiritual Formations Movement embraced the importance of the disciple-formation process. Notwithstanding, the turn of the 21st Century, was met with more incidences and prevalence of defeated Christians being reported. There is a need for a clear and concise Discipleship Model that is consistent with foundational truths and the realities of the Christian journey.

For the purposes of this project, I will define a discipleship model as a schematic employed by the ministry to indoctrinate followers and to equip them for spiritual maturity. The church needs to accept accountability for seeing to it that people are given what is necessary for maturity in Christ. This accountability mechanism would serve to harness and engage those who would otherwise fall by the way side or through the cracks. Several ministries have understood this quest and have developed discipleship models to equip disciples with tools to accomplish effective Christian living. Many theologians have identified several key components necessary for effective Christian living. Varying faith-based traditions agree on key factors to achieve this end; they are: **Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism.**

The Hypothesis and Justification for this project will explore: Is there a correlation between effective Christian living and a thorough Discipleship Model? Is there a correlation between a concise Discipleship Model and healthy Spiritual Formation? This project seeks to explore Discipleship Models and their agency for Christian identity development, transformation and the healthy spiritual formation for the adult congregants.

⁶ JohnTurner, *Bill Bright & Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 147.

It is my belief that the development and utilization of a healthy discipleship model will provide agency to healthy Christian identity and healthy spiritual formation.

My project begins with a review of the literature that includes the contributions of Elton Trueblood, Findley Edge, and David Haney, who were contributors of the Lay Renewal Movement. This movement has refocused the church on the **Ministry** of the Christian church.⁷

A review of the literature will further explore the contributions by many of those who were a part of the **Discipleship**/Spiritual Formations Movement. Included in this movement are groups as the Navigators, Worldwide Discipleship, and Campus Crusade for Christ, and authors such as Waylon Moofe, Gary Kuhne, Gene Getz, Richard Foster and Dallas Willard, who have underscored the importance of building up Christians and establishing personal spiritual disciplines.⁸

In my examination of the Literature, I will also include the **Worship**/ Renewal Movement. This movement has refocused the church on the importance of worship and how we worship. It began with the Jesus Movement in the early 1970s and was followed by the Charismatic and Liturgical renewals. Most recently, the contemporary worship emphasis has brought us new music, new worship forms, and a greater emphasis on corporate worship. Music styles like those created by Christian music producers like Maranatha, Hosanna and Integrity have played a major role in shaping how worship styles have changed and multiplied in recent years.⁹

⁷ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1995), 126.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

An examination of the Literature will explore the Church Growth Movement. This movement has refocused the church on **Evangelism**. Contributions made by the work of Donald McGavran, Peter Wagner, Elmer Towns, Win Arn, and numerous seminary professors, the movement grew larger in the 1980s through growth consultants and seminars. ¹⁰

The Literature review will also explore the Small Group/Pastoral Care Movement. It has been the task of the small group/pastoral care movement to refocus the church on **Fellowship** and caring relationships within the body. The Korean cell-church model and organizations such as Touch Ministries, Serendipity, Care Givers, and Stephen's Ministry have shown us the value of using small groups and the importance of caring for individuals. ¹¹

Careful exploration of current discipleship models will also occur with the goal of identifying those indispensable factors that may lead one to live an effective Christian life. Indispensable factors are defined as those critical areas within the discipleship model that are consistent with foundational and Biblical truths that augment healthy spiritual identity and formation. The overall goal of this project is to investigate current discipleship models with demonstrated effectiveness in facilitating new believers to a place of spiritual maturity.

Biblical Mandate and Purpose for the Project

Churches are mandated to create an atmosphere that allows every congregant to live an effective Christian life. 'The Great Commandment' says:

¹⁰ Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* , 127.

¹¹ Ibid.

And thou shall love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy entire mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (St. Mark 12: 30 & 31).

‘The Great Commission’ says:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (St. Matthew 28: 19 & 20).

‘The Great Commission’ and ‘The Great Commandment’ provide a theological foundation profitable for “doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man/woman of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Timothy 3: 16b – 17).

Further exegesis offers a discipleship process for a congregational context that offers a path to fulfillment of purpose, wholeness and a quality of life to ALL those who freely accept. ‘The Great Commandment’ and ‘The Great Commission’ generate a five-fold approach to spiritual formation and maturity and is the foundational block for the Chief Paradigm for this project: Worship, Ministry, Fellowship, Evangelism, and Discipleship. This project proposes to use findings and results of the survey and literature review to create a Discipleship Model that will be used for implementation at the Chosen Generation Community Church in Plainfield, NJ.

Project Population

The purpose for this project was multi-faceted. I wanted to investigate and analyze available information on areas of Christian development so that I could isolate and understand those factors that seemed critical for turning new converts into well-grounded disciples. The information from the investigation of several discipleship models were analyzed in order to determine what common factors they possessed. These factors were then designated “indispensible factors.” These factors were compared to those factors that surfaced as a result of my project survey. Further, my purpose was to also use findings from the data analysis of this project to create an actual program for discipleship at my church, Chosen Generation Community Church, located in Plainfield, N.J.

Plainfield is nicknamed "The Queen City". It was settled in 1684 by Quakers, and incorporated as city in 1869. A short train ride from New York City, Plainfield is a bedroom suburb in the New York metropolitan area; it has become the urban center of 10 closely allied municipalities, with diversified industries, including printing and the manufacture of chemicals, clothing, electronic equipment, and vehicular parts.¹²

The project surveyed the adult population of the current membership rosters of four diverse churches: 1. Rose of Sharon Community Church located, Plainfield, NJ – where the Senior Pastor is the Bishop LaVerne M. Ball; 2. Beth-El Ministries, Newark, NJ – where the Senior Pastor is Rev. Dr. Gloria Harris; 3. Closer Walk Ministries, Newark, NJ – where the Senior Pastor is Rev. Robert D. Goldson; and 4. Grace Apostolic Church, East Orange, NJ - where the Senior Pastor is the Bishop Ronnie Amos, Jr. The survey involved 80 adult men and women. The scope of this survey was limited to these four (4) Northern New Jersey urban churches with predominantly African-American

¹² City of Plainfield Website, accessed 22 October 2014, www.Plainfield.com.

memberships. Consequently inferences will be limited to churches with similar demographics and cultural attributes.

The Discipleship Model created through this project will be employed at the Chosen Generation Community Church located in Plainfield, New Jersey. Plainfield has a population of 50, 244 residents; 25,280 males (50.3%) and 24,964 females (49.7%). The median age is 33.3. The median income is \$50,076. 44% are married; 71% speak English; 25% speak Spanish. 21% are Caucasian; 61% are African-American; 5% are mixed race; and 11% are other.¹³

Plainfield is comprised of many small businesses; one high school; several middle schools and elementary schools. There are over 125 churches in Plainfield. Plainfield is comprised of faith-based institutions, service providers, small businesses and for-profit corporations, who could benefit from favorable outcomes of project indicators which may impact the social theory of change in Plainfield. Like many townships, Plainfield has social issues that negatively impact its' citizenry.

Current discipleship narratives, presented in the literature, utilize a 'social theory of change' which supports a compromised gospel and an unhealthy congregational context for respondents to achieve the victorious Christian life. These narratives employ the current social theory of change which focuses on the masses and the multitude, and not on individual discipleship formation. Discipleship models play a vital role in shaping the spiritual formation process for new believers and the theory of change is the vital ingredient inherent in it. A social theory of change which focuses on the masses has the inherent danger of opening potholes for new believers to fall into. This has reinforced a lack of accountability and has deprived many believers of the victorious Christian life

¹³ City of Plainfield Website, accessed 22 October 2014, www.Plainfield.com.

that Jesus Christ offers through salvation, according to scripture. More on this matter will be reflected in the Review of the Literature section. This project aims to develop a discipleship model that would engage all respondents and circumvent those behaviors that prevent healthy spiritual formation.

The Terms

- Chief Paradigm: Worship, Ministry, Discipleship, Evangelism, Fellowship - the primary parameters explored for this project. Those Indispensible factors and tenets of the Faith that embrace Spiritual Disciplines inherent for healthy spiritual formation.
- Worship: Reverence rendered unto God; a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual.
- Ministry: The church's internal mechanisms to minister to one another's needs.
- Discipleship: A schematic employed by the ministry to indoctrinate new members with the goal of equipping them for spiritual maturity.
- Evangelism: The church's outreach and mission strategies to win souls to Christ; to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with the goal of conversion.
- Fellowship: Community of interest, activity, feeling or experience; the quality or state of being comradely; membership; partnership.
- Disciple: One who accepts the doctrines of Jesus Christ and assists in spreading this Gospel; a professed follower of Christ.

- **Spiritual Identity:** Full awareness and understanding of the spiritual dimension and benefits/costs of the new birth experience.
- **Spiritual Formation:** A schematic that employs spiritual disciplines with the goal of achieving spiritual maturity.
- **Effective Christian Living:** A holistic lifestyle where mind, body and soul are in balance with a realistic understanding of fundamental truths of the faith.
- **Spiritual Disciplines:** Practices like prayer, fasting, devotion, meditation, worship, and singing that enhance the spiritual dimension through consistent praxis.
- **Mission Statement:** The stated goals and objectives of the church with its purpose, scope and strategy.
- **Social Theory of Change:** The underlying motives, principles and guidelines which shapes a ministries global outlook on discipleship and spiritual formation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs. Disciples are persons who do and act in certain ways; they are not persons who just say yes to something, then go their own way. In this case, we are talking about disciples of Jesus Christ, so these disciples will in some way do and act like Jesus.¹

Disciples stumble and fail, but disciples experience forgiveness and love through the grace of Jesus Christ. As a result of their failures or struggles disciples become grounded and secure in their relationship to God. This is the foundational basis for Christianity's theology of Grace. Moreover, an additional component of the theology of grace is that God's demonstrated favor to humankind warrants a response. Christian Disciples are people who demonstrate their love of and response to Christ by loving one another in word, in deed, in prayer, and in every other possible way.

In *Charting the Course: A Workbook on Christian Discipleship*, John P. Gilbert posits that:

John Wesley believed that Christians journey on a path toward human perfection – the way of salvation. The path toward perfection is marked by various types of grace. Prevenient grace is given to all persons, and works in their lives before they encounter Christ. At some point, prevenient grace moves people to be convicted of their sins, a gift called convicting grace. When people are moved to repent of their sins, they receive justifying grace, assuring them of God's presence in their lives and giving them new life in Christ or Christian identity. Sanctifying grace moves people onward toward perfection. Such movement of grace reminds us that Wesley believed Christians are on a spiritual pilgrimage.

¹John P. Gilbert, Theresa Gilbert, Patty Johansen and Jay Regenniter, *Charting the Course: A Workbook on Christian Discipleship* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 15.

For Wesley, the movement of grace upon grace is evidenced by continual growth in love of God and neighbor.²

This understanding is vitally important for discipleship. This position of God's grace is the foundational truth that allows Christians to develop a healthy spiritual formation while journeying through the ups and downs of life's journey. Many converts fall by the way side or through the cracks because when they are met with life's struggles, they lose faith and give up.

Gilbert further posits that:

In order to facilitate continual growth in persons seeking to grow deeper as disciples, Wesley organized the people called the Methodists into groups for public service. As people experienced God through those service encounters, they moved into trial bands. If they were growing as a result of their experiences in a trial band, they became members in a united society or church. Each person in the united society also belonged to a smaller group, called a class, which was located in the person's neighborhood. Some moved into bands, which were voluntary, smaller groups that met for confession, prayer, and spiritual growth. Through fellowship and Christian conversation, bands gained mutual accountability, nurture and growth in grace. Wesley's process allowed people to move through stages of growth and development toward spiritual maturity – always growing deeper in their love of God and neighbor.³

The 'social theory of change' inherent in this model centers around God and the "other". While I strongly believe this process for spiritual growth and disciple formation provides a healthy framework for new converts to live a victorious Christian life, I posit that the inclusion of the "self" is an important variable also needed for healthy spiritual formation. I believe a "social theory of change" grounded in the development of the "self" is important for Christians to live an effective and victorious Christian life. Discipleship-formation grounded in the development of the "self" is NOT the same as the narcissistic

² Gilbert, 40.

³ Ibid., 45.

self-love prevalent in our culture today. I believe an investment in the development of the “self” is consistent with Scripture and is vitally important, particularly for individuals exposed to the negative aspects of urban or inner city culture. One cannot fully love another, if there is no healthy love of “self”. Many Christians misunderstand Jesus’ admonition to His disciples when He said “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up His cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” (Matthew 16: 24-25). This denial of the “self” in this passage of scripture refers to one’s carnal nature and lustful desires, not one’s psychosocial persona. A Discipleship Model that embraces the development of the “self” is critically important and I will explore this point further in my discussion of Worship and also incorporate it into the Discipleship Model created for this project. I believe many Christians are defeated today because the church of our time has failed to incorporate key factors of discipleship taught by theologians like John Wesley.

Healthy discipleship-formation processes require various entry points into the process, since persons may enter the disciple-formation process at various points on their faith journey. Healthy discipleship-formation processes focus on the faith journey of individuals and the congregation. They focus on lifelong formation, rather than on programs that provide quick fixes.⁴

I strongly believe many Christians fall through the cracks because the Gospel has been compromised and commercialized in a narcissistic culture which has no patience and only focuses on the present moment. Churches have turned their attention to wanting bigger, larger and mega. This preoccupation with the multitude and not the ‘individual’ has caused many to be relegated to the sidelines. This mindset has become commonplace

⁴ Gilbert, 93.

in contemporary church practices, mission statements and vision. Moreover, not only does this bigger and mega phenomenon play a part in the problem of discipling, there are some indispensable factors inherent in the processes utilized by theologians, like John Wesley, that are absent in contemporary spiritual formation practices. These indispensable factors are Worship, Ministry, Fellowship, Discipleship and Evangelism. These factors will augment healthy spiritual identity and formation, while also providing guidelines for those engaged in the disciple-formation process. “Practices of faith, means of grace, and the church-owned definition of disciple will become the developing guidelines for what it means to grow in faith.”⁵

Rick Warren posits in his book, *The Purpose Driven Church, Growth Without Compromising Your Message & Mission*:

I’ve found it interesting to observe that most of the parachurch movements begun in the past forty years tend to specialize in one of the purposes (Worship, Ministry, Discipleship, Fellowship, Evangelism) of the church. From time to time God has raised up a parachurch movement to reemphasize a neglected purpose of the church. I believe it is valid, and even helpful to the church, for parachurch organizations to focus on a single purpose. It allows their emphasis to have greater impact on the church.⁶

Worship Renewal Movement (Worship)

Worship has always been a vital part of the life in the church. Worship is a reverence rendered unto God; a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual. Worship is both individual and corporate. Nathan Smith cites George Mallone’s

⁵ Gilbert, 93.

⁶ Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 126.

description of a vision of worship which he found in a Sunday bulletin of a church that was experiencing renewal.

We believe worship of God should be spiritual. Therefore: We remain flexible and yielded to the leading of the Spirit to direct our worship. We believe worship of God should be inspirational. Therefore: We give a great place to music in our worship. We believe worship of God should be intelligent. Therefore: Our services are designed with great emphasis upon teaching the Word of God that He might instruct how He should be worshiped. We believe worship of God should be sacramental. Therefore: We give ourselves to weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. We believe worship of God is fruitful. Therefore: We look to His love in our lives as the supreme manifestation that we have truly been worshipping Him.⁷

Corporate worship has evolved over the years and has been impacted by the renewal movements. As we examine the origins of corporate Christian worship Gordon Wakefield states, "One problem with regard to the origins of Christian worship, as Paul Bradshaw has shown, is that because accounts of it derive from later periods, there is little certainty as to what precisely Jewish worship was like at the time of Christ."⁸ To this end, there have been several renewal movements throughout the Christian history seeking out new meanings on the importance and expression of worship. All the renewal movements share a common idea – worship, both individual and corporate, are vitally important in the life of a Christian believer.

The twentieth century began with Liturgical Movement. Wakefield states, "The cornerstone of the liturgical movement is the reaffirmation of the Eucharist as the central act of Christian worship. It is the source of the Church's life, from which all prayer,

⁷ Nathan Smith, *Roots, Renewal and the Brethren* (Pasadena, CA: Hope Publishing House, 1986), 125.

⁸Gordon Wakefield, *An Outline of Christian Worship* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark LTD, 1998), 1.

devotion, witness and evangelization flows.”⁹ To this end, the liturgical movement placed emphasis on the importance of the liturgy. Attention to the order of service had to be intentional, intelligent and meaningful. This requirement underscored the evolution of the renewal movements as the meaning, expression, rituals, and traditions around worship were sought. Wakefield states, “The liturgical movement insists that it is a service of Word and Sacrament, but with short lections and sermons the Word may not occupy much time.”¹⁰ Certainly, this perspective is not the same among other traditions of faith. Methodism placed more importance on the delivery of the Word and Pentecostalism has revolutionized the preaching moment as the highlight of the service. I will not argue the merits of each view here, but will agree that the Liturgical Movement impacted worship in important ways.

In the 1960’s the Charismatic Renewal Movement emerged. Tom Smail states, “Because charismatic renewal is about our relationship to God, the renewal of our worship of God is one of its primary concern, and in fact over the last twenty-five years it has had a transforming effect on the worship of the churches.”¹¹ This vibrant period of renewal transcended denominational and liturgical traditions and ushered in an era of freedom and joy of the Holy Spirit. Smail further states:

At the centre of that worship has been a new release of praise with its own distinctive characteristics that have supplemented and complemented the cherished treasury of worship that the churches have inherited from the past. In this connection, it is not accident that the distinctive feature of charismatic worship, which has made a positive impression on most people who have come into contact with it, has been the corporate and

⁹ Wakefield, 153.

¹⁰ Ibid., 77.

¹¹ Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for Theology* (Great Britain: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1995), 109.

spontaneous singing in tongues that has often been called ‘singing in the Spirit.’ That seems to me to be the quintessence of worship in its charismatic mode, it gives expression to the distinctive features that inform the other parts of renewal worship and that characterize it as charismatic.¹²

While the theology of the charismatic movement is not accepted in varying Christian denominations, the importance and the impact of it on the subject of worship is invaluable.

For some Catholics in St. Charles County, the way to spiritual health is an outward expression of worship. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, as 25 year-old movement, has been sanctioned by several popes and many Catholic bishops. Most Catholic pastors are frightened of the Charismatic Renewal. Part of the reason is that they’ve seen people get into it and go on to leave the church.¹³

Notwithstanding, the belief that God communicates with His people is fundamental to Christian living and is an indispensable factor for living victoriously.

The expression of worship is intertwined with one’s understanding of the meaning of worship. Graham Hughes explores the ‘meaning of worship’ in his book, *Worship as Meaning*, and poses many interesting questions around how the liturgy has evolved through the years. This information is important because it reveals that the meaning of worship has changed from one generation to the next. He states:

In the degree of generalization with which I am working, one may say that mainline Protestantism endeavors to make sense of God by reflecting from within its condition in modernity in order to say how and where God may be understood as fitting into this. Said again, protestant theology assumes the modern condition as given and is then faced with the task – self elucidatory and apologetic – of explaining God’s place and function in this.¹⁴

¹² Smail, 109.

¹³ Esther Talbout Fenning, “Charismatic Renewal: Movement in Worship,” *St. Louis Post Edition*, accessed August 19, 1994, 4, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.drew.edu>.

¹⁴ Graham Hughes, *Worship as Meaning: A liturgical Theology for Late Modernity* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University, 2003), 244-45.

This point is important in worship because it makes the worship subjective. One's understanding of the meaning of life's experiences is directly proportional to one's relationship and worship to God. In this way, worship now moves from being corporate worship to individual worship. Individual worship is vitally important in the life of the believer.

Individual worship in a corporate setting became pervasive in the Jesus People Movement (JPM). "The Jesus People Movement was a religious movement among White American youth in which the participants wed certain values of the 1960s American counterculture, namely hippiedom, together with values of Christianity, namely Pentecostalism."¹⁵ The phrase Jesus Movement, first appeared in an article written by Brian Vahon in *Life Magazine* in 1971 and was coined by Jack and Betty Cheetham. The Jesus People Movement took worship to another level as castaways and those who would otherwise fall through the cracks in traditional Christian denominations found God in unconventional ways. Their values, images, traditions and rituals were quite different from the contemporary churches. Hippies were finding God and their lives were being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, many mainline churches were critical of the JMP and found it to be cultic. Bustraan states, "Without arguing for or against the anti-cult movements, its people and organizations filled a void and served a policing function in the arena outside the established church. While they have attempted to legitimize and delegitimize organizations based on their own evaluative criteria, many have testified to its benefit."¹⁶

¹⁵ Turner, xvii.

¹⁶ Richard Bustraan, *The Jesus People Movement: A Story of Spiritual Revolution among the Hippies* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 171.

The Renewal Movements were instrumental in changing the worship music of the contemporary church. Richard Bustraan states:

Jesus People Movement music as a unique genre may have died off by the late seventies, but it should not be dismissed as a trivial, ephemeral expression of the JPM. Instead it was the harbinger of the transformation in Christian worship music that subsequently permeated Christian churches around the globe and the seed out of which the industry blossomed. The unbroken chain of continuity that can be traced from Jesus Music to Maranatha, Vineyard Music and to many other worship music derivatives of the present day shows this short lived genre to be one of the most enduring and influential contributions to global Christianity from the JPM.¹⁷

Lastly, a central issue about the idea of worship concerns the range of entities that can be worshiped. Ninian Smart ponders this matter in his work, *The Concept of Worship*, and asks “What range of entities can be objects of worship? Maybe there should be only one such entity, the true God. But that value-judgment differs from the issue of what entities it makes sense to worship.”¹⁸ I found this discussion interesting and germane to the discussion of worship because the culture of narcissism and commercialism prevalent in our contemporary society has to be addressed. Individuals are coming to church today with varying allegiances of complicated values to people, places and things that impede their ability to embrace worship as contemporary liturgies encourage and expect. Therefore, intentional discovery of ways to introduce and encourage worship has to be explored and implemented. Scripture is clear that believers are to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Expressions of worship as praying, bowing, lifting hands, kneeling, dancing, and singing may be presented in an imposing and abrasive manner which may be hard for some to embrace because it may suggest that

¹⁷ Bustraan, 54.

¹⁸ Ninian Smart, *The Concept of Worship* (Macmillan: St. Martin’s Press, 1972), 3.

everyone must worship this way. Value-judgment occurs when others do not respond in manners expected of them from other Christians. Smart further postulates that, “One does not learn the primary concept of worship by sweeping floors but by participating in and/or observing acts of worship such as singing hymns, addressing prayers to God and so on.”¹⁹

The use of ritual and conventional meaning in worship has been a recurrent theme in the renewal movements. This indispensable factor for living an effective Christian life continues to be vitally important.

Spiritual Formations Movement (Discipleship)

The Spiritual Formations Movement played a major role in cultivating renewed interests in the importance of spiritual development and discipleship. James C. Wilhoit states:

Spiritual Formation is the task of the Church. Period. It represents neither an interesting, optional pursuit by the church nor an insignificant category in the job description of the body of Christ. Spiritual Formation is at the heart of its whole purpose for existence. The church was formed to form. Our charge, given by Jesus Himself, is to make disciples, baptizing them, and teach these new disciples to obey His commands (Matthew 28:19 – 20). The witness, worship, teaching, and compassion that the church is to practice all require that Christians be spiritually formed.²⁰

Making disciples is therefore one of those indispensable factors for living an effective and victorious Christian life. Discipleship has to be an intentional aspect of the churches curriculum following the call to discipleship at the altar. Frank C. Senn states:

¹⁹ Smart, 5.

²⁰ James C. Wilhoit, *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ through Community* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008) 15-16.

Even so, it was Wesley who gave shape to the Methodist movement, and his spiritual insights provided its bedrock. His genius was to create a theological synthesis between the two major strands of English Protestant spirituality – Anglican holiness of intent and Puritan inward assurance – and apply it in the practical outworking of an accountable discipleship.²¹

To this end, spiritual formation has to be intentional. James C. Wilhoit, a contributor of the Discipleship Movement, further states:

Christian spiritual formation refers to the intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and becoming conformed to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual Formation as a process, thereby implying that formation is a long-term, lifelong venture, and that it results from a multidimensional ministry, not just a technique of program.²²

During the Spiritual Formations Movement many models for discipleship were introduced. Dallas Willard was a major contributor of this movement. Kieth Kettering outlined two major concepts of personal transformation in Dallas Willard's model for discipleship. He states, "Dallas Willard's (2001) VIM (Vision, Intention, and Means) model provides a framework for this study of sanctificational growth. This model is utilized because it is a heuristic procedure that has the potential to describe sanctificational growth. It also provides support for the necessity for human participation in sanctificational growth."²³ Kettering goes on to define sanctification, "Sanctification relates to holiness as indicated by the translation of *hagios* in the New Testament. As a noun, it is translated "holy" or "sacred" while as a verb it is translated "make holy, consecrate, or sanctify."²⁴ He further provides discussion on the distinction between

²¹ Frank C. Senn, *Protestant Spiritual Traditions* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 217.

²² Wilhoit, 23.

²³ Keith Kettering, *The Sanctification Connection: An Exploration of Human Participation in Spiritual Growth* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2008), 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

positional sanctification, which occurs at the point of salvation, and progressive sanctification, which is the lifelong pursuit of holiness through a spiritual formation curriculum provided by the church. This point is poignant, because it provides insight into why some Christians go on to live effective and victorious Christian lives and others fall by the wayside of through the cracks.

Discipleship can best be likened to a learning process. Dallas Willard describes a disciple as an apprentice; “Someone who has decided to be with another person, under appropriate conditions, in order to become capable of doing what that person does or to become what that person is.”²⁵ Ernest Best uses the teachings found in the Gospel of Mark to expound on this process. He states:

Followers is indeed the characteristic word which Jesus uses to men. ‘Follow me’ is the challenge to those who would be his disciples (1:17, 1:20, 2:14). The word ‘follow’ implies that the one who says it is in motion, and Mark depicts Jesus in motion in the accounts of the call of disciples. Throughout the Gospel the word ‘follow’ is used almost exclusively in the reference to the disciples of Jesus.²⁶

Eugene Peterson echoes this fact and describes this process of following Jesus as ‘a long obedience’. He states:

That men and women who believingly follow Jesus (what we commonly call “the Christian life” or Christian “spirituality”) are best guided and energized by a fusion of Scripture and prayer. For as long as enthusiasm for Christian “spirituality” accelerates without an equivalent commitment to its means, nothing much is going to come of it.²⁷

Suzanne Johnson echoes this fact when she states:

²⁵ Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins Publisher, 1998), 282.

²⁶ Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh, United Kingdom: T&T Clark LTD, 1986), 5.

²⁷ Eugene Peterson, *A long Obedience in the Same Direction* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 203.

Christian spiritual formation is a matter of becoming the song that we sing, the Story we tell. We are to become the living texts of Christianity. Its very intent is formation, not information. Our task is to let the Story so live through us that we are transformed to be as the Story is. The process of change is understood as sanctification or conversion.²⁸

The conversion process ushers new believers into a journey of spiritual development that provided Christian identity and spiritual formation. Stephen Happel states:

The prime spontaneous expression of our turning toward God is the individual that we are, the whole person directing his or her life toward the One who love us. In the New Testament communities, symbols of Christian conversion were equally important. Symbol is the external expression of these inner changes. The public expression in the early community for this experience what Christians called the sacraments of the church, especially Baptism and the Eucharist. Eucharist and Baptism are first Christ's own symbolic self-expression. The Christian community took up the two symbols of the Eucharist and Baptism for their own process of self-identification.²⁹

These foundational truths are pillars of the Christian faith and are significant in the disciple-formation process. Inherent in these traditions are principle of self denial, as we follow Christ. Being baptized into the body of Christ served as an initiation rite for believers. The Eucharist is a life-long reminder of the sacrifice that Christ paid for our redemption and as we are invited to the table, we are admonished to take up our crosses, deny our selves of carnal pursuits, and to follow Christ.

Richard Foster, another major contributor to the Spiritual Formations Movement, concurs with the process of following Christ as a life-long venture. He states:

This transforming work does not happen all at once and not completely perhaps. But it does happen. The old games of manipulation and control begin losing their appeal to us. Guile becomes less and less a pattern of

²⁸ Suzanne Johnson, *Christian Spiritual Formation in the Church and Classroom* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989), 103.

²⁹ Stephen Happel and James J. Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship: A Christian Foundation for Ethics and Doctrine* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 17-18.

our daily life. A new compassion rises up within us for the bruised and broken and the dispossessed. Indeed, it's a kind of well-reasoned concern of the well-being of all people, of all creation. We are becoming friends of Jesus.³⁰

Daniel A. Helminiak further elaborates on the process of spiritual formation. He states:

A characteristic of spiritual development is that it involves the whole person; it entails personal integrity or wholeness. The specific intent of this insistence on wholeness or integrity is that the intrinsic dynamism toward authentic self-transcendence must not be forgotten when one speaks of human development. Thus, wholeness implies a growing self-consistency, a consistency within the whole. As humans follow the drive toward authentic self-transcendence and not only come to acknowledge what is really 'so' but also then decide and act appropriately on what they know, they effect changes not only in the external world on which they act but more importantly on themselves who are acting. They become as they do.³¹

Helminiak's discussion here on spiritual formation is vitally important to the discipleship process because it underscores the importance of self-investment. I believe healthy spiritual formation must be grounded in development of the self. Within the group dynamics of congregational life, David Augsburger states:

What makes witness authentic is neither the charismatic personality of an individual nor the perfection of a particular life; it is the presence of a community of witnesses who verify, validate, and authenticate their life together. Witness is a shared task, not an independent one. Such joint witnesses, when it is given in corporate life, makes both values and virtues visible. We live out our witnesses as a people; we find that a shared spirituality processes a sociological authenticity not possible for an individual on a private journey; we become a community of co-questors, not a world where each is pursuing her or his own quest.³²

³⁰ Richard J. Foster, *Sanctuary of the Soul: Journey into Meditative Prayer* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 148.

³¹ Daniel Helminiak, *Spiritual Development: An Interdisciplinary Study* (Chicago, Illinois: Loyola University Press, 1997), 36.

³² David Augsburger, *Dissident Discipleship: A Spirituality of Self-Surrender, Love of God, and Love of Neighbor* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2006), 179.

This provides a larger magnitude and scope for the discipleship process. Healthy Spiritual Formation and discipleship is an individual pursuit within a group dynamic.

John Ackerman states:

Group growth requires individual growth. For the whole group to grow, every individual needs help to get in touch with his or her own individuality in God. For the group and the individual to be aligned with God's purposes, the group together needs to listen to God, to compare its spirit to the Holy Spirit. A group discernment process should not be limited to the spiritual elite who want to gather in exclusive groups with their like-minded colleagues. Adult education isn't just talking about scripture; its' helping people read the scripture and listen to and discern God's word addressed to them.³³

This point is critical in the literature because, many denominations have hierarchical structures that divide and conquer. This stifles the discipleship process of the group and the individuals. One of the highlights of the Spiritual Formations Movement was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among **all** the people. This outpouring crossed traditional barriers and empowered congregants as they heard from God. Of course, many denominations felt uncomfortable with this shift in the body of Christ.

As congregants were empowered by the Holy Spirit, they felt the need to challenge traditional barriers that heretofore kept them relegated to certain roles in the church. Richard Foster states:

Experiencing the inward reality liberates us outwardly. Speech becomes truthful and honest. The lust for status and position is gone because we no longer need status and position. We cease from showy extravagance not on the grounds of being unable to afford it, but on the grounds of principle. Our goods become available to others.³⁴

³³ John Ackerman, *Spiritual Awakening: A Guide to Spiritual Life in Congregations* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1993), 85.

³⁴Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1988), 80.

This phenomenon in the discipleship process circumvents the spirit of narcissism that was prevalent then and which has pinnacled in the contemporary times in which we live today.

Augsburger states:

In an age of narcissism the past is irrelevant, and the future will have to take care of itself. What matters to the narcissist are me and my satisfaction, safety, and security here and now. A spirituality that is focused on self-fulfillment, self-actualization, even self-transcendence is focused on the self and on the realization of the self's capacity to claim the higher reaches of human experience. This narcissism is evident in more than just occasional instances of immature spirituality. It is becoming the norm of both mainline and evangelical churches. In narcissistic faith, we focus on how God is meeting our needs and fulfilling our requests here and now. We no longer think of being part of God's purposes that stretch back into time and draw us toward His intentions for humanity.³⁵

I agree with Augsburger and believe that this culture of narcissism has caused many to be lost from the flock. During the Spiritual Formations movement, the Holy Spirit attempted to eradicate this culture of narcissism, but human nature keeps it alive. Foster states:

Contemporary culture lacks both the inward reality and the outward life-style of simplicity. Because we lack a divine center our need for security has led us into an insane attachment to things. Courageously, we need to articulate new, more human ways to live. We should take exception to the modern psychosis that defines people by how much they can produce or what they earn. The Spiritual Discipline of simplicity is not a lost dream, but a recurrent vision throughout history. It can be recaptured today. It must be.³⁶

One of the highlights of the Spiritual Formations Movement was the Campus Crusades for Christ Ministry. This ministry recaptured the fervor of simplicity mentioned by Richard Foster. God poured out the Holy Spirit among college campuses. Explaining how the ministry works Turner states:

³⁵ Augsburger, 182-83.

³⁶ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 80-81.

Evangelical ecumenism remained very different from mainline Protestant ecumenism. Campus Crusade retained a seventeen-point statement of faith that began with an affirmation of biblical inerrancy and emphasized Jesus Christ as the only mediator between God and man (woman). Bill Bright recruited young evangelists who entered Greek houses that were anathema to most conservative Protestants, allowed several staff members to dress like hippies (also anathema) in the late 1960's and hired former executives to evangelize businessman and politicians.³⁷

Thus, the Campus Crusade served to counter attack the culture of narcissism and wealth that consumed the world and the church. The foundational truths employed by this movement upon the discipleship process, had an internal and external impact. David Brown states:

Discipleship is not simply a matter of individual relationship to Christ as lord or even of following His example, however indirectly, wherever it might lead. It also has a strong social dimension. In contemporary theology this is pursued overwhelmingly through reflection on eschatology, the realization of Christ's kingdom within this world 'at the end of the age', and our present contribution towards that goal.³⁸

Discipleship does impact the 'social theory of change'; the underlying motives, principles, and guidelines which shape a ministries global outlook on discipleship and spiritual formation. Ackerman states:

The pastors of America have metamorphosed into a company of shopkeepers and the shops they keep are churches. They are preoccupied with shopkeeper's concerns – how to keep customers happy, how to lure customers away from competitors down the street, how to package the goods so that the customers will lay out more money. The pastor's responsibility is to keep the community attentive to God. It is the responsibility that is being abandoned in spades. Pastors and leaders will need their own personal mission statements and their own regular discipline to get in touch with God's dream for their ministry.³⁹

³⁷ Turner, 231.

³⁸ David Brown, *Discipleship and Imagination: Christian Tradition and Truth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8.

³⁹ Ackerman, 84.

This discussion provides a grim outlook on the vital role that pastors should play in the church. I believe God has called pastors to be leaders in the Body of Christ and to be His voice piece to the congregants. When pastors are relegated to just being shopkeeper's, the magnitude and scope of their role is diminished.

Church's mission statements and foundational truths play a major role in the discipleship process for individual spiritual formation and church growth. Suzanne Johnson records:

By its very nature, the church is an ecology of spiritual care and guidance. Spiritual guidance includes training persons in the skills and disciplines ingredient to living the Christian Story. These are fundamentally the means by which the church itself participates in and initiates persons into the Realm of God.⁴⁰

Teaching the fundamental truths of the Christian faith is an integral factor for healthy spiritual formation. Christian education is the vehicle used to provide new believers with those fundamental truths that will ground them and sustain them through the harsh realities of life. Johnson further states:

Christian education can be defined as the dynamic, intentional process of teaching and learning through which the faith community is initiated into ever more faithful and complex participation in God's creative and redemptive activity in the world. It consists of intentional and lifelong processes through which Christian character receives distinctive shape and orientation over a lifetime and through which the church itself is more fully initiated into the Realm of God through instruction and praxis. Instruction refers to deliberate means whereby the faith community teaches the Story (Scripture and tradition) and skills for critical inquiry into and faithful, critical revision of it. Praxis includes the practice (means of grace) that Wesley called works of mercy and justice.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Johnson, 121.

⁴¹ Ibid., 143-44.

The Spiritual Formations Movement and its impact on the importance of discipleship continue to serve as vehicles for discovering the invaluable and indispensable factor for living an effective Christian life.

Small Group/ Pastoral Care Movement (Fellowship)

Like the other parachurch movements, the Pastoral Care Movement comprised of many contributors and has enlightened the churches understanding of the importance of fellowship in the life of the Christian believer and the dynamics of small groups. The American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Southern Baptists, and United Church of Christ were among many of its contributors.

From its beginning, the Methodist Church has found its identity in pastoral care. A small group of students gathered around John and Charles Wesley at Oxford University to pray and call upon lonely persons in prisons and alms-houses. When the movement grew in number, each person belonged to a small group, known as a Class meeting, for open sharing of personal concerns and spiritual growth.⁴²

Many Christian denominations employed varying approaches in the implementation of the small group dynamic. Charles Kemp states:

We see the ecumenical aspect of the movement, for the names that are mentioned as being influential in a denomination have also been influential in other denominations as well. This is true from Luther and Wesley down to Westberg and Hiltner. Differences are obvious, but they are not divisive. We have much to learn from each other in sharing experiences, fostering experimentation and research, and a continuing dialogue for increased effectiveness in the service of the people and the advancement of the church.⁴³

⁴² Paul E. Johnson, "The Methodists," *Pastoral Psychology*, 18, no. 175 (June 1967): 37.

⁴³ Charles F. Kemp, "The Pastoral Care Movement: A Product of many Contributors," *Pastoral Psychology*, 18, no. 175 (June 1967): 44.

From this perspective, the small group dynamic, transcended denominational barriers. People gathering in small groups and sharing hopes, experiences and struggles were instrumental in providing a safe haven for healthy spiritual formation.

The small group or pastoral care dynamic provided an atmosphere where developing believers, at varying points in their spiritual journey, could meet to discuss a plethora of open-ended agenda items that impacted their spiritual identity. Frederick Quinn states:

The church was a place to speak out freely on social and political issues such as war, gun control, immigration, capital punishment, civil rights, and the place of women in society and/or the place of persons of same-sex orientation in the wider life of the community. Finally, it was a prayerful setting where members realized the sad cost of divisions, and the joy of a purposeful community gathering to happily proclaim the news of the ‘goodly fellowship’ in Christ.⁴⁴

The small group dynamic facilitated pastoral care in the vital role of developing and implementing a community to achieve effective and purposeful fellowship for believers.

Pastoral care, as we understand it today has evolved down through the centuries.

Abstract concepts of pastoral care have been developed through the centuries under such labels as ‘pastoral theology,’ but these concepts have been powerless to create effective pastors. A Christian pastor is one who in his very person and in his living relationships with people mediates something of the quality of being which is found in a larger measure in the revelation of Christ. In this living relationship there are reconciliation, forgiveness, and healing which reach below the struggles of human existence into the very core of man’s being. Only the presence of the Holy Spirit will save a pastor from a mechanical imitation of the model presented by Jesus – with all of the destructiveness of such imitation.⁴⁵

The small group movement created an atmosphere where pastoral care became a shared responsibility for the entire congregation. The evolution of pastoral care is important as

⁴⁴ Frederick Quinn, *Building the “Goodly Fellowship of Faith”: A History of the Episcopal Church in Utah, 1867-1996* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2004), 272.

⁴⁵ Carroll A. Wise, *The Meaning of Pastoral Care* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), 1.

it outlines the progress and failures of the movement. The small group dynamic or pastoral care underscores the importance of fellowship. Fellowship is an indispensable factor for Christian discipleship because it provides a safe environment for accountability and healthy spiritual formation. Pastoral care, traditionally centered around the pastor, which was a major part of the problem – both for pastoral self-care and parishioners. This resulted in a greater understanding of congregational helps and the development of small groups to assist in the pastoral care role. Carroll Wise states:

Pastoral care is the art of communicating the inner meaning of the Gospel to persons at the point of their need. Thus pastoral care is not ‘pastoral theology,’ especially when this term denotes a set of principles for the conduct of a specific activity. Pastoral care is more a function than an activity, more a living relationship than a theory or interpretation, more a matter of being than of doing.⁴⁶

Fellowship among developing Christian believers affords a healthy exchange of ideas and encourages everyone in the group to identify and explore their ministry gift(s). Stephen Seamands echoes this important point by stating:

In the daily grind of ministry it’s easy to forget whose ministry it is. Although we desire to serve Christ and often ask Him for help, we assume that it’s our ministry and we are the principal actors. Ministry, then, is not so much asking Christ to join us in our ministry as we offer Him to others; ministry is participating with Christ in His ongoing ministry as He offers Himself to others through us.⁴⁷

This shared responsibility for healthy spiritual formation provides accountability in a loving and affirming environment. The small group movement grew as the Christian church gained greater insight into the importance of congregational care for its’ potential members. Freddy Clark states, “God’s people then are called to be imitators of God. The

⁴⁶ Wise, 8.

⁴⁷ Stephen Seamands, *Ministry in the Image of God* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, 2005), 20.

disciples of Jesus Christ are to make disciples. Disciples are made by sharing with all people the teachings of Jesus so that His church would be rooted in nothing but that which was received from Him.”⁴⁸ The small group dynamic was later referred to by churches as hospitality. Carroll Wise later went on to liken hospitality to what he calls covenant making. He uses hospitality as a paradigm for covenant or the laying out of an ethical framework of justice and addressing issues of liberation. He states, “The covenantal notion that gives credence to the subject of hospitality is the covenant God has with God’s people.”⁴⁹ From this perspective, fellowship provides a paradigm useful for understanding church membership, accountability and healthy spiritual formation for new converts and potential members.

As the small group movement evolved, many churches experienced growth in their membership rosters. This was particularly prevalent in the Korean Christian Church. In his address during a church conference Ryu Tong-shik stated:

The life of the church can be preserved and developed only through constant renewal. The church is the Body of Christ and at the same time is the community of believers. The renewal of the church is a natural manifestation of the nature of the church in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, renewal of the church is not the result of man’s effort, but the fruit of the work of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit among believers who obey God.⁵⁰

The Korean Church came to understand the importance of lay ministers and developed cell groups to assist in the evangelism and fellowship of new believers.

The Korean church began to ask what the mission of the church is. In this endeavor also, diverse understandings were revealed. The conservative

⁴⁸ Freddy James Clark, *Hospitality: An Ecclesiology Practice of Ministry* (Lanham, Maryland: Hamilton Books, 2007), 41.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵⁰ Boo-Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism Its History and Theology* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1988), 157.

group emphasized church-centered, lay evangelism. The church-centered understanding of evangelism and mission culminated in 1965-66, in a National Movement of Evangelism with the slogan, 'Thirty Million Koreans for Christ,' under the leadership of Dr. Helen Kim, president of Ewha University.⁵¹

The development and utilization of cell groups were instrumental in providing effective pastoral care to a growing membership and facilitated healthy spiritual formation. Much of what is distinctive about contemporary Korean Christianity can be traced to the influence of early twentieth-century Protestant missionaries. They employed a fundamentalist form of Christianity which stressed the inerrancy of the Bible and inflexible ideas about morality. Ecklund states:

However, Korean Christians made Christianity distinctively their own. They emphasized the Korean Confucian tradition of hierarchical relationships and the shamanist tradition of religious emotionalism. The rapid expansion in Korea occurred in a period of Japanese occupation, which provided a unique subversive and political context in which the Korean church thrived. By 1990 there were about 2,000 Korean churches in the United States, with one church for every 300-350 Korean immigrants.⁵²

Rapid church growth was directly proportional to the ability of small groups to disseminate the gospel message, in ways that the larger group could not.

Yong-Do Lee was another contributor of the small group movement in the Korean church. He stressed the importance of a life of repentance, prayer, thanksgiving, love and sacrifice. "Whenever he had a chance, he urged the renewal of Christian thought and called for reform from the pulpit in order to awaken the lethargic Korean church."⁵³ Lee

⁵¹ Yoo, 158.

⁵² Elaine Howard Ecklund, *Korean American Evangelicals: New Models for Civic Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 9.

⁵³ Ung Kyu Pak, *Asian Thought and Culture: Millennialism in the Korean Protestant Church* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 2005), 148.

was heavily influenced by his Methodist heritage and understood renewal of the church was accomplished by the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is important to note that Lee overemphasized one's personal experience and this informed his hermeneutic. For this reason many orthodox Christians criticized Lee, but the contribution of the importance of healthy spiritual formation through the presence of the Holy Spirit was an invaluable ingredient in the pastoral care movement and its work.

Paul Mickey states, "Pastoral care is a disciplined effort to offer responsible theological and psychological leadership and assistance to individuals, groups and organizations."⁵⁴ One of the inherent dangers and critiques of the movement was undisciplined pastoral care by lay members or individuals in small groups. This is why contributors like Paul Mickey were critical of the movement and voiced the importance of offering disciplined and responsible assistance to individuals. Many fellowships began to sprout that lacked ecclesiological oversight. This oversight provided for monitoring and quality assurance. The lack of oversight among fellowships was very risky. This risk factor was very pervasive in the rise and spread of Pentecostalism.

The beginnings of Pentecostalism, with its characteristic practice of speaking in tongues as evidence of baptism by the Holy Spirit, is often associated with a revival beginning in 1906 at the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California.

Among zealous heirs of John Wesley's Methodism such longings were expressed in the language of 'Christian perfection' or 'holiness,' while Protestants of Calvinist background spoke more of 'the higher Christian life.' With their stress on the need for a special work of the Holy Spirit,

⁵⁴ Paul Mickey, Gary Gamble and Paula Gilbert, *Pastoral Assertiveness: A New Model for Pastoral Care* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 19.

these longings led to episodes where the Holy Spirit was thought to descend in a special way.⁵⁵

Charles Parham and William Seymour were major contributors to the early history of Pentecostalism and are mentioned in the literature because of its impact on rapid church growth and the pastoral care movement.

Once underway, the Pentecostal movement rapidly became a world-wide phenomenon. Over the last half of this century, the charismatic movement in Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and many other denominations expanded emphases on healing and other spiritual gifts borrowed from earlier Pentecostalism. Together, the Pentecostal and charismatic emphases upon experiencing the grace of God – especially upon sensing God through more intimate, less cognitive forms of worship – have influenced Protestants, Catholics, and even some Orthodox all over the world.⁵⁶

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an important factor in fellowship. Rick Warren, the author of *Purpose Driven Church*, and the senior pastor of Saddleback Church (megachurch) postulates:

I believe it is because it [fellowship] symbolizes one of the purposes of the church: fellowship – identification with the body of Christ. As Christians we're called to belong, not just to believe. We are not meant to live lone-ranger lives; instead, we are to belong to Christ's family and be members of His body. Baptism is not only a symbol of salvation; it is a symbol of fellowship.⁵⁷

Saddleback, whose membership exceeds 10,000 believers, implemented small groups and lay leaders to effectively facilitate healthy spiritual formation for this large membership.

Warren believes small groups afford accountability and pastoral care for its membership.

⁵⁵ Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Michigan, 2000), 299-300.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁵⁷ Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, 105.

Small groups were also developed and implemented abroad in East and West Africa. They were called small Christian communities (SCCs). Speaking about Christian community, Jeanne Hinton agreed with Christopher Mwoleka in a 1991 Notre Dame consultation, “We share everything in common, we bring up our children together, we attend to the sick and elderly together. We grow bananas, keep cows and pigs and ‘live by our own sweat.’ The main purpose is to gain strength to serve in the wider community.”⁵⁸ Hinton agreed with Mwoleka that the importance of fellowship in a community is an invaluable and indispensable factor for healthy spiritual formation. Hinton further stated, “This ‘integrated community,’ as it is called, has a particular task – to inspire and help in the formation of small Christian communities (SCCs). Typically a community comes together only once a week, meeting informally in the homes of members.”⁵⁹ These informal small groups were the invaluable ingredient in shaping healthy spiritual formation in an affirming and loving context.

Through the fellowship that they demonstrate, the Small Group/ Pastoral Care Movement proclaimed to the world, this person is now one of us. We have each other for support. You are members of God’s very own family and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian. Warren states, “The church exists to provide fellowship for believers.”⁶⁰ I concur with the words of Sondra Matthaei, another small group contributor, who concludes, “Being heard, being known, and being accepted are the characteristics of authentic relationships. When others accept us as we really are, we

⁵⁸ Jeanne Hinton, *Walking in the Same Direction: A New Way of Being Church* (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 1995), 22-23.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶⁰ Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, 106.

come to know ourselves in new ways.”⁶¹ The framework that pastoral care provides, affords believers the comforts of attaining spiritual identity in an atmosphere that facilitates healthy spiritual formation.

Hearing not only helps persons come to new self-awareness and self-understanding but also transforms community into communion. The word communion points to something deeper than our individual understanding of community. When we recognize that God is a participant in these relationships, community becomes communion as persons are heard, known, and accepted through the development of authentic relationships within our churches. Communion begins with hearing because it is in the hearing and then the listening that we find mutual authentic relationship. We are bound together in community by our shared life, but there is also room to celebrate the unique gifts of each member of that communion. And communion brings deeper meaning to our lives.⁶²

This is the inherent power and strength of fellowship, within a loving and affirming community. The small group movement provided a healthy environment conducive for healthy spiritual formation which afforded accountability and oversight for developing Christian believers. Speaking about fellowship, Richard Cimino states:

It’s difficult to remain a removed observer when it comes to the Roman Catholic charismatic movement. Charismatics, with their emotional, even ecstatic, worship, their close bond of fellowship, and their expressive affection, had a way of putting me in the middle of things. This prayer group is a real family. Like that small prayer group dwarfed by its mammoth parish, the Catholic charismatic renewal movement generated a more personalized and informal style of faith that spilled out from the prayer groups and large charismatic conventions to have a significant impact on the contemporary church.⁶³

This reflection describes the impact of fellowship and the small group movement on the larger church traditions at that time. John Casteel echoes this sentiment and provides

⁶¹ Sondra Higgins Matthaedi, *Formation in Faith: The Congregational Ministry of Making Disciples* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 3.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁶³ Richard Cimino, *Trusting the Spirit: Renewal and Reform in American Religion* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 13.

biblical foundation for fellowship when states, “Modern individualist pietism is simply not Biblical. We have somehow equated “personal” with “individualist” religion. The very concept of person, rightly apprehended, implies membership in a community. No personal being, Paul Tillich reminds us, exists without communal being. “There is no person without encounter with other persons. Persons can grow only in the communion of personal encounter.”⁶⁴ In his discussion of small groups, he quotes Theodore O. Wedel, “This was the greatest religious experience of my life.”⁶⁵ This qualitative statement is relevant as it rates the importance of fellowship and validates it as an indispensable factor for living an effective Christian life. John Casteel then poses an interesting question, “Redemptive experience in Christian fellowship – Is this not one of the most essential marks of what the very word “church” should mean when it manifests such basic New Testament images of the church as Body of Christ and Fellowship of the Holy Spirit?”⁶⁶ Viewing fellowship from this perspective provides a schematic consistent with Scripture. “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:16). Membership in a local church provides wonderful fellowship which strengthens whole Body of Christ. A healthy local church is one that understands the importance of fellowship and creates a loving and affirming atmosphere conducive for accountability and healthy spiritual formation.

⁶⁴ John L. Casteel ed., *The Creative Role of Interpersonal Groups in the Church Today* (New York: Association Press, 1968), 46.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

The impact of fellowship among Christendom is invaluable for healthy spiritual formation. Small groups continue to be a vibrant and vital factor for developing healthy Christians. John Casteel states:

You cannot by organization lead a person into a relationship with God – you must begin where a man is and help to awaken God within him. Something more than good preaching and teaching was needed. Modern man needs to find a vocabulary by which he can communicate religious ideas and feeling to another. He must have an experience of God as well as possess knowledge about God. Jesus had shared intimately religion as a way of life with a small band of disciples. John Wesley began his great Methodist movement with the Methodist “meeting.” I was certain that this was the direction in which to move – the power of a small group.⁶⁷

The universal church of Jesus Christ has always been in the process of renewal.

Nothing remains static. Nathan Smith states:

Families grow and change as children reach maturity, the elders die off, and new members are added through marriage and birth. So churches are never static because there are new dynamics to contend with. There is a seducing tendency for faith to be pulled toward a rigid and formal religion. Fortunately, God, in His providence, enters this cycle and breathes new life into His people. Where new wine is made, the old forms and structures simply yield.⁶⁸

John Patton in his book, *From Ministry to Theology*, provides a critical reflection of the group dynamic between the ministry and the community. He states:

The ministry group develops a sense of community among the members, facilitated by an initial bracketing out of critical responses to what was shared. As relationships have developed brackets are gradually removed so that conceptualization, critique, and objectivization become appropriate responses as the groups move from reflection on pastoral event to theological reconstruction.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ John L. Casteel, *Spiritual Renewal Through Personal Groups* (New York: Association Press, 1957), 30-33.

⁶⁸ Nathan Delynn Smith, *Roots, Renewal and the Brethren* (Pasadena, CA: Hope Publishing House, 1986), 2.

⁶⁹ John Patton, *From Ministry to Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 50-51.

This critical reflection is important for the Lay Renewal Movement because it parallels the movement with the dynamism of church growth and membership patterns. Patton utilizes the work of anthropologist Victor Turner, in his studies of developing communities to understand the more sophisticated community of the church. He states:

Turner uses the term *communitas* to identify a rudimentary structured and relatively undifferentiated community of equal individuals who submit together to the authority of a “ritual elder,” a leader having been given authority by the larger community, tribe, or, in our case, religious group. *Communitas* has an existential quality involving the whole person in relation to other persons.⁷⁰

This discussion on group dynamics underscores the importance on the evolution of individual church cultures and their impact on the spiritual formation process. This quality of the group dynamic is important in the fellowship of believers as it has allowed the movement to progress over time and maintained consistency of foundational truths and church traditions as the leadership changed.

Lay Renewal Movement (Ministry)

The Lay Renewal Movement served to refocus the church on the Ministry of the Christian church.

The thirty-five year history of the “lay movement” has been continually coordinated and encouraged by the World Council of Churches, and the Collaboration Committee is one current form of this encouragement. The World Collaboration Committee for Christian Lay Centres, Academies, and Movements for Social Concern is a network with the following purposes: 1) To establish channels of communication; 2) To develop programs as international studies, research, training courses, exchange of

⁷⁰ Patton, 52-53.

staff; 3) To offer consultative or advisory service on personnel; and 4) To develop relations with other agencies with particular concerns.⁷¹

The work of the ministry is both an individual and collective enterprise. This is a complex phenomenon and has been problematic for churches. Robert C. Worley, a contributor of the Lay Renewal movement states:

The problem of understanding the membership in the church and ministry by clergy and laity is related to the turbulence in congregations. We must focus on the organizations and the methods of governance in these organizations as at least partial answer to this problem. There is wholeness to Christ's ministry which is not found normally in the church today. Congregations expect that the minister will "do it" – whatever the ministry is. Cultural conditioning, theological education, and personal style and proclivities have combined to produce both ministers and lay persons with expectations which are theologically heretical.⁷²

This problem was the impetus for the Lay Renewal movement and the importance of laity involvement in the work of the ministry.

Lovett Weems Jr. and Tom Berlin states:

Clergypersons sometimes feel that they have only two options: one is "faithfulness," with little regard for results, and the other is to adopt the "success" culture they see around them. But a third option is fruitfulness. Fruitfulness has as its goal not personal advancement or acclaim but the advancement of God's reign on earth. It seeks to shape the life and work of the congregation through a shared passion for its mission.⁷³

Learning about the congregation, a churches history and mission, is important because it allows the leadership to bring the membership alongside them in the task of discovering God's will for the particular church and its' individual members. This is work. Marcene Marcoux suggests:

⁷¹ World Council of Churches, *Voices of Solidarity* (Geneva, Switzerland: World of Council Churches, 1981), 13.

⁷² Robert C. Worley, *A Gathering of Strangers: Understanding the Life of Your Church*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1976), 99.

⁷³ Lovett H. Weems Jr. and Tom Berlin, *Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011), xvi.

Without a doubt movements entail work. Since individuals do not automatically embrace a program of renewal, there must be a basis for their support, and it is this ground that constitutes part of the present work of the movement; the process of legitimization. Legitimization is the crown jewel or reward one finds in discovering their ministry gift. It has been said that there are two (2) important days in one's life: the day they are born and the day they know why they were born. Legitimization is about discovering one's purpose in life. This indispensable factor circumvents countless years of wandering, experimentation and enticement to illicit behavioral patterns. The work of legitimization is complex and elaborate.⁷⁴

Worley argues, "Most Legitimization is given to particular kinds of sacramental-priestly and pastoral functions. But in Protestantism there is little understanding and legitimization of kingly-governance or political leadership activities. A great deal of stress is created by those who use a political style rooted in feudal tradition."⁷⁵ This discussion of legitimization is important here because it provides the etiology of the problem with many churches that see church agencies as to be ruled autocratically, from the top down. This schematic does not invoke the fruitfulness of the entire membership, thus placing undue burden upon the clergy, while dismissing the membership. Members waste countless years because they are not supported in self-discovery of their purpose and ministry gifting. A healthy local church is one that understands the importance of assisting the members in discovering their ministry gift(s) and allowing them to use them in service to the Lord and others. This legitimization is empowering as it solidifies one's purpose for living. It also helps to offset idleness which is an arena for illicit temptations to flourish.

⁷⁴ Marcene Marcoux, *Cursillo – Anatomy of a Movement: The Experience of Spiritual Renewal* (New York: Lambeth Press, 1982), 192.

⁷⁵ Worley, 98.

The Lay Renewal Movement sought to recapture the biblical understanding of the ecclesia and the membership gifts. Findley B. Edge, a major contributor of the Lay Renewal Movement states, “Anyone even casually related to the church is aware that it has come upon hard times. This is a rather strange phenomenon because the church today has more members than ever before to do its work, and they are better educated than they have ever been. But in spite of this, church work is declining in many areas.”⁷⁶ He concludes that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is God’s call to ministry. God ordained to accomplish His redemptive purpose in the world through ‘a people’ called to be the ministers. That means, “The primary responsibility for God’s ministry in the world is the responsibility of the laity and not the clergy.”⁷⁷ This legitimization of the laity was the strongest impact of the Lay Renewal Movement. Edge believed that while in church, the believer should study, worship, and open their lives to the Spirit of God. “When the worship, study, planning, and equipping are completed, they go out to invade the world for God; In stores, shops, offices, factories, homes, farms, each expresses his ministry.”⁷⁸ To this end, Edge believes that God’s basic call is a call to ministry.

Elton Trueblood, another major contributor of the Lay Renewal Movement, states, “All Christians are called to the ministry regardless of their particular secular occupations.”⁷⁹ James Newby once stated of Trueblood, “Elton is still, perhaps, the most

⁷⁶ Findley B. Edge, *The Greening of the Church* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1971), 37-38.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷⁹ Elton Trueblood, *While it is Day: An Autobiography* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), 84-85.

quoted religious leader in the country.”⁸⁰ He quotes one of Elton’s most notable writings on wholisitic Christianity:

The only way in which a person may achieve relative unity of life is by dedication to something outside himself, to which he gives such loyal devotion that the self is forgotten in the process. The competing parts of our lives, which cannot unite themselves, are then united because of a unity of direction, when all the parts point one way. The ancient truth is that the health of the self comes, not by concentrating oneself, but by such dedication to something outside the self, that self is thereby forgotten.⁸¹

Findley Edge further explored the will of God and the Christian life in his work, *A Quest for Vitality in Religion: A Theological Approach to Religious Education*. He attempted to answer the question, “What does it mean to be Christian?” In answering this question, he employed Matthew 7:18-20; Jesus declared that tree is known by its fruit. “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Edge pondered the nature of this fruit and was convinced that Jesus gave a clear answer: Fruit comes in doing “the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (v. 21) Edge concluded, the concept of “the will of God” provides the framework in which the mission and the ministry are to be accomplished.

Findley Edge, Elton Trueblood and other contributors of the lay Renewal Movement understood the importance of each individual believer discovering their ministry gift and purpose in the Body of Christ. Edge posits:

Herein is a basic part of the problem. The preaching and the teaching that has been done in the churches have led people to accept Christianity in terms of such generalized ideals that almost anyone can agree with them.

⁸⁰ James R. Newby, *Elton Trueblood: Believer, Teacher, and Friend* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1990), 160.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 163.

But these people have not known how these generalized ideals are to be implemented and expressed in specific situations.⁸²

Jim Wallis echoes this point when he states:

I just seek to be a person who lives what I believe and who lives what God has asked me to live. It's clear to me that God ask me to love. That means I have to offer food to the person who's hungry, clothes to the person who has no clothes; I have to welcome the stranger in my midst, and I have to work for the day when those needs, when those deprivations, those injustices won't be. It's an outpouring of myself more than anything else. I believe I am to love, and in so doing here I am.⁸³

Edward O'Connor describes what it is to live out the mandate of Christian love in ministry. He states:

It is a sudden gift of love taking hold of our whole being as a sensible fire rather than as a light. The whole life of the being that has undergone such an experience is now transformed into a continuous song of love: the *melos amoris*, which gives a tone to everything we know, feel or do. The whole matter of a Christian spiritual life is an experience of love, and goes far as to acknowledge also that it should permeate our entire being, including our bodily sensibility.⁸⁴

D. Elton Trueblood states:

One of the blessings of maturity which is seldom sufficiently recognized is that of genuine humility. In early life there is a strong tendency to suppose that we have all of the answers, but some experience of life can cure this malady. One mark of intellectual growth is the recognition that there are no simple answers. In the logic of living, gratitude is the normal result of humility. In this fashion, gratitude can become a way of life. The greatest blessing of maturity is that gratitude may transcend the single occasion, to become both habitual and continuous.⁸⁵

⁸²Edge, *A Quest For Vitality in Religion*, 110-11.

⁸³ Jim Wallis ed., *The Rise of Christian Conscience* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987), 17-18.

⁸⁴ Edward D. O'Connor ed., *Perspectives on Charismatic Renewal* (Notre Dame, London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 126.

⁸⁵ D. Elton Trueblood, *Essays in Gratitude* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 17-18.

The Lay Renewal Movement refocused the churches attention on the importance of ministry, fruitfulness, and purpose. It is the critically important for the church to continue to provide agency for this endeavor. “I believe the greatest tragedy in life is not death. The greatest tragedy in life is life without a purpose.” ~ The Late Dr. Myles Monroe, Bahamas Faith Ministries International, founder and senior pastor.

Church Growth Movement (Evangelism)

The Church Growth movement was founded by Donald McGaravan in the 1950’s. The Church Growth movement refocused the churches attention on the importance of evangelism and missions. The Church Growth movement was a parachurch movement that placed value on the church having a broader global perspective and marketplace transformation. While studying growing churches in India, McGaravan noted several important sociological factors: Cultural adaptation of worship and preaching; and the homogeneous unit principle. Describing McGaravan’s work, Robb Redman states:

People are more receptive to the gospel in the company of their peers.”⁸⁶ He further records, “McGaravan’s student C. Peter Wagner discovered that many of the mentor’s principles worked in a North American setting as well. The movement is influential and controversial. Wagner has taught and mentored many of the leading seeker church pastors in his courses at Fuller Theological Seminary, notably the late John Wimber, Rick Warren and Walt Kallestad. As the megachurch became more prominent in the 1980’s and 1990’s, the church growth movement’s practical focus attracted many pastors and church leaders to conferences and courses on how to build a growing church.”⁸⁷

The criticism of the movement has been its’ de-prioritization of the place of worship in the service. This phenomenon has caused many of the adherents to reduce it

⁸⁶ Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2002), 12.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

liturgy to 'seeker-sensitive' strategies. Seeker-sensitive refers to those congregants who are not yet believers, but who come to churches seeking to know who God is and what the Christian message is all about. Seeker-sensitive people are looking for purpose in life, wholeness of person and answers to life/death issues. Redmann states, "But for a church that attempts a seeker-sensitive worship service, the issue of participation is critical. A key assumption of seeker service advocates is that seekers don't want to participate actively in worship."⁸⁸ For the purposes of this project I will focus my attention on the positive impact of the movement. The positive impact of the movement centers around having a global perspective and an understanding of marketplace transformation; 'Light driving away the darkness.' The most important feature of the Church Growth theory is that, "It uses the social sciences of sociology, ethnography, and demographics to understand how people live, think and feel; it challenges church leaders to pay attention to the environmental factors."⁸⁹

Church growth has much to do with evangelism and the church's understanding of the Great Commission to go and make disciples. Win & Charles Arn, other major contributors to the church growth movement, states, "While the church has grown – and there are more Christians today than ever before in the history of the world – there is still a vast unfinished task."⁹⁰ They further argue:

Most approaches to mass and local church evangelism today have a significant common shortcoming. Attention is centered around, and success judged according to, the goal of "getting a decision." That brief verbal commitment is seen as the ultimate response to the Great

⁸⁸ Redman, 19.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 13.

⁹⁰ Win Arn & Charles Arn, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998), 8.

Commission. Unfortunately, there is often a great gap between getting a decision and making a disciple.⁹¹

Donald McGaravan states:

It is impossible to ignore the call to evangelism, for it is being raised in so many quarters of the world. As we have studied evangelism in its ecumenical setting, we have been burdened by a sense of urgency. We have recaptured something of the spirit of the apostolic age, when the believers went everywhere preaching the word.⁹²

This impetus for the church growth movement refocused the churches on the importance of evangelism. McGaravan states, “Evangelism proclaims Christ and persuades men to become His disciples and responsible members of His Church. Ideally it is His Church only. To some extent I agree that evangelism is “a function of expectancy.”⁹³ The value of the Church Growth movement rests in its ability to circumvent isolationism that is prevalent in many denominations and local church parishes. Many local churches know very little about the world around them. They are not interested in the community, social issues, educational systems, law enforcement, local government or politics. This is a major problem, because the church cannot be the church if it is an island to itself. The Great Commission compels us to go into the world. This is a literal imperative, not just a suggestion. The world cannot hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, if the church confines itself to their four walls.

C. Peter Wagner, emphatically states, “The positive dimension of the Christian’s involvement in the world is found in our Lord’s high-priestly prayer in John 17. The principal objective of sending believers into the world is that the world might believe. (v.

⁹¹ Win Arn & Charles Arn, 12.

⁹² Donald McGaravan, *Eye of the Storm: The Great Debate in Mission* (Waco, Texas: Word Publishers, 1972), 41.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 57.

12).”⁹⁴ He believes the main responsibility of the church is the preaching of the gospel or *kerygma*. He states, “But even the announcement of the kerygma is only a means to another end. The objective, according to the Great Commission, is to make disciples and baptize them, which indicates that they should become members of the church (Matt. 29:19).”⁹⁵ Evangelism is a challenge for many churches as it requires them to come out from beyond their sacred four walls and into the community. Robert Tuttle states simply:

I have often said that the presentation of the gospel can be described in two words – hard work. The more detailed work of discipleship (usually within community) must then lead to the more careful analysis of peoples in culture. To communicate at one level does not mean that the work of evangelism has been done⁹⁶

Evangelism is the culmination of healthy spiritual formation because it understands that the Kingdom is present where the church is. Developing a global perspective and embracing marketplace transformation is the sign of a healthy Christian and hence is an indispensable factor for living an effective Christian life.

Understanding that ‘the world is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof’ is an empowering ingredient. Donald McGaravan echoes this sentiment when he states:

Church growth follows where Christians show faithfulness in finding the lost. The purpose is not to search, but to find. The goal is not to send powdered milk or kindly messages to the son in the far country. It is to see him walking in through the front door of his (her) father’s house. It never takes place among the indifferent or rebellious.⁹⁷

I concur with his critique that:

⁹⁴ C. Peter Wagner, *Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical?* (Grand rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishers, 1970), 105.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Robert G. Tuttle, Jr., *Can We Talk? Sharing Your Faith in a Pre-Christian World* (Nashville; Abingdon Press, 1999), 17.

⁹⁷ Donald A. McGaravan, *Understanding Church Growth , Fully Revised* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishers, 1970), 5.

Since church growth has been born in an interdenominational milieu and taught to missionaries and ministers of many theological persuasions, naturally therefore to denominational theologians church growth looks inadequately theological. They consider it as method not theology. Baptismal regenerationists complain that church growth does not believe in baptism. Some Calvinists complain that church growth overlooks the sovereignty of God. Pentecostals tend to feel that church growth gives insufficient emphasis to the Holy Spirit. Those fighting for social justice like to say that church growth men teach cheap grace. Those interested in liturgy find that church growth says very little about liturgy.⁹⁸

The response to the critics by the church growth movement is to build theology with growth concepts as to the urgency and authority of evangelism into it. The biblical precedent lies in the common interpretation of the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20). “The mission of the church is quite literally, be equipped bluntly or subtly, to “scare hell out” of people. The individual, convicted of his sin, accepts Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.”⁹⁹ While this discussion underscores many of the inherent dangers in the church growth movement, it doesn’t dismiss the importance of evangelism as an invaluable ingredient for healthy spiritual formation. In many denominations, this ‘call to discipleship’ is the main focal point for evangelism. Holmes states however:

I call this a method of recruitment because the intermediate objective – assuming the ultimate objective is the wholeness of the person of his union with God – is to get the individual’s name one way or another in the book of life (sometimes confused with the parish register). Recruitment is the obvious answer in many mainline churches to the decline in church membership roles from 1968 on.¹⁰⁰

This is problematic because is somehow makes numbers dominate the evaluation of Christian outreach and evangelism. Holmes and his contribution to the church growth

⁹⁸ McGaravan, *Understanding Church Growth*, Fully Revised, 7-8.

⁹⁹ Urban T. Holmes, *Turning to Christ: A Theology of Renewal and Evangelism* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), 114.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 115.

movement refocused the mission of the church: to win individuals not by recruiting them into heaven but the aim was to free people from what enslaved them and to establish a new society. “The Christian mission in liberation theology assumes the presence of God in all of life. It enables us to work apart from the trappings and deceptions of religion.”¹⁰¹ It moves us to a place where social reform is not relegated to just the politicians, but we understand the value that the church plays in the marketplace. Understanding and embracing the mandate of evangelism pushes us to be social reformers. We understand that we are not free, until we are **all** free. The church growth movement gained momentum as it understood theology of liberation and missions.

The Wesleyan Movement has been responsible for explosive church growth around the world for the last two centuries. Donald McGaravan and George Hunter III states:

Today’s church growth movement has rediscovered church growth. The missionary movement, which at the outset was focused exclusively on carrying out the Great Commission, and based solidly on the ancient conviction that the Gospel was for all people, became excessively concerned with other things than communicating that Gospel to the peoples of the earth. So the assumption evolved that social action and the changing of social structures were basic functions of the Christian mission. Even as evangelism became more and more “renewal,” an effort to make existing Christians better Christians.¹⁰²

As the movement gained momentum, the church grew in magnitude and scope and facilitated healthy spiritual formation for those who embraced it. Christians gained greater insight into the Great Commission and it informed a more focused and

¹⁰¹ Holmes, 117.

¹⁰² Donald McGaravan, and George G. Hunter III, *Church Growth: Strategies that Work*, Creative Leadership Series, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 14-15.

scripturally sound mission and vision statement for local parishes. David Smith concludes:

What is clear by now is that both the concept of mission as a one-way movement from Christendom to the unevangelised world, and the structures devised at the close of the eighteenth century to facilitate that movement, have been overtaken by historical developments that render them increasingly irrelevant and redundant. To fail to make this distinction between mission, as the abiding obligation and mark of the church, and missions, signifying specific historically conditioned institutions created to advance the cause of the kingdom in particular cultural situations, is to risk being locked into an obsolete model and so to be condemned to increasingly futile and frustrating activity.¹⁰³

It is this frustrating and futile redundancy that has caused many local churches to die. They die from the inside-out because their initial fervor for evangelism got lost in tradition, legalism and customs. Seeker-sensitive individuals are not attracted to this kind of environment. This environment becomes a safe haven only for the current membership. But for a church to grow and to continue to grow, it has to reproduce itself. If there is no reproduction going on, this church will eventually die, when the membership gets older and naturally begin to die. This has been the detriment of many local churches because of their inability to embrace newer strategies to make itself relevant to a narcissistic culture, which is only concerned with self. So seekers leave the world and come into the church, only to find the same environment that it is running from, present there. The environment of producing mega-churches and focusing on materialism is a self-absorbed church, where individual care can be easily overlooked.

The church growth movement understood and attempted to respond to this dilemma. Peter Wagner, a pioneer in the church growth movement placed a great value

¹⁰³ David Smith, *Mission After Christendom*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003), 116.

on the individual effort of every believer to play their part in evangelism efforts. He states:

In order to evangelize the world more effectively in our generation, I believe that many evangelicals need to get their heads out of the clouds when it comes to pronouncements about the degree of involvement that the average Christian ought to have in active evangelistic work. There are certain basic things that we need to recognize. For one thing every true Christian has got to be in tune with God who is ‘not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance’ (2 Peter 3:9).¹⁰⁴

The impact of the church growth movement continues to be felt among the churches throughout the world and is evidenced by ecumenism. A major event in this endeavor was a national ecumenical consultation sponsored by the Episcopal Church in November 1978 near Detroit.

The Detroit Report opens with a strong statement that the Lord of the church through Scripture calls His church to make visible unity He has given to the church. In this communion of communions, churches recognize one another’s members and ministers, share eucharistic fellowship, acknowledge membership in the catholic church throughout time and space, engage in a common proclamation of the gospel, and share a mutual trust and dedication to the needs of the world.¹⁰⁵

Evangelism allows the ‘church organism’ to have global impact – light driving out the darkness; and transformation in the marketplace. This global perspective serves to circumvent the church from isolationism and being self-absorbed in the sole survival of its’ four walls. The impact of the church growth movement continues to evolve as the church searches for relevancy in the community and the world at large.

¹⁰⁴ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1974), 176.

¹⁰⁵ William G. Rusch, *Ecumenism: A Movement Toward Church Unity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 96.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY
Project Design

Phase One: The project began with a thorough review of the literature in an effort to ascertain those indispensable factors that lead to effective Christian living. This review included current discipleship models and the social theory of change around those models. Those indispensable factors were identified as: Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism. A review of the literature will be used in addition to the comparative data generated from a survey created for this project to create a Discipleship Model to be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church. Special emphasis will be made to ascertain the church's consistency with its' Mission Statement. Inquiry will require investigation into many areas. The following questions will be employed in the survey to assist in the final development of a Discipleship Model for effective Christian living:

- Is the Call to Discipleship Narrative clearly articulated?
- Is this introduction of the faith followed up with a Discipleship Model?
- Does this model outline a clear path for Christian identity development?
- Does this model outline a clear path for healthy spiritual formation?
- Is the model consistent with Churches Mission Statement?
- Are new conversions recognized?
- Is there a mechanism for membership accountability and retention?

Phase Two: Once indispensable factors were identified I created an anonymous, empirical, objective self-report survey that would be given to selected churches membership for the purposes of understanding the call to discipleship and the five indispensable factors or hereafter referred as the “chief paradigm.” The goal of the survey was to determine if respondents were familiar with those five indispensable factors and its’ impact on their spiritual formation. Special attention was given to the respondents understanding of the discipleship process offered at the selected churches and their ability to equip them for spiritual maturity. I also examined the path to discipleship from the initial “call to discipleship” through the spiritual formation process that selected churches employed. The survey further attempted to examine the respondents’ knowledge of the selected churches Mission Statement and the churches ability to abide by it.

Phase Three: I selected four urban Northern New Jersey churches for the project. I met with the ministry leadership from these selected churches and introduced the DMIN project goals, objectives, scope and processes. From these four selected churches I created the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) consistent with DMIN guidelines, which included a chairperson. PAC re-visited the initial survey created for feedback and feasibility for the targeted population. A revised DMIN survey was created. PAC identified the mechanism to disseminate and collect the Self-Report Surveys.

Phase Four: PAC distributed and collected the Self-Report Surveys over a three week period to the four selected churches for this project. The data was quantified and the

results were used to create a working discipleship model that would be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church in Plainfield, New Jersey. PAC met for a total of six sessions from November 2013 through April 2014. A Site Review was conducted on April 24, 2014 where PAC met with faculty advisor from Drew University.

Self-Report Validation

Self-Report validation has been well documented in the literature. The reliability and validity of Self-Report studies have received much attention by research practitioners. Research by P.J. Frawley tested the reliability and validity of the quantitative inventory and the veracity of self-reporting. “The primary intention was to demonstrate the reliability and validity of self-reporting as a diagnostic tool. The results from the investigation supported the hypothesis that individuals can produce valid responses to self-report questionnaires.¹ PAC chose to use a Self-Report Survey for this project because PAC wanted a first hand account from members of the four selected churches on the current state of affairs surrounding discipleship in their local church. Often, the leadership is oblivious to the quality of work they are doing. Most church leaders either believe that they are doing fine or don’t care. Many local churches don’t have a quality assurance measure or an evaluative diagnostic tool in place to solicit feedback from the membership. Self-Report Surveys have demonstrated effectiveness as a viable and reliable diagnostic tool to collect data from people, so for that purpose it was employed for this project. PAC also elected for the survey to be anonymous so that respondents would feel free to express their true feelings without fear of negative repercussions.

¹ PJ Frawley, “The Validity of Self-Report Data,” *Journal of Alcohol*, 49, no.5 (1988): 263-92.

DMIN Project Survey

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) created an anonymous, empirical, objective self-report survey. PAC decided that the survey would be anonymous with the intentions of ascertaining if those indispensable factors revealed in the review of the literature are present in the selected church's current discipleship models. Special attention would focus on the respondents' ability to understand the discipleship model offered by the four selected churches and its' ability to facilitate healthy spiritual formation consistent with the selected churches Mission Statement. The selected churches were assigned a number to be used in lieu of the church name in an effort to protect and safeguard the privacy of the church and its' congregants. The quantitative and qualitative data from the Self-Report survey would be analyzed and used to create a Discipleship Model to be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church. This data will also be shared with selected churches for their edification and use.



Chosen Generation Community Church

“Exploring Indispensable Factors in Living an Effective Christian Life”

SURVEY: THIS ANONYMOUS SURVEY SEEKS TO OBTAIN YOUR OPINION OF THOSE INDISPENSIBLE FACTORS IN LIVING AN EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LIFE. THIS IS NOT A DENOMINATIONAL SURVEY POLL. IT DOES NOT ATTEMPT TO EXPLORE OR RATE THE RESPONDENTS RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE HELD IN THE STRICTEST OF CONFIDENCE AND USED TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO YOUR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION AND TO DEVELOP A DISCIPLESHIP MODEL TO AID FUTURE CHRISTIANS. FOR ANY ‘NO’ RESPONSES FEEL FREE TO PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION ON THE BACK OF THIS SURVEY FORM!

AGE: _____ **SEX:** _____ **RACE:** _____

1. Were you invited to participate in an **Altar Call** to Discipleship? Yes ___ No ___
2. Did you **understand** the Call to Discipleship? Yes ___ No ___
3. Was your **conversion** recognized and/or celebrated by your church? Yes ___ No ___
4. Were you offered a **new members class** at your church? Yes ___ No ___
5. Did this class provide you an understanding of your **new** Christian identity?
Yes ___ No ___
6. Were you offered **discipleship lessons** for continued spiritual growth? Yes ___
No ___
7. Did the lessons provide a clear path for **healthy** spiritual development? Yes ___
No ___
8. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Worship**?
Yes ___ No ___
9. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Ministry**? Yes ___
No ___

10. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Discipleship**?
Yes__No__

11. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Evangelism**?
Yes__No__

12. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Fellowship**?
Yes__No__

13. Does your church **reach out** to you when you are absent or away? Yes ___ No ___

14. Are you aware of your church's **Mission Statement**? Yes ___ No ___

15. Does your church **do** what the Mission Statement says it will do? Yes ___ No ___

16. Are you living an **effective** Christian life as a result of the lessons offered you?
Yes__No__

17. Can you describe **how** the discipleship lessons **improved** your spiritual
development?

CHAPTER IV

SURVEY RESULTS

Overview

Of the four selected churches for the project, eighty (80) surveys were collected in total. The following is the breakdown of respondents: Rose of Sharon twenty-four (24); Grace Apostolic twenty-four (24); Beth-El Ministries twenty (20); and Closer Walk Ministries twelve (12). The survey comprised of sixteen (16) close-ended questions which allowed a yes or no response and one (1) open-ended question that allowed for remarks. This schematic provided for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. For the purposes of this project, the responses were measured across the board and special care was given so as not to compare the selected churches or rate them against each other. At the conclusion of the project, the four selected churches will be provided with their individual surveys so that they can view them. The survey results and created Discipleship Model will also be provided to the selected churches when the project is completed.

Quantitative Breakdown by Churches: (NR=Not Reported)

Demographics: (Table 1 in Appendix)

Rose of Sharon: 24 Respondents; Median Age 48; 7 Male, 17 Female; Race 24 BL

Grace Apostolic: 24 Respondents; Median Age 43; 8 Male, 16 Female; Race 21 BL 3 NR

Beth-El: 20 Respondents; Median Age 44; Male 5, Female 13, NR 2; Race 14 BL 6 NR

Closer Walk: 12 Respondents; Median Age 47; 7 Male, 5 Female; Race 9 BL 2WH 1 NR

Respondent Answers: (Table 2 in Appendix)

1. Were you invited to participate in an **Altar Call** to Discipleship?

Rose of Sharon: 19 Yes (79%); 4 No (17%); 1 NR (4%)

Grace Apostolic: 19 Yes (79%); 4 No (17%); 1 NR (4%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 9 Yes (75%); 2 No (17%); 1 NR (8%)

2. Did you understand the Call to Discipleship?

Rose of Sharon: 18 Yes (75%); 6 No (25%)

Grace Apostolic: 18 Yes (75%); 5 No (20%); 1 NR (4%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 9 Yes (75%); 3 No (25%)

3. Was your **conversion** recognized and/or celebrated by your church?

Rose of Sharon: 19 Yes (79%); 4 No (17%); 1 NR (4%)

Grace Apostolic: 19 Yes (79%); 5 Yes (21%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 11 Yes (92%); 1 NR (8%)

4. Were you offered a **new members** class at your church?

Rose of Sharon: 21 Yes (88%); 3 No (12%)

Grace Apostolic: 12 Yes (50%); 11 No (46%); 1 NR (4%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 8 Yes (67%); 3 No (25%); 1 NR (8%)

5. Did this class provide you an understanding of your **new** Christian identity?

Rose of Sharon: 18 Yes (75%); 5 No (20%); 1 NR (5%)

Grace Apostolic: 15 Yes (63%); 7 No (29%); 2 NR (8%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 10 Yes (83%); 2 No (17%)

6. Were you offered **discipleship lessons** for continued spiritual growth?

Rose of Sharon: 18 Yes (75%); 6 No (25%)

Grace Apostolic: 20 Yes (83%); 4 No (17%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 9 Yes (75%); 3 No (25%)

7. Did the lessons provide a clear path for **healthy** spiritual development?

Rose of Sharon: 20 Yes (83%); 4 No (17%)

Grace Apostolic: 20 Yes (83%); 4 No (17%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 11 Yes (92%); 1 No (8%)

8. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Worship**?

Rose of Sharon: 18 Yes (75%); 5 No (20%); 1 NR (5%)

Grace Apostolic: 20 Yes (83%); 4 No (17%)

Beth-El: 19 Yes (95%); 1 NR (5%)

Closer Walk: 11 Yes (92%); 1 No (8%)

9. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Ministry**?

Rose of Sharon: 18 Yes (75%); 5 No (20%); 1 NR (5%)

Grace Apostolic: 20 Yes (83%); 3 No (13%); 1 NR (4%)

Beth-El: 19 Yes (95%); 1 NR (5%)

Closer Walk: 10 Yes (83%); 2 No (17%)

10. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Discipleship**?

Rose of Sharon: 15 Yes (63%); 7 No (29%); 2 NR (8%)

Grace Apostolic: 18 Yes (75%); 6 No (25%)

Beth-El: 18 Yes (90%); 2 NR (10%)

Closer Walk: 10 Yes (83%); 2 No (17%)

11. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Evangelism**?

Rose of Sharon: 16 Yes (67%); 7 No (29%); 1 NR (4%)

Grace Apostolic: 20 Yes (83%); 4 No (17%)

Beth-El: 18 Yes (90%); 2 No (10%)

Closer Walk: 9 Yes (75%); 3 No (25%)

12. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Fellowship**?

Rose of Sharon: 20 Yes (83%); 3 No (13%); 1 NR (4%)

Grace Apostolic: 22 Yes (92%); 2 No (8%)

Beth-El: 18 Yes (90%); 2 NR (10%)

Closer Walk: 11 Yes (92%); 1 No (8%)

13. Does your church **reach out** to you when you are absent or away?

Rose of Sharon: 14 Yes (58%); 7 No (29%); 3 NR (13%)

Grace Apostolic: 19 Yes (79%); 3 No (13%); 2 NR (8%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 10 Yes (92%); 2 No (8%)

14. Are you aware of your church's **Mission Statement**?

Rose of Sharon: 22 Yes (92%); 1 No (4%); 1 NR (4%)

Grace Apostolic: 16 Yes (67%); 8 No (33%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 12 Yes (100%)

15. Does your church **do** what the Mission Statement says it will do?

Rose of Sharon: 21 Yes (88%); 3 NR (12%)

Grace Apostolic: 14 Yes (58%); 7 No (29%); 3 NR (13%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 12 yes (100%)

16. Are you living an **effective** Christian life as a result of the lessons offered you?

Rose of Sharon: 20 Yes (83%); 1 No (4%); 3 NR (12%)

Grace Apostolic: 18 Yes (75%); 6 No (25%)

Beth-El: 20 Yes (100%)

Closer Walk: 12 Yes (100%)

Quantitative Breakdown Grand Totals: (NR=Not Reported)

Demographics: (Table 3 in Appendix)

Total Respondents: 80

Median Age: 46

Sex: 27 Male (34%); 51 female (63%); 2 NR (3%)

Race: 68 Black (85%); 2 White (3%); 10 NR (12%)

Respondent Answers: (Table 4 in Appendix)

1. Were you invited to participate in an **Altar Call** to Discipleship?
67 Yes (84%); 10 No (13%); 3 NR (4%)
2. Did you understand the Call to Discipleship?
65 Yes (81%); 15 No (19%)
3. Was your **conversion** recognized and/or celebrated by your church?
69 Yes (86%); 9 No (11%); 2 NR (3%)
4. Were you offered a **new members** class at your church?
61 Yes (76%); 17 No (21%); 2 NR (3%)
5. Did this class provide you an understanding of your **new** Christian identity?
63 Yes (79%); 14 No (18%); 3 NR (4%)
6. Were you offered **discipleship lessons** for continued spiritual growth?
67 Yes (84%); 13 No (16%)
7. Did the lessons provide a clear path for **healthy** spiritual development?
71 Yes (89%); 9 No (11%)
8. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Worship**?
68 Yes (85%); 10 No (12%); 2 NR (3%)

9. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Ministry**?

67 Yes (84%); 10 No (13%); 3 NR (4%)

10. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Discipleship**?

61 Yes (76%); 15 No (19%); 4 NR (5%)

11. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Evangelism**?

64 Yes (80%); 14 No (18%); 2 NR (3%)

12. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of **Fellowship**?

71 Yes (89%); 6 No (8%); 3 NR (4%)

13. Does your church **reach out** to you when you are absent or away?

63 Yes (79%); 12 No (15%); 5 NR (6%)

14. Are you aware of your church's **Mission Statement**?

70 Yes (88%); 9 No (11%); 1 NR (1%)

15. Does your church **do** what the Mission Statement says it will do?

67 Yes (84%); 7 No (9%); 6 NR (8%)

16. Are you living an **effective** Christian life as a result of the lessons offered you?

69 Yes (86%); 7 No (9%); 4 NR (5%)

Qualitative Breakdown by Churches:

17. Can you describe how the Discipleship lessons improved your spiritual development?

Rose of Sharon: 14 Respondents (58%)

- “Helps me keep God first in life.”
- “Understanding the Word.”
- “Priceless.”
- “To trust God and obey.”
- “Helps me to grow stronger in the Word. Have faith and continue to dwell upon that solid rock, which is Jesus Christ my Lord and God.”
- “The Bible Academy helped me in my spiritual development but that was not a part of the discipleship lessons.”
- “The lessons showed me how I am connected to Jesus and He walks with me and protects me, listens and understands me.”
- “Learned that I am to be the hands and feet of Christ and the desire to serve.”
- “Helps me to be a better person.”
- “I like church a lot more.”
- “It taught me how to study.”
- “Under the teachings of Rose of Sharon Community Church they have trained us to enter to worship and depart to serve; the true meaning of being Saved.”
- “I can see more clearly. I am more forgiving. I am closer to God.”

Grace Apostolic: 14 Respondents (58%)

- “It opened my eyes a lot, especially to God.”
- “Now I know.”
- “Believe and hope and faith in God to protect us from evil.”

- “By making me aware of what I do, my surroundings, etc.”
- “Bringing others to Christ. Learning more about His Word. Closer to Jesus.”
- “The way that the discipleship lessons have improved my spiritual development is by being able to seek God for myself. To actually understand the true meaning of God.”
- “I haven’t been to church a lot lately, but the lessons I’ve learned growing up have always stuck with me and helped me through trials.”
- “I believe that foundational teachings are awesome. I believe some things were slipped through the cracks, however the wealth of the Word is present.”
- “Being more knowledgeable about the Word and instructions for my daily life. It is getting better daily.”
- “At this point I am a backslider.”
- “As of today I am still living and walking in a Godly manner because of what I was taught and what I learned. To God be the glory.”
- “Have a better understanding.”
- “It provided clear understanding to me on how to live holy and to gain eternal life.”
- “As an observation church is wherever you are and wherever I am my sins are forgiven and washed away. It is important to me to love the sinner. I’m saved because He loves me and I have to occupy till he comes. Discipleship is precious.”

Beth-El: 19 Respondents (95%)

- “Explained how important my relationship with Christ is.”
- “I never tried to live by God’s Word, but now that I’m committed to the Word it’s hard on my soul not to listen.”
- “It helped me to understand the importance on what it means to be saved, and how to live my life accordingly.”

- “I have a much clearer understanding of the need of the people and a clearer understanding of my need for Jesus to be in my life and the need for Him to be in the lives of everyone else.”
- “By reading the Word and seeking God on a daily basis.”
- “The lessons gave clarity as to where I stand in God’s Word. It helped me understand the strongholds in my life that I needed to be delivered from and how God’s Word makes it happen.”
- “I am more committed to God and the work in the ministry.”
- “It has taught me to live a well rounded Christian life. It also provided an understanding of true holiness.”
- “Very Good.”
- “It gave me a better understanding of who I am and what I believe and know is the truth.”
- “It taught me what is expected of my life and how I should live my life for God, how important it is to study the Word, worship, pray and fast for a change.”
- “Worked as a combative weapon/tool as to how to live as a born again believer without conforming to the ways of the world. It also served as a reminder of how I should live when at times I begin to allow life to take control rather than Jesus Christ.”
- “The lessons provided me the knowledge of God and His requirements and standards for holy living. Why we have to renew our minds and be committed, constant and dedicated to God and ministry.”
- “The discipleship lessons improved my spiritual development because it allowed me to understand the principles of God and the extent of His Love.”
- “The lessons presented steps I could take toward growth and spiritual maturity.”
- “Allowing me to understand my role as a Christian. Setting standards and be an example to live by.”
- “Increased desire to learn and share God’s Word with others.”
- “I was equipped scripturally to handle spiritual adversity.”

- “A greater understanding of my faith. Why and how Christ affects my total self. A clearer knowledge of my responsibility to give feedback and strengthen the brothers and sisters too.”

Closer Walk: 7 Respondents (58%)

- “Taught me the importance of studying the Word for myself. How to grow and how to meet circumstances and situations in my life when they come.”
- “It’s taken me to another spiritual level and dimension.”
- It improved my discipleship development by teaching me how to be more like Christ and how to live my life according to His will.”
- The discipleship improved my life. As a mother it gave me direction on how to live in God’s world.”
- “Growth and maturity in the Lord Jesus Christ, via the Holy Spirit.”
- “Learning to follow His path, life has been great.”
- “Makes me realize that I need God in my life.”

CHAPTER V

CREATION OF CGCC DISCIPLESHIP MODEL

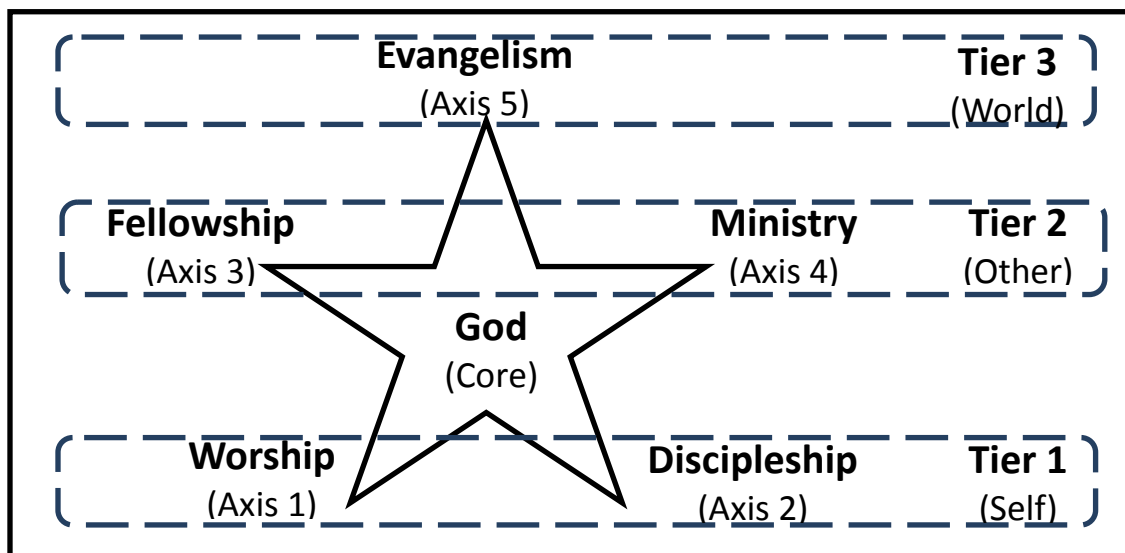
Motto: *“One Disciple at a Time”*



Chosen Generation Community Church

“Exploring Indispensable Factors in Living an Effective Christian Life”

The Model Overview (3 Components)



- These 5 factors can be quantified to provide empirical data to ministries

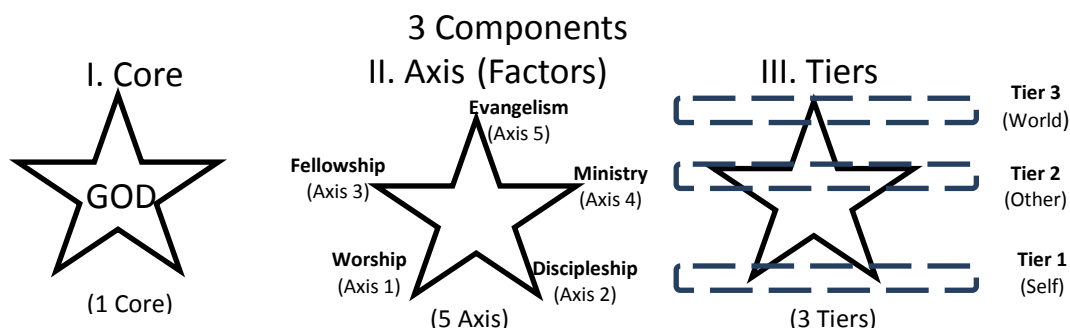
Once we had gathered and analyzed the data cited above, we set about the job of using the information we had gathered to create a Discipleship Model to be used at

Chosen Generation Community Church. The created Discipleship Model comprises three (3) components: one (1) Core (God); five (5) indispensable factors (Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry, and Evangelism); and three (3) Tiers (Self, Other, and World).



Chosen Generation Community Church

Discipleship Model Overview



The **Core** of the CGCC Discipleship Model is God. “God is a Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.” (St. John 4:24) Recognition of the importance of the spiritual dimension in human development is vital. Spirituality is not a measure of a person’s religion; it is the belief in a “higher power.” The Higher Power is one of the most amazing facts in human existence. This tremendous inflow of power is of such force that in its inrush it drives everything before it, casting out fear, hate, sickness, weakness, moral defeat, scattering them as though they had never touched you, refreshing and re-strengthening your life with health, happiness and goodness. Healthy Spiritual Formation is grounded in the existence of God. The Discipleship Model should provide a thorough examination of the attributes of God: Creator, Eternal Spirit, Trinity, Immutable, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Covenant, and Sovereign.

- I. The **Axis** of the CGCC Discipleship Model consists of the five (5) Indispensable Factors (Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry, and Evangelism)
- a. **Worship** (Axis 1): Healthy Spiritual Formation is accessed by intentional worship through *Spiritual Disciplines*. As multi-faceted beings (mind, body, & spirit) the Spiritual Dimension first and foremost is ‘experiential’; It is not a mental assent. Worship is an experience. Spiritual Disciplines and Creative Acts of Worship for Axis 1: prayer, fasting, meditation, yoga, devotional, walking, reading, bible study, solitude, giving, singing, dancing, nature, (use of one’s physical body and senses).
 - b. **Discipleship** (Axis 2): Healthy Spiritual Formation is fostered through a teaching curriculum of *Foundational Truths* in Axis 2: fall of man, propitiation, atonement, adoption, redemption, predestination, salvation, reconciliation, justification, forgiveness, faith, grace, mercy, regeneration, spiritual identity, restoration, Holy Spirit, Spiritual fruit, Spiritual gifts, Spiritual warfare, sanctification, eschatology, resurrection.
 - c. **Fellowship** (Axis 3): Healthy Spiritual Formation is reinforced by its’ natural progression to Axis 3 for healthy socialization and accountability within a loving and affirming community. In Axis 3: Mission & Vision Statements, Affirmation of Faith, *Traditions* (services, communion, water baptism, ethics, tithes, disputes, marriage, baby dedications, funerals/death), *Governance* (pastors, elders, deacons, trustees, board, ministers, overseers, lay leaders), *Fellowships* (Sunday service, Bible study, Sunday school, small groups, AA/NA, social calendar), MEMBERSHIP.
 - d. **Ministry** (Axis 4): Healthy Spiritual Formation is demonstrated through ministry gifts within a loving and affirming community of Axis 4. *Ministry gifts* (preaching, teaching, counseling, hospitality, visitation, benevolence, evangelism, administration, liturgy).

Ministry roles (pastors, elders, trustees, teachers, deacons, lay leaders, counselors, ushers, music ministry, audio, altar workers, intercessors, janitorial, floral guild, culinary, children's ministry, youth ministry, senior services, nursing care, pastoral aides, greeters, media, programming, clerical).

- e. **Evangelism** (Axis 5): Healthy Spiritual Formation is fulfilled as it extends to the world for global impact and market place transformation. Areas include: Missions, outreach, street ministry, revivals, prison ministry, businesses, train & bus stations, food banks, clothing drives, housing, job readiness, voter registration drives, community activism, ecumenical alliances, PTA's and gang violence intervention.

II. The **Tiers** of the CGCC Discipleship Model comprises of three (3) levels: Self, Other, and World.

- a. Tier 1 (Self): Healthy Spiritual Formation is accessed and fostered through 'self' development by Spiritual Disciplines (Worship) and Foundational Truths (Discipleship).
- b. Tier 2 (Other): Healthy Spiritual Formation is reinforced (Fellowship) and demonstrated (Ministry) as a natural progression to the 'other' within a loving and affirming community.
- c. Tier 3 (World): Healthy Spiritual Formation is fulfilled as it extends to the 'world' (Evangelism) for Global impact and marketplace transformation to offset isolationism, cultism and narrow-mindedness.

Social Theory of Change



Chosen Generation Community Church

“Exploring Indispensable Factors in Living an Effective Christian Life”

Social Theory of Change



- The social theory of change - grounded in the development of the “self”- Tier 1
- Healthy spiritual formation has a normal progression to the “other” – Tier 2
- Healthy spiritual formation is fulfilled as it extends to the “world” for global impact – Tier 3

The Social Theory of Change, as described and defined in the Terms (Section C.) of the Introduction, for the CGCC Discipleship Model, is grounded in the development of the self. Tier 1 is a shift from traditional models which begin with God, extend to other, than to self. This is critically important as the research has suggested that many fell by the way side, or through the cracks, because not enough work was done in the area of personal development. It is tragic that many new believers attempt to extend Christian love to others, when there was no investment in the development of the self. I believe God does not want believers to self-sacrifice in this manner. This is not, “denying oneself and following Christ;” this is naivety. This shift in understanding should impact one’s social theory of change. It is a theory grounded in the development of the self.

The CGCC model utilizes the motto: One Disciple at a Time! This takes the focus off of the masses and works with one person at a time. Every church is not a mega-church in number nor will it ever be. The magnitude and scope of the ministry is not diminished by its' size or membership roster. It carries the same value in the eyes of God, and leadership should mimic this in its discipleship model, mission and vision statement. The review of the literature suggests worship and discipleship augment healthy spiritual formation in this endeavor. The normal progression to the other (Tier 2) is now more feasible and easily accomplished through fellowship and ministry. Healthy Spiritual formation culminates as the believer embraces a global perspective and marketplace transformation (Tier 3).

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The methodology for this project began with a thorough review of the literature in an effort to ascertain those indispensable factors that lead to effective Christian living. Those indispensable factors were identified as: Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism. This review was followed by the creation of an anonymous, empirical, objective self-report survey that was distributed to four selected churches membership to determine if the respondents were familiar with those five indispensable factors and its' impact on their spiritual formation. A total of eighty (80) individuals completed the survey. 85% of the respondents reported that they were provided an understanding of the importance of *Worship* through the discipleship lessons offered. 84% of the respondents reported that they were provided an understanding of the importance of *Ministry* through the discipleship lesson offered them. 76% of the respondents reported that they were provided an understanding of the importance of *Discipleship* through the discipleship lessons offered them. 89% of the respondents reported that they were provided an understanding of the importance of *Fellowship* through the discipleship lessons offered them. 80% of the respondents reported that they were provided an understanding of the importance of *Evangelism* through the discipleship lessons offered them. This quantitative data from the selected churches supported the literature and validated those five factors as indispensable to the discipleship process. Consequently, the

five factors were integrated into the discipleship model created for Chosen Generation Community Church.

Special attention was given to the respondents understanding of the discipleship processes offered at their churches and how they fostered spiritual development. 84% of the respondents reported that discipleship lessons for continued spiritual growth were offered at their churches. 68% of the respondents provided qualitative feedback when asked to describe how the Discipleship lessons improved their spiritual development. (Refer to Chapter IV, Qualitative Breakdown by Churches)

PAC examined the path to discipleship from the initial “call to discipleship” through the spiritual formation process that selected churches employed. 84% of the respondents reported that they were invited to participate in an Altar Call to Discipleship. 81% of the respondents reported that they understood the Call to Discipleship. PAC believes healthy spiritual formation responds favorably to a point in time moment when a decision is made to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to follow Jesus. This moment in time establishes Christian identity and serves as a benchmark going forward. Perhaps for some it serves as the day they report being “born again.” 86% of the respondents reported that their conversion was recognized and/or celebrated by their church. This data suggests that this recognition plays a part in legitimization and opens the door for accountability. 76% of the respondents reported that they were offered a new members class at their church. 79% of the respondents reported that the class provided them an understanding of their new Christian identity. 89% of the respondents reported that the discipleship lessons provided a clear path for healthy spiritual formation. This data suggests that healthy spiritual formation is augmented by a deliberate process that is

clear and concise. Moreover, 86% of the respondents reported that they were living an effective Christian life as a result of the lessons offered them. This was the most critical data, because it asks the respondents to assess their spiritual maturity based upon a deliberate discipleship narrative. The Terms described effective Christian living as a holistic lifestyle where mind, body and soul are in balance with a realistic understanding of fundamental truths of the faith. PAC believes this realistic understanding provides the needed magnitude and scope for developing Christians to weather the storms and vicissitudes of life.

PAC examined the respondents' knowledge of their churches adherence to its' Mission Statement. 88% of the respondents reported that they were aware of their church's Mission Statement. 84% of the respondents reported that their churches adhered to its' Mission Statement. This data is important and suggests that respondents are aware of their churches vision around missions and believe their churches are adhering to them. Perhaps inconsistencies between perception and reality can impact healthy spiritual formation, but this survey did not address that.

PAC examined the church's protocol to account for absenteeism. 79% of the respondents reported that their churches reached out to them when they were absent or away. PAC particularly was exploring if there were any inconsistencies in protocol which would allow believers to fall away. Unfortunately, this question did not allow us to effectively ascertain that information, because the methodology did not include information from those who did in fact fall away or stopped attending services. The methodology was not equipped to match membership rosters over time, against present membership. The methodology was also limited by those who freely responded to the

request to participate in the survey. This was an inherent bias in the sampling because of the selection process employed. Three out of the four selected churches reported poor record keeping in regards to membership rosters and had no way to account for those who stopped attending.

The survey results were used to create a working discipleship model that would be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church in Plainfield, New Jersey. The created discipleship model (refer to Chapter V, Discipleship Model Overview & Social Theory of Change) effectively integrated those five indispensable factors of Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism into a schematic that had at its' core, the existence of God. The model depicted three tiers of development in the discipleship process as self, other and God. There was a natural progression from tier 1 through tier 3 that afforded healthy spiritual formation. The model possesses three (3) components: core, axes, and tiers. They provide a clear path from the initial call to discipleship through spiritual maturity.

The genius of the schematic is that any believer should be able to pinpoint where they are in the process. The schematic does not put everyone at the same starting place and it allows everyone to grow at a pace comfortable for them. It allows the believer to understand their strengths and weaknesses. Healthy spiritual formation is accessed and fostered through self development by spiritual disciplines and foundational truths. Healthy spiritual formation is reinforced and demonstrated as a natural progression to “the other” within a loving and affirming community. Healthy spiritual formation is fulfilled as it extends to the world for global impact and marketplace transformation.

A critical analysis of the processes employed throughout the DMIN project allowed for a project and self evaluation. It was noted that the Project Advisory Committee's (PAC) understanding of a Discipleship Model was positively impacted by this project. Some of the glaring differences noted among the selected churches were as follows: Church #1 - reached its' climax or pinnacle of growth; Church #2 - was a dying church; Church #3 - was a church in peril; and Church #4 - was a healthy church that reached its' optimum potential. (Note: selected churches were assigned numbers, in an effort to shield the congregations' identity) The PAC's awareness relative to the Chief Paradigm and its' Biblical Mandate was good and therefore instrumental in developing a thorough survey. Despite some shortcomings in the methodology it appears that those churches selected for the project agreed with the Literature about those five factors that were deemed indispensable to the discipleship process. The people who volunteered to participate in the survey had a positive experience and validated the initial thesis of the importance of a healthy discipleship model for healthy spiritual formation. PAC reported that initiating recommendations would require implementing change in the current discipleship models used at their churches.

Assessment of the process revealed an increased awareness of the history and importance of discipleship models for healthy spiritual formation. The methodology and project design was clear and concise. It became apparent that the methodology did not have a mechanism to retrieve feedback from those who terminated their membership at the selected churches, or who were absent without leave. Other limitations to the methodology were the inherent biases due to the demographic makeup of those who responded to the survey. The median age of reported respondents was 46. Perhaps

older/younger congregants would have reported differently. 34% of the respondents were male and 63% were female. The number of women in the sample population doubled the number of men. Perhaps this skewed the data results and analysis. 85% of the respondents were Black, 3% were White and 12% Not Reported. Perhaps Race is a determining factor in assessing the discipleship process. (Table 3 in Appendix) Therefore inferences could only be made to populations with similar demographics.

Developing and adding a component that enabled me to survey a larger and more diverse sample would be a recommended improvement to the methodology. This research opened up a way to discuss shortcomings and strengths of the discipleship process of struggling urban churches and offers them suggestions on what to work on. In addition, a follow-up plan to implement the created discipleship model and re-visit the survey could improve upon the initial findings and further discussion. The greatest value of this project was an increased awareness around the importance of bridging the gap to account for those “lost in the cracks” or “fallen by the wayside.” This was coupled with the most remarkable finding, that none of the selected churches had a mechanism to monitor membership retention. PAC met for a total of six face-to-face sessions and had several interoffice meetings. The topic of membership accountability became a targeted area of concern for all the selected churches. It was observed and reported that the selected churches did not have clear and concise mechanisms in place for accountability. It was recommended that this area be explored to identify a mechanism for implementation in an effort to close that gap. PAC interface during meetings provided critical feedback to the processes and methodology employed. PAC involvement

energized the processes as they were very positive about the experience and played a central role in bringing the congregants of the selected churches along.

My observations regarding this project were multi-faceted. Mostly, I was impressed with the fact that the selected church's leadership and congregants wanted to grow spiritually. I observed that many of the church's infrastructure and polity impeded growth and was not friendly to change. Therefore, any plan of action need to be preceded with a seminar on the importance of implementing change. The Biblical Mandate: "The Great Commission" (St. Matthew 28: 19 & 20) and "The Great Commandment" (St. Mark 12: 30 & 31) provided a wonderful theological foundation for the Chief Paradigm: Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry, and Evangelism. It became apparent that a church's Mission Statement is critical in keeping a church focused on its' vision and moving believers to a place of spiritual maturity. It is vitally important that Mission Statements utilize user-friendly language that connects theology and theory to praxis.

Personally, I grew emotionally and spiritually through this process as I viewed the experience as a life's body of work becoming unraveled through self-discovery and the group dynamic. I was empowered by PAC and their responses during our sessions. The magnitude and scope of the project opened up my way of thinking concerning discipleship, particularly as the laity is involved. It renewed my enthusiasm for Christianity and its' ability to answer humanity's inner quest for purpose, wholeness and direction. In a culture that has been invaded with apathy and narcissism, I believe Christianity still stands as a vibrant antidote. In terms of my leadership skills, I was amazed at my ability to mobilize PAC and selected churches, and at, their endurance to see the project through till it was completed.

My greatest surprise was an increased awareness of the social theory of change and how the created discipleship model has positively impacted and re-defined my understanding of that theory, as it was defined in the Terms. Like many believers, I was taught the God (Jesus), other, self (you) paradigm or commonly referred as the “J-O-Y paradigm”. I believe this schematic may predispose one to unhealthy self-care and immature self-development. By this I mean the discipleship process, with God as its core, must give careful attention to a process grounded in the development of the self. I believe a developed self through spiritual disciplines and foundational truths better equip believers to face the harsh realities of life and extend Christian fellowship to others.

Kirk Byron Jones, in his book about self-care strategies for clergy and other caregivers states, “There are many Scripture references, not to mention post-biblical examples that tout personal abandonment as a necessary and continuous act of faithful service. Self-sacrifice is a hallmark of our faith, yet in most of the world’s great religions, self-care is an equally essential component of spiritual well being.”¹ I now believe that a healthy discipleship model must be grounded in a healthy development of the self before that Christian love can be shared to others. “Well-doing, devoid of proper self-care is, at best, doing well poorly. Exemplary care for others is rooted in vigilant self-care.”² I am careful not to confuse this development of the self with the narcissistic self-love that has invaded our culture. These are two completely opposing ideas.

Healthy spiritual formation achieved through a clear and concise discipleship model that embodies those indispensable factors for living an effective Christian life is

¹ Kirk Byron Jones, *Rest in the Storm* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2001), 15-16.

² *Ibid.*, 8.

attainable and should be made available by every responsible church entrusted with the souls of men and women.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Christianity matters and continues to be a viable resource to navigate people through the vicissitudes of life. Christianity offers a blueprint that explores the spiritual dimension and answers humanities innermost quest for wholeness, purpose and happiness. The aim of this research was to bridge the gap between consistent maturing members, and those who are lost or fallen through the cracks due to shortcomings in the discipleship process. I therefore set out to identify and explore what those indispensable factors that would empower Christian believers to live an effective and victorious Christian life. Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism were identified as those indispensable factors. I believe that the development and utilization of a healthy discipleship model, integrating those indispensable factors, would provide agency to healthy Christian identity and healthy spiritual formation. The review of the literature discovered five parachurch movements and their major contributors. They were the Renewal Movement, Spiritual Formations Movement, Small Group/ Pastoral Care Movement, Lay Renewal Movement and the Church Growth Movement. Their contributions were instrumental in increasing the churches awareness of the importance of Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry and Evangelism.

The methodology for this project employed an empirical, objective, anonymous, self-report survey to obtain information from selected churches. Survey results were used to create a working three component, multi-axel discipleship model. This newly created

model will be implemented at the Chosen Generation Community Church, Plainfield, New Jersey.

The outcome from the project data was favorable and supported the five factors identified as indispensable for effectively living the Christian life, as just that. Despite the observed shortcomings of the discipleship processes employed by selected churches, the findings of this research opens up a way to further discuss discipleship formation of struggling urban churches and offers them suggestions on what to work on. Further progress in this endeavor may positively impact the current social theory of change and circumvent members being lost to a culture of apathy, narcissism and materialism. I believe that the Christian Church will thrive and overcome the negativities of the present culture, by providing a healthy and relevant congregational context conducive for healthy and wholesome Christian identity and development.

APPENDIX
SURVEY RESULTS

TABLE 1 - Quantitive Breakdown by Churches: Demographics				
	Rose of Sharon	Grace Apostolic	Beth-El	Closer Walk
Total	24	24	20	12
Median Age	48	43	44	47
Sex M	7	8	5	7
Sex F	17	16	13	5
Sex NR			2	
Race BLK	24	21	19	9
RaceWHT				2
Race NR		3	1	1

	Rose of Sharon			Grace Apostolic			Beth-El			Closer Walk		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
1. Were you invited to participate in an Altar Call to Discipleship?	19	4	1	19	4	1	20			9	2	1
2. Did you understand the Call to Discipleship?	18	6		18	5	1	20			9	3	
3. Was your conversion recognized and/or celebrated by your church?	19	4	1	19	5		20			11		1
4. Were you offered a new members class at your church?	21	3		12	11		20			8	3	1
5. Did this class provide you an understanding of your new Christian identity?	18	5	1	15	7	2	20			10	2	
6. Were you offered discipleship lessons for continued spiritual growth?	18	6		20	4		20			9	3	
7. Did the lessons provide a clear path for healthy spiritual development?	20	4		20	4		20			11	1	
8. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Worship ?	18	5	1	20	4		19		1	11	1	
9. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Ministry ?	18	5	1	20	3	1	19		1	10	2	
10. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Discipleship ?	15	7	2	18	6		18		2	10	2	
11. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Evangelism ?	16	7	1	20	4		18	2		9	3	
12. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Fellowship ?	20	3	1	22	2		18		2	11	1	
13. Does your church reach out to you when you are absent or away?	14	7	3	19	3	2	20			10	2	
14. Are you aware of your church's Mission Statement ?	22	1	1	16	8		20			12		
15. Does your church do what the Mission Statement says it will do?	21		3	14	7	3	20			12		
16. Are you living an effective Christian life as a result of the lessons offered you?	20	1	3	18	6		20			12		

Table 3 - Quantitive Breakdown Grand Total: Demographics

Grand Total		80		
Median Age		46		
Sex M		27	34%	
Sex F		51	64%	
Sex NR		2	3%	
Race BLK		68	85%	
RaceWHT		2	3%	
Race NR		10	22%	

	Total Answers			Percentage		
	Yes	N0	NR	Yes	N0	NR
1. Were you invited to participate in an Altar Call to Discipleship?	67	10	3	84%	13%	4%
2. Did you understand the Call to Discipleship?	65	15	0	81%	19%	0%
3. Was your conversion recognized and/or celebrated by your church?	69	9	2	86%	11%	3%
4. Were you offered a new members class at your church?	61	17	2	76%	21%	3%
5. Did this class provide you an understanding of your new Christian identity?	63	14	3	79%	18%	4%
6. Were you offered discipleship lessons for continued spiritual growth?	67	13	0	84%	16%	0%
7. Did the lessons provide a clear path for healthy spiritual development?	71	9	0	89%	11%	0%
8. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Worship ?	68	10	2	85%	13%	3%
9. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Ministry ?	67	10	3	84%	13%	4%
10. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Discipleship ?	61	15	4	76%	19%	5%
11. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Evangelism ?	63	16	1	79%	20%	1%
12. Did the lessons provide an understanding of the importance of Fellowship ?	71	6	3	89%	8%	4%
13. Does your church reach out to you when you are absent or away?	63	12	5	79%	15%	6%
14. Are you aware of your church's Mission Statement ?	70	9	1	88%	11%	1%
15. Does your church do what the Mission Statement says it will do?	67	7	6	84%	9%	8%
16. Are you living an effective Christian life as a result of the lessons offered you?	70	7	3	88%	9%	4%

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