

**Discovering the Vision in Beth Moore's "Breaking Free" Message:
Applying Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis to Evaluate the Message.**

By

April Nicole Pressley

A Thesis Submitted in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Arts

in Communication

At

Liberty University

April 2010

Copyright 2010 by April Nicole Pressley
All rights reserved

Acknowledgements

Writing a thesis is an interesting experience. When it takes a couple of years of your life to get it done, it seems difficult to distinguish those who offered guidance and help along the way. There are the professors in the beginning who thought the project was worthy of study. There are fellow classmates and peers who are there to bounce ideas off of. There are friends who encourage you not to give up and who work to convince you that you are smart enough to get this done. Overall, the experience is based on collaboration from beginning to end. A few people do stand out and they contributed to making this thesis a completed project.

Though I risk being cliché, I must first acknowledge that without faith in God and believing that something beyond myself was encouraging me to get this project done, I likely would never have possessed the inner gumption to persevere through the rougher parts of this project. I feel that God used this project to teach me more about myself and my relationship with Him. I could not be more grateful for the way this project was used in my life to mature me into a stronger more confident version of myself who truly believes that with God all things are possible.

Next, it is important to acknowledge my committee members who encouraged me throughout the project. Doctors Cecil Kramer, Faith Mullen and Bill Mullen were there to ask the tough questions. They exhibited an excessive amount of patience with me and were always willing to give advice on how to make this paper better. With their help, I believe I was able to create a scholarly work that I can be proud of.

There are many others along the way who have contributed to this paper and I just want to thank the “village” of people who were there for me during this project. Dale McClesky stands out as someone who came along during the homestretch of the paper. His contribution helped make my paper stronger. Others who stand out are people from Beth Moore’s staff. Though I did not actually meet Moore herself, her staff was truly open and willing to share with me how their leader contributed to their life. Their willingness to be open with me at the beginning of my project gave me the inspiration I needed to see that Beth Moore was a person who was worth studying.

Last, but not least, I want to thank my parents Rick and Nita Pressley. Without their support and encouragement I would not have made it through this project.

**Discovering the Vision in Beth Moore’s “Breaking Free” Message:
Applying Bormann’s Fantasy Theme Analysis to Evaluate the Message.**

A Thesis

Submitted to the

Graduate Faculty

Of

Liberty University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Arts in

Communications

Committee

Dr. Cecil V. Kramer _____ Chair

Dr. Faith Mullen _____ 1st Reader

Dr. Bill Mullen _____ 2nd Reader

ABSTRACT

**Discovering the Vision in Beth Moore’s “Breaking Free” Message:
Applying Bormann’s Fantasy Theme Analysis to Evaluate the Message.**

Beth Moore, Christian speaker and author, has become a prominent figure in Christian circles. She ministers to over a million people a year with her messages. Breaking Free is her “life message.” This project analyzes 6 of 11 messages from Breaking Free. Using Bormann’s Fantasy Theme Analysis, seven fantasies emerged from the messages, which yielded a rhetorical vision that describes what Beth Moore believes a woman should be like after hearing her message. After that analysis, the fantasies were compared to evangelical Christian doctrine. That analysis determined that Moore’s underlying message is valid and acceptable to the Christian audience she is trying to minister to.

Key Words: Beth Moore, Ernest Bormann, Fantasy Theme Analysis, Rhetorical Vision, Symbolic Convergence, Christian women, Leadership, Women’s Roles, Biblical Womanhood, Breaking Free, Baptist Faith and Message, Values of Christian Women, Christian women history, fantasy themes, Fantasy Theme Analysis criticisms; Christian doctrine; Evangelical

April Pressley
Masters of Arts
Graduate Studies in the Department of Communications
Liberty University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright		ii
Acknowledgements		iii
Signature Page		iv
Abstract		v
Table of Contents		vi
Chapter I	Introduction	1
	Justification of Study	2
	Research Questions	3
	Understanding the Artifact	4
	Overview of Beth Moore	6
	Biography	7
	Explanation of Ministry	16
	Channels of Development	18
Chapter II	Literature Review	27
	Overview of Christian Women Leaders	27
	Biblical Women’s Leadership Roles	28
	<u>Table 1</u> : Various Leadership Roles of Women in the Bible	29
	A Brief History of Christian Women Leaders	32
	<u>Table 2</u> : Overview of Christian Women in Early Centuries	33
	The Values of Christian Women	43
	An Exploration of Fantasy Theme Analysis	44
	Fantasy Theme Analysis	45
	Symbolic Convergence Theory	48
	Uses of Fantasy Theme Analysis	61
Chapter III	Methodology	65
	Application of the Rhetorical Tool	66
Chapter IV	Results & Analysis	68
	The Messages	69
	Goals of Breaking Free	69
	Untying the Cords of the Yoke	70
	Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins	72
	Beauty from the Ashes	73
	The Steadfast Mind	74
	The Display of His Splendor	76
	Fantasy Themes & Social Realities	78
	Fantasy Theme 1	79
	Fantasy Theme 2	95
	Fantasy Theme 3	105
	Fantasy Theme 4	110
	Fantasy Theme 5	122
	Fantasy Theme 6	127
	Fantasy Theme 7	131

Chapter IV Continued		
	Heroes & Villains	135
	Rhetorical Vision	138
	Vision Analysis	144
Chapter V	Future Research and Conclusions	151
	Continuing with Fantasy Theme Analysis	151
	Analysis of Moore's Future Work	153
	Applying Other Methods	153
	Final Conclusions	155
Bibliography		159
Appendix A:	Statement of Beliefs for Living Proof Ministries	165
Appendix B:	Bible Studies by Beth Moore	166
Appendix C:	Books by Beth Moore	167
Appendix E:	The Baptist Faith and Message	170

**Discovering the Vision in Beth Moore’s “Breaking Free” Message:
Applying Bormann’s Fantasy Theme Analysis to Evaluate the Message.**

Chapter I: Introduction

Beth Moore, known in some circles as “America’s Bible Teacher,” is an author and media entrepreneur who has been speaking to audiences for over a decade. Since the inception of her ministry in 1994, Moore has spoken to more than 658,000 women at her Living Proof Live Conferences. Through these events, usually sold out, she now speaks to over 100,000 every year. In 2008, during a simulcast event, Moore spoke live to 85,000 people. The simulcast in 2009 is expected to draw more than 100,000. In October 2008, she spoke at her 100th Living Proof Live event and reached her goal of speaking in all fifty states. Moore has written numerous books, studies, and curriculums that are used throughout America and in many other countries. A conservative estimate is that her product sales now exceed more than 11 million units. These few statistics barely touch the surface of the impact Moore is making on women and her ministry shows no signs of slowing or diminishing in the near future.

The goal of this paper is to apply a communication criticism to the message she promotes. Though each of her spoken messages and books promote different central ideas, Moore claims that the message contained within her Breaking Free book and Bible study

promote her life message. This life message is the engine that drives the rest of her messages. Therefore, Fantasy Theme Analysis will be used to evaluate six of the eleven spoken messages delivered in the Breaking Free Bible study DVD series. The goal is to identify the fantasies within these messages. The resulting fantasies will be used to identify Moore's rhetorical vision. A final assessment of her vision will determine if her message aligns Biblically with the Scripture she claims to be promoting.

From a rhetorical standpoint, Moore is a person of interest because she has the ability to deliver a message that creates resonance. This project began with the idea that investigating a prominent women's figure in today's Evangelical Christian culture would be beneficial to those within the rhetorical community and to those beyond it. The intrinsic worth of researching Beth Moore's rhetorical vision will be established throughout the remainder of chapter one.

Justification of Study

Several justifications exist for this study. First, Moore is an effective female communicator that is making an impact within her field as a speaker and author. As such, it is likely her leadership and ministry efforts will become an important part of Christian history. Second, at the time of this study, a rhetorical criticism of Beth Moore's message and technique does not exist. Women speakers can learn from her structure and audience adaptation techniques. Finally, those seeking insight into her life, ministry, and message will be able to glean information from this criticism.

Beth Moore is worthy of study because she is a leader. John D. Rockefeller once said, "Good leadership consists of showing average people how to do the work of superior people." Moore leads women to Biblical excellence in both their public and private lives. She is a leader

who has established a clear vision. People claim to make dramatic changes in their lives as they embrace her vision. Moore's determination to motivate people may prove to impact Christian history. As she seeks to reach those beyond the church she stands out in her generation as a Christian leader with a substantial presence. Though it is too soon to determine the breadth of her ministry, it is apparent that her ability to spread Christian ideals surpasses many leaders already recognized as a part of Christian history.

Women speakers must be studied to establish a foundation for women communicators who seek to improve their speaking structure and style. Studying Moore will yield insight to techniques that can be used in a variety of communicative venues: speaking, writing and media presentation. Carole Spitz and Kathryn Carter, authors of *Women in Communications Studies: A Typology for Revision*, explain vigorously that because women are up and coming in all fields, a new precedent for studying women as communicators needs to be established (Spitz and Carter 906). As a result, Beth Moore is worthy of study. An analysis of her work will benefit the rhetorical community as it expands our knowledge of women communicators.

Research Questions

Three research questions provide a framework for this paper: What fantasy themes can be identified in her message? Is there a rhetorical vision created by these fantasies? Is that vision consistent with an evangelical Christian doctrine? These questions are based on Ernest G. Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis, the critical tool that will be used analyze Moore's messages. Chapter three provides a methodology for how Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis will be used to accomplish these research goals.

Understanding the Artifact

Moore promotes a variety of messages through Living Proof Ministries. *Breaking Free* is conspicuous because she considers the content to be her “life message.” Moore expresses vulnerability and deep care for the subject matter. In the book version, she explicates:

Somehow I think a writer should never appear desperate for a reader to care about her work. It just isn't seemly. She should just do her best and place the results out there. I believe that, but in this case I just can't do it. The contents of these pages are so important to me that I desperately desire for it to be precious to you. I want the process described here to grab your heart. I want it to pull at your life so powerfully that the bondage of mediocre discipleship will never again be acceptable. Christ calls us to a place of breaking free. He woos us to a place of absolute freedom – the only kind of freedom that is real (Moore, *Breaking Free*).

She explains in chapter one, “I’ve never written anything that has meant more to me than the message of this book.” This quote is taken from the re-released version of the book in 2007.

The challenge associated with discerning her rhetorical vision is combing through the array of video messages, workbook materials, and book chapters. The videos are made up of eleven taped messages. The DVD version of the videos also includes supplemental information. The “series” is eleven taped messages of Moore talking about how God helped her overcome the lack of personal value and deep shame she had as the result of the child abuse she experienced in her early years. Moore works to explain how God allowed her to overcome her strongholds to become a mature Christian who “lives free in Christ.” The advantage of the videos is that the entirety of the *Breaking Free* message is presented directly from the mouth of Moore. Moore’s

expression, passion, and actual journey can be seen as she shares her message with the audience that is with her during the tapings.

The workbook is intended to be a supplement to the videos. The goal is to help the Bible study participant to be fully immersed into the concepts of the *Breaking Free* message. A participant meets with Moore each week for a period of eleven-weeks via the video messages. In the meantime, they work an hour a day for five days a week on the workbook that guides them through Biblical references and questions about the themes associated with the weekly lesson. The intention of this protocol is to encourage a complete immersion into the subject matter. Moore adds in the intro pages of the workbook:

If you spend this kind of time in the Word of God, He will change your life. I urge you not to miss a single lesson. Get completely involved, picturing yourself as an eyewitness to the events you are studying. Ask God daily what He wants to say to you personally (Moore, *Liberty in Christ* 7).

The workbook includes listening guides for each of the taped messages. Ideally, each week concludes with the participant getting together with a small group and discussing the questions provided for them in their books and what the participant has gleaned from their week of study.

Breaking Free, the book, is meant to deliver this same message in a compact whole. There are no videos or homework required as part of the *Breaking Free* process. The book is divided into six segments to enable the reader to go on a specific mental journey. The book has forty-seven chapters. The benefit of the book is that it offers an entire, quotable message that can be referenced easily by anyone desiring to glean from the message without the homework and time spent watching videos.

Despite the book's complete picture of the message, it was decided that analyzing the spoken messages would lend better insight to Moore's actual feelings, which would lead to a more complete rhetorical vision. When people deliver spoken messages they convey an entire communicative package: facial expression, tone of voice, emphasis, body language, etc. As such, this researcher assumes that Moore's spoken message will provide insight to Moore's rhetorical vision in its raw form. Moore is also speaking to actual women as she delivers this message, which adds an extra dynamic to Moore's delivery.

Analyzing all eleven messages would be a monumental task. Therefore, this author decided to narrow the analysis to six of her messages. After gaining perspective on the nature of each eleven messages, six were chosen: "Goals of Breaking Free," "Untying the Cords of the Yoke," "Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins," "Beauty from Ashes," "The Steadfast Mind" and "The Display of His Splendor." The first message, "Goals of Breaking Free" provides an introduction to what the study is going to be about, which seems pertinent to goals of this paper. The other messages are from weeks one, four, six, nine and ten. The hope is that by analyzing the beginning, the middle and the end a rhetorical vision will emerge.

Overview of Beth Moore

In order to understand the results of the Fantasy Theme Analysis, it is important to be aware of Moore's life and ministry. Moore's background establishes a foundation for her rhetorical vision. Her life experiences are the motivation for her ministry. Therefore, it is pertinent to gain insight to her personal journey of becoming a Bible teacher and leader. The channels of development will allow the reader to understand the current impact of her rhetorical vision.

Beth Moore learned at an early age to be aware of God and Christ, but she did not embrace the teaching as a complete lifestyle until her adult years. Moore's life is a testament to overcoming hardship, including repeated sexual abuse in her childhood. She pushes past each devastating quake in her life to press on toward the goals she believes are right for her life. Moore derives this path through her perception of God's will for her life via the study of Scripture and Biblical principles. She embraces Christianity as her source of peace and purpose. Moore believes:

The Word of God is health and life not only to our soul, but also to the marrow of our bones. God has taught me that His Word is alive and powerful. When someone shares a verse from His Word, God prompts me to actively incorporate it into my thoughts (Montgomery 96).

Moore actively shares her failures and weaknesses to encourage the development of faith and hope in the lives of others. As she does this, she finds intrinsic worth and believes that she is glorifying God. But the underlying question is: How was her passion refined?

Biography

According to documents released by Living Proof Ministries, Beth Moore, full name Wanda Elizabeth Moore, was born to the late Albert Green, an Army major, and the late Aletha Green, homemaker, during a thunderstorm in 1957 on an Army base in Green Bay Wisconsin (Living Proof Ministries). After Albert Green's retirement, the family settled in Arkadelphia, Arkansas where Albert ran a local cinema. Moore, the fourth of five children, recalls that she and her siblings were known around town by the way their shoes stuck to the floor when they walked (as a result of the coke syrup from the movie theatre concession stand) (Moore, Feathers

86). Moore worked at this theatre handing out samples of popcorn and soda to cinema patrons and acknowledges that the movies sparked her love for stories. When Moore was 15, the family moved to Houston, Texas where she lives to this day.

Unfortunately, Moore's childhood was not all fun, games, popcorn, coke and movies. Though the accused remains unknown to the public due to her respect of privacy, Moore admits that she was abused as a young child. In an interview with Jane Struck Johnson of Christianity Today, she reflects briefly on this matter:

The first time I recall anything about my abuse, I was very young. My victimization was not constant, because my victimizer didn't have continual access to me. But it certainly was enough to mess me up at a time when I was figuring out who I was. I was pigeon-toed. I had buckteeth. I had the hairiest legs in the free world. My mother wouldn't let me shave them for the longest time and fishnet tights were in! Even though I did well in school, I had the worst self-esteem imaginable (Struck 32).

Moore's abuse began before her fifth birthday and continued until she was almost out of elementary school. She recounts this story in detail in a book, Were it Not for Grace, by Leslie Montgomery. She reveals that her natural ability to speak out was silenced and that the resulting effects on her personality were devastating (Montgomery 97). It would be years before she dealt with this pain. Though she was loved and raised in the church, she remains convinced that there was not enough good to counteract the devastation caused by the abuse (Struck 33).

Moore was drawn to the Christian life at an early age. As previously stated, she grew up in the church. She accepted Jesus as her personal Savior at the age of six (Montgomery 96). She freely admits that the character of Jesus has fascinated her since she was a child (Struck 33). Moore reflects, "My Sunday school teacher would hold up pictures of Jesus, and he looked so

nice. I needed a hero, and Jesus seemed like one. I'd lie on the grass, stare up at the sky, and wonder what Jesus was like. Even as a child, I fell in love with him" (Struck 33). This love affair has continued and she believes this type of relationship with God is akin to "feeding our souls with rich and luscious foods" and believes that "people are meant to feast on Him to satisfy the aches of their souls" (Moore, *A Woman* 7).

She graduated from Northbrook High School in Houston, Texas. After graduation, at the age of 18, Moore sensed God "calling" her to work for Him. What does that mean? Quentin Schultze, communication scholar and author of *Here I Am*, defines the nature of "calling:"

God's callings have always been incredibly diverse and often rather ambiguous in hindsight. We might sense a call while conversing with a friend, watching a sunset at the beach, listening to the lyrics of an inspiring song, meditating on a sermon, reading Scripture, or sitting in solitude. There is no formula (12).

The nature of being "called" in the evangelical sense is based on Biblical texts such as Romans 9:20-24 that speak of the relationship between God and man. Moore responded to this call by acknowledging that she would be willing to do whatever God asked her to do.

Moore's calling came after her freshman year of college while working as a camp counselor for sixth-grade girls. She says, "Early one morning, as the girls were sleeping, I sensed God's presence enfold me. There were no audible words, no bright lights. But suddenly I knew, without a doubt, my future was entirely His" (Struck 33). She explains this experience greater detail in one of her *Breaking Free* DVD messages, *The Display of His Splendor*. At the time, she felt she had no skills in which she could serve Him. In spite of this, with audaciousness and youthful vigor she told all of those within her church community that no one would ever

come between her and God and that God would always be first in her life. However, it was a few years before this calling took hold of her life.

As she finished her degree at Southwest Texas State University, she began to consider God's calling again. During this time, she remembers poor choices, which for privacy reasons she keeps to herself. She realized that she broke the agreement that she made with God at 18. In the aforementioned video message, she admits that she served herself and did not put God first. She explains that a relationship formed during school, for a season of her life, was more important to her than God. As a result, she ended up feeling complete despair and admits to wishing that God would just take her home to heaven so that she could stop being such a disappointment to Him.

Finally, after several years, she let go of the destructive relationship. She is open to the fact that these were tumultuous years for her because she had yet to "break free from self-destruction" (Struck 33). Through this struggle, her soul did seek to remain committed to the cause of Christ. She comments, "Yet even in those turbulent years, Jesus drew me back every single time. I couldn't stand anything that put distance between Christ and me. I still can't. His presence is everything to me" (Struck 33).

She does not dwell on her past sin, even though she remembers it clearly. Moore explains, "All I can do now is walk in the Holy Spirit's power. That is all I can do until I see him face-to-face." This statement is an example of her strong Biblical faith. Faith is an obvious component to someone who lives his or her life in accord with God's will. For Moore, this is especially true. Oswald Chambers, a person Moore frequently references, captures Moore's concept of faith by saying:

Living a life of faith means never knowing where you are being led. But it does mean loving and knowing the One who is leading. It is literally a life of *faith*, not of understanding and reason – a life knowing Him who calls us to go. Faith is rooted in the knowledge of a Person, and one of the biggest traps we fall into is the belief that if we have faith, God will surely lead us to success in the world. The final stage in the life of faith is the attainment of character, and we encounter many changes in the process (Chambers March 19).

Moore seeks this type of faith by continually seeking a deeper relationship with God and by doing her best to reflect a character that is rooted in Christ (Moore, To Live 2).

Moore graduated from Southwest Texas University with a degree in political science. Soon after she married her husband, Southwest Texas alum, Ivan Keith Moore. They were married in 1978 and now share a love for traveling, hiking, drinking coffee on the back porch, eating Mexican food and making each other laugh (Living Proof Ministries "About Beth"). Her husband is the co-owner of John Moore Home Services and he is an avid fisherman, hunter and award winning clay pigeon shooter. In an interview in 2003 she said:

Keith and I share a precious friendship. And we both love dogs! We have three, and we dress them up in hats for their birthdays and have a party. People think we are nuts, but we have fun with them and each other. I always tell young women, "Pay attention to your husband, honey, because when it's all said and done, he's what you've got left" (Christianity Today "Beth Moore").

Their dogs have changed, but it is clear that they are precious to them and stories of her dogs often end up in the narrations she shares with her audiences.

Times have not always been easy for the couple. Moore explains in another interview that she and Keith came as close to divorcing as you can without closing the deal with papers (Struck 34). The resulting fights were difficult to survive; however, she says that though they are an odd mix, they keep each other laughing constantly and are *very* attracted to each other. She believes that women should, “Treat a man like he already is everything you want him to become, and he will become it” (Struck 34).

They renewed their wedding vows in 2003 in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary. On December 30th they took part in a ceremony that was held in Westin Regina Resort in Cancun, Mexico. Close friends and family were part of the celebration and they even took a second honeymoon to Wyoming’s Teton Mountains. They dedicated the next twenty-five years of their marriage and beyond to serving the Lord together wherever the Lord may lead (Living Proof Ministries "Mr. and Mrs.").

Moore is the mother of two biological children: Amanda Sheree and Melissa Gay. She shares her perspectives on being their mother in her book Feathers From My Nest. She gives details about her family and admits that there were times her home was in desperate need of repair (4). She desires to leave a legacy much like Acts 3, “Silver and gold have I none, but that which I have I give thee.” She tells her girls:

I don’t have a testimony of a mother’s victorious walk. I can’t give you a testimony of a virgin bride. But I can tell you the Lord is my whole life. I love him more than anything in this world, and I know he’s real and he’s powerful. I know he transforms lives. I can’t give you a good past, but I can give you passion for your present and passion for your future (Struck 34).

Notes in her memoirs say that she has three hopes for her children: that they will know where to go (straight to the throne of grace), what to do (pour their lives into God), and that they can cry (because that is what healthy people do) (Moore, *Feathers* 25).

Moore is unyielding in her desire that her children know and understand how to experience joy as they worship God. She desires for them to learn how to study and worship with Christians from other races and cultures and made a conscious decision to deliberately teach them how they can live their lives “out rightly” (Moore, *Feathers* 39). As of 2009, both of her daughters are married and working in the ministry. As a result, she now has two grand children, Jackson and Annabeth.

A deeper look into Moore’s life produces a slight controversy regarding whether or not Moore is the mother of three children or two. *Feather’s from My Nest* provides an introduction to the subject:

From the very first stages of our “adoption” dialogue until now – a season spanning over a dozen years – I have encountered complexities of circumstance and emotions like nothing I have ever known. People who mean well ask questions about things they don’t understand. I couldn’t have understood it either unless I had experienced such complicated circumstances first hand. I am fiercely and unapologetically private about it. I knew, however, when God placed the concept for this book upon my heart, that I could not possibly write about my children without writing about all my children...even one who was only “mine for a season.” (Moore, *Feathers* 125).

Acknowledging this bit of her life seems to be difficult for Moore, but it is pertinent to the story of her life. The story of the third child prompts many questions, most of which remain unanswered because of privacy reasons. However, in *Feathers from My Nest* Michael, the third

child, is acknowledged. His name is mentioned in some of her early works, including Breaking Free, but ceases to show up in any of her later books or studies.

Though Moore acknowledges the situation developed out of bad circumstances, Michael was an answer to Moore's prayer for a son. He was living with an unstable home in Moore's extended family. Initially, there were some issues with bringing Michael into the family because she and Keith wanted to fully adopt him. Though adoption did not work out, they provided him a home for seven years. He was their son during this time for all intents and purposes. Although they did not want to give him up, Michael went back to living with his biological mother.

Another time of crisis came about in her early thirties as despairing reality regarding her early child abuse began to set in. In the aforementioned article with Jane Johnson Struck she reflects:

I went through a season of uncharacteristic despair in my early thirties. I'd never before looked straight at my victimization, never allowed my mind to replay the images. Every single time they began to erupt, I pressed them down. But I no longer had the energy to do that. The victim in me took over. I felt like I was jumping of the highest cliff and descending into the bottom of a canyon. While Amanda and Melissa knew I was sad, they had no idea how severe it was. I was good at hiding it; you don't have my kind of background and not develop a way to do that (Struck 33).

She recounts, in a *Breaking Free* DVD message that the misery she felt at nineteen was nothing compared to what she felt during this season of her life. She explicates that God used this time to force her to deal with the hurt of past. This 'mental breakdown' led her to bind herself to Christ and now she admits that nothing can touch her to the depth that God can.

Moore is open to the fact that she told no one about the abuse as a child, which led her to a defeatist mentality during her teens and early twenties (Montgomery 97). Her life at this time was consumed with a cycle of sin, remorse and repentance. She recalls, “As a Christian, I assumed I needed to ignore the pain because I thought that was the object of the Christian life – to forget, cover the pain with a mask of piety, and move on” (Montgomery 97). At this time, Moore had been under the teaching of a man named Buddy Walters. She embraced his enthusiasm to study God’s Word, which led to her writing her first Bible Study, and the eventual healing from her trauma. Now, she is an advocate for sound, godly counsel and admits there are issues in life that people need help talking through (Struck 34). Moore even expresses, in an excerpt from an introductory Breaking Free DVD message, that she believes in counseling that is accompanied by “a deep time in the Word.”

Moore daily makes the decision to give back. One of her recent missions was in a project that she calls *Voices of the Faithful*. She teamed up with the International Mission Board, for the project. The resulting book, Voices of the Faithful, came out in 1996. The study shares the stories of 300 missionaries. Moore states, “Before I clearly knew who Jesus was, I knew there were people willing to go anywhere and do anything to tell people about Him. Jesus must be something, I mused. And He was” (Moore, *Voices* 2).

This work encouraged others to catch the vision. Now, many churches use the book to teach others the importance of missionary work. Others have decided to extend her vision. Mary Ann Bridgewater released a follow up book Prayers of the Faithful in May 2008. In the forward Beth Moore writes:

About ten years ago God began leading me to take a far more active role in missions... primarily through daily intercession. I recall wondering, *How does a person approach*

praying for the entire world? God graciously placed tools in my hands along the way, but I can assure you I've never seen one quite like [*Prayers for the Faithful*] (Bridgewater ix).

This forward is evidence that she rejoices when others are touched by the work that God is doing in her life. She also seeks to uplift and promote others within the faith.

Moore has dedicated her life to service. Through speaking or on mission trips to Africa, she is trying to make a positive difference in the world. In an interview she wrote:

To avoid being self-absorbed the Lord's shown me how important it is to stay in tune with what's going on in the lives of oppressed people around the world. I pray daily beyond my own little world to keep me not only from being self-centered but also too family-centered. There's a big world out there. I can implode with self-absorption if I'm not careful (Struck 33).

A dedication to people and a persevering attitude seems to have opened the door to the things she has been able to accomplish with her life. The education she has received from the trials she has experienced and the lessons she has learned as a Bible teacher have prepared her to have the ministry she has today. She has become a teacher who speaks with energy, passion, humor, warmth and grace (Living Proof Ministries "About Beth").

Explanation of Ministry

Living Proof Ministries was founded by Moore, its president, in 1994 with the purpose of teaching women how to love and live by God's Word. On their website, they state their purpose as thus:

We are dedicated to Bible literacy and a commitment to guide believers to love and live on God's Word. Every tape, book or product offered through this ministry is developed to encourage people to know Christ through His Word (Living Proof Ministries "Mission").

The founding scripture is Hebrews 4:12, "For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any two-edged sword." The ministry is guided by a clearly defined vision:

Living Proof is devoted to investing in the spiritual lives of people of every color and denomination through sound Biblical teaching and uplifting praise and worship. Often we hear the noble expression "color blind" to describe people without racial prejudice. We're not at all sure "color blindness" is what God is looking for. We believe He wants us to appreciate and delight in our different colors and be "color-blessed" instead! (Living Proof Ministries "Mission").

This vision developed as the ministry formed and as she noticed that far fewer people of color attended her lectures and conferences.

As a result, Moore became burdened and sought to change her ministry to meet the needs of women of all races and denominations. She encourages her staff to have technicolor vision. She recognizes the road to completing this vision is still a long one and asks for those who are a part of the ministry to pray for walls to be broken down and bridges to be built. Her inspiration lies within the Biblical text Revelation 7:9, "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, or all nations and kindred, and people and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb." She wants to do her part to also reach the multitudes.

Moore's ministry has clearly defined core values that drive its visions and goals. These beliefs state that their foundation is the Bible and that they seek to parallel their ministry to that

which is found in the Scriptures. Appendix A: Statement of Beliefs for Living Proof Ministries lists the ministry's stated beliefs and their supporting Scripture.

Channels of Development

Her ministry began as she submitted to the call of God. She began volunteering her time at her church with ministries such as Mother's Day Out. Eventually, she began teaching an aerobics class, which opened the door to her teaching a Sunday school class. Teaching the Sunday school class opened the door for her to teach at retreats, luncheons, and other engagements. Now, the work she does extends far beyond her local church and into many countries.

She reveals, in various interviews and Bible studies that much of her career revolves around what she feels God is leading her to do. She seeks to achieve and do all that God sets before her, but there have been times when she has had to let things go. For instance, she taught aerobics enthusiastically for 12 years, but stopped it abruptly:

I felt God kept telling me, "*I am calling you to do something different.*" I kept telling him, "I'll leave my aerobics class when I don't like it anymore!" Well, one morning, I got up to teach, and my hip was out of joint. I felt the Holy Spirit say to me, "*Am I going to have to break your leg to get you to listen to me? Let it go!*" So I pulled away from the aerobics, and the Lord began to show me what He had for me" (Christianity Today "Beth Moore").

Part of the process for Moore has been her willingness to follow the road signs of life (Moore, Stepping Up 5). If she feels God is leading her to end a ministry, she ends it because she is

aware that a person cannot do a thousand things to the glory of God, even though sometimes it does take an act of God to move her to the next stage.

Moore recalls her journey to becoming a Bible educator in a DVD message associated with her Stepping Up Bible study. Moore states that when a position opened up for a Sunday school teacher in her church, she reluctantly took the position after peer pressure from fellow church members at the First Baptist Church of Houston, Texas (Moore, Stepping Up 1). At first there was hesitation, but soon she embraced the position. Though she was teaching, she did not quite have the passion and drive that is seen in her studies today.

One night, Moore attended a Bible study led by a former football player, Buddy Walters. She noted in an interview that this man had such a passion for the Word and remembers admiring his vulnerability. She recalls, “I don’t know what this man has, but I want it” (Struck 32). At the time, Moore was in her mid-twenties and she had done some speaking and teaching, but she was not yet very good at it. After witnessing this man’s passion and deeply emotional explanation of the Scripture, she decided she would change her approach, which led to the Bible becoming her life.

As Moore taught Sunday school with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, people requested that she make handouts to accompany the messages she brought each week. These “handouts” led to the creation of full Bible studies. The Bible studies gave her the material to host Tuesday night non-denominational studies for women in her community. Eventually, her vision caught on to the extent that the studies got published. By 1994, she was speaking and teaching in various venues and the Sunday school lessons were developed into weekly radio bits that were picked up by local and national radio stations.

In 2007, Moore stopped teaching Sunday school after 22 years. This position is one of very few duties she has let go through the years (Moore, Stepping Up 1). She stopped the radio broadcasts simultaneously because the Sunday school sessions were her source for material. The reason for her resignation was to allow for new opportunities to develop with internet and television. Though occasionally overcome with low self-esteem and nervousness, she works to spread the message of the Bible through these venues with God as her strength and encourager (Moore, When Godly 2).

Moore continues to lead a Tuesday night Bible study for women in her community. Thousands of Texas women join Moore as she leads them through the Bible. She begins by having a worship team pump up the audience through song and dance. Moore is always off to the side praising God right with her audience. After worship, she leads them through a Scriptural journey with explanations from commentaries, books, and even lessons on Hebrew and Greek terms.

Starting in 1996, LifeWay has published one or more of her Bible studies every year. This Christian company established a partnership with Moore that is thriving to this day. LifeWay, located in Nashville, Tennessee, is a nonprofit organization that does not receive funding from the Southern Baptist denomination and reinvests income above operating expenses in mission work and other ministries around the world. To date they operate more than 140 LifeWay Christian Stores. LifeWay and their associated company, B&H Publishing Group, produce Bibles, church literature, books, music, audio and video recordings, and church literature. LifeWay, an entity of the Southern Baptist Convention, seeks to provide Biblical solutions for life. Their website, lifeway.com, provides their vision statement: “As God works

through us... We will help churches know Jesus Christ and seek His Kingdom by providing Biblical solutions that spiritually transform individuals and cultures.”

The studies that LifeWay produces are detailed and include workbooks, videos, homework, listening guides, and ways for women to further their study of the Scriptures on their own. Moore is supported by her publishers and those who work in her ministry. Faith Whately, who is the current Director of Training and Events and former event coordinator for Living Proof Live, provided the following statement about Moore:

LifeWay strongly supports Beth and her ministry not only as her publisher but also as a partner in ministry and in prayer. Her dedication to Bible literacy was and is the same vision we have at LifeWay. We immediately saw God's hand on Beth and knew He would use her to reach thousands of women throughout the world (Whately).

Appendix B: Bible Studies by Beth Moore displays the studies that LifeWay has published as of January 2010. Moore’s ministry continues to produce each year. Though publishers keep the actual numbers under wraps, the front pages of some of the studies show that many of her studies are in the 12th and 13th printings. The published studies have allowed her messages to be received by larger audiences. Moore encourages women who participate to pick up a Bible and submerge themselves in to the study.

At the end of the day her heart’s desire is for women to ask God “to light a fire for His Word in their heart” (Struck 34). She believes that this is a prayer to which He’ll never answer *no*. She wants women to immerse themselves into the Word. She says, “It don’t matter whose Bible study series it is, if it has a sound approach to God’s Word, for crying out loud, do it!” (Struck 34). Her studies often take from six to twelve weeks to complete. For those who are

unable to commit the time, she has worked with publishers to convert many of the studies into books.

Specific statistics are hard to find on Moore's ministry. Her website, lproof.org, proclaims that American missionaries and expatriates have taken her Bible studies overseas resulting in Beth Moore Bible study groups all over the world. In 2001, Patrick Dunn, a newspaper reporter, said that more than 750,000 people a year were involved in her studies (Dunn). Nine years later, fifteen studies are now in publication. One may assume, since statistics are unavailable from publishers, if there is twice the number of studies circulating, her impact and reach is easily over a million people a year.

Almost every Bible Study has become a book or vice versa. She had five publishers pick up her books over the years. Broadman & Holman Publishing Group, one of her publishers, reports that as of 2008 she has a total of 8.5 million in book sales. They report that she has published 31 titles, not including curriculum and study books. Just like with her Bible studies, her book publishers work with her to produce new works every year. Appendix C: Books by Beth Moore portrays a partial list of her work (it does not include devotionals, journals, books published in Spanish, or other materials). Many of her books are also national best sellers. The Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA), reports that on their charts she has 11 best sellers, such as, 90 Days with a Heart Like His and Praying God's Word Day by Day. In 2007, her book Get Out of the Pit reached the top of the ECPA sellers list in less than a month. In 2010, her book So Long Insecurity made the New York Times best seller list.

Moore is also an advocate for other authors, such as: Jennifer Rothschild, Carrie McDonnall, Mandisa Hundley, & Vicki Courtney. She has co-authored several books and promotes others work via written forwards, her conferences and studies. She encourages women

not too submerge themselves under one Bible teacher. As such, she often will tell her audiences who she is currently gleaning inspiration from. She is constantly seeking to improve herself and does not want any lady who submits to her teaching to believe that she has all the answers.

Moore's ministry goes beyond the United States to countries such as England, Ireland, Singapore, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Angola, Kenya, South Africa and India (Living Proof Ministries "About Beth"). She uses many of the same stories, poems, and humor located within her books and Bible studies at her conferences, but brings them to life with an intense, energetic, expression that incorporates both nonverbal and spoken languages.

Moore participates in a variety of conferences. Her Living Proof Live series is her signature conference that is put out by her ministry and LifeWay. She promises that no two of these conferences will be the same or canned (Dunn). The mission for each conference is the same because she wants every student to walk away with a deeper understanding of the Scripture and a deeper relationship with God. Her goal is to focus on the Biblical text that she feels the Lord has put on her heart for each particular group of women. She then works to come up with appropriate applications that the attendees can incorporate into their everyday life.

Liz Ruiz, newspaper reporter, reflected on Moore's impact, "Grammy winner John Mayer didn't sell out the Colonial Center, but Beth Moore did." Fifty-seven local churches sponsored this particular conference and it was attended by at least 16,000 people. Amy Cato, current Events Coordinator for the Living Proof Live events, provided the following statement:

In 2008 alone, an expected 81,000 women will attend a Living Proof Live event.

However, this does not include the national simulcast on August 1-2 that expects to reach another 80,000 in churches nation-wide. At the completion of our event year in October, about 754,000 women will have attended a Living Proof Live event from 1998-2008 (not

including simulcast events). This year our event is celebrating 10 years, 100 events and will have visited all 50 states (Cato).

Her speaking schedule is audacious and she proclaims her message in all sorts of communities.

She occasionally pairs up with other women for speaking engagements. In one such conference, Deeper Still, produced and promoted by LifeWay, she speaks with Kay Arthur and Priscilla Shirer. Moore participates in other conferences as well, such as Women of Faith, though not lately. All of her conferences are geared toward women; occasionally, a few men sneak in. Why they do is debatable, and Moore points out that she is not there to teach the men, but will allow them to stay and participate if they desire to do so. The only conference that stands out as different is the *Passion* conference, which brings in a variety of speakers to speak to college age students of both genders.

Moore's reach extends in new ways each year. Her main venues are obviously with the Bible studies, conferences, and books. While she no longer does a radio broadcast, she does produce a weekly, thirty minute broadcast with Oneplace.com. At the end of the week the broadcasts become available for purchase either via the web as a MP3 or through the mail as an audio CD.

Moore commits to television broadcasts on *Life Today* with James and Betty Robinson. The show is based out of Fort Worth, Texas, but reaches other countries, such as Canada, Europe and Australia. Moore's featured segment is entitled *Wednesdays with Beth*. The partnership gives Moore the opportunity to be seen weekly to an audience of 200 million and works to promote DVD volumes that can be purchased once a series is complete. As of late, four series are available: *Wednesday's with Beth Volumes One through Six*, *Get Out of that Pit*, and *Fully Alive*.

A complete offering of Moore's products is not found on any one particular website, but LifeWay, Amazon and her home web page offer the biggest selection. She has inspired a variety of other products that do not include either spoken or written messages. She offers prayer cards and music CD's as well. Moore has a passion for music; as such, it plays a huge role in her conferences and lectures. Though she is not a singer, she is more than willing to promote those who are. For instance, there are musical compilations available that are meant to encourage people as they complete her Bible studies. She works directly with musicians as well, such as Travis Cottrell, her main worship leader.

Moore is being talked about on the web. There are blogs about her, groups dedicated to her on facebook, some videos on YouTube and GodTube. Her work is available on iTunes and other areas. Moore reflects in the aforementioned article with Jane Struck the process that helped her become the woman she is today:

Even though I committed my life to Christ as a child, as a young woman I lived the Christian life through my own determination. I was a very unhealthy person who made lots of destructive choices. I didn't yet understand about God's Spirit living through me. The odd thing was that I didn't *know* that I didn't know the Word (Struck 32).

Now that she *does* know the Word, she uses her success to infiltrate popular culture in as many ways as possible. Moore shows no signs of stopping. She and the people she works with are constantly seeking new ways to impact society in a positive way.

Others acknowledge Moore's efforts. Howard Payne University gave her an honorary doctorate in humanities. Julie Clinton, president of the Extraordinary Women's Conferences, acknowledges her as a leader. In Clinton's book, Extraordinary Women, she states that extraordinary women exude the following in their lives:

- They decide life's disappointments will not dampen their enthusiasm.
- They decide to become better not bitter.
- They decide to bravely face their circumstances.
- They decide to persevere in loving and praying for each of the children entrusted to them.
- They decide not to dwell on what they don't have, but to be grateful for what they do have.
- They decide not to be overwhelmed by tough choices they have to make.

Clinton acknowledges Beth Moore as a woman who fulfills these in life. This is but a brief glimpse of what Moore has accomplished thus far with her 51 years of life. Moore has not lived a perfect life, but seems to be striving to make the most of it in order that she may have a positive impact on those she interacts with.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Two investigations were done to establish background to this study. The first inquiry was into the history and roles of Christian women as spiritual leaders. Awareness of these matters will be of use in understanding the historical platform Moore has as a spiritual leader. Second, an exploration of Fantasy Theme Analysis rendered knowledge concerning the validity of its use as a rhetorical tool to apply to Moore's writings and speeches.

Overview of Christian Women Leaders

Florence Littauer, Corrie ten Boom, Kay Author, Fanny Crosby, Elisabeth Elliot and Henrietta Mears are but a few of many women who have preceded Beth Moore as influential Christian women. Working diligently for the cause of Christ is nothing new. Women's imprint on Christian history is easy to discover. Recounting the history of evangelical women teachers will provide invaluable insights and provide justification for most of the presuppositions espoused by modern Christian leaders. It also establishes that Moore is not a loner in advocating the ideas she promotes through her rhetorical vision.

Christian women have been influencing their communities for centuries by assuming roles such as authors, orators, educators, politicians and businesswomen. They make a difference in the arts, entertainment, music, radio, and television. They write and publish

literature. They work in missions, Christian ministry, evangelism, theology, marriage, and motherhood. To gain perspective on this topic, an overview of Biblical leadership roles and overview of Christian women leadership through time will be provided. This synopsis will conclude with a summation of their apparent value system.

Biblical Women's Leadership Roles

Eve, the first woman of the Bible, is known as the mother of all who have life and as the first person to commit sin (Genesis 3:6). A woman was the first to sin and women were there at the feet of Jesus when he hung dying on the cross (Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41). Women were the first to see Jesus' tomb (Mark 15:46-47) and the first to whom the risen Lord appeared (Mark 16:9; John 20:14-18). Women were among the first converted in the early days of Paul's preaching and often served as the person of peace for the new churches (Acts 16:14-15).

In Genesis 2:18, the woman is noted as man's helper and her presence is essential to the completion of His being. Herbert Lockyer, author of All the Women of the Bible, writes that though most of the ancient world was dominated by men, the Jews, holding to the revelation given to Moses of woman's endowments, were distinct among oriental nations in their view of women, comparatively, the Jews held women in high esteem, giving them honor, and affection (13). Lockyer's statement is substantiated by internal evidence throughout the Bible, which indicated that this high view of womanhood was also extended to include the Gentiles.

Identifying the various roles of women in the Bible enables one to comprehend the extent to which some women were esteemed. The following chart gives a brief overview of those who were rulers of nations, influential in public affairs, poets, and prophetesses. These roles are particularly important because they establish that women have had leadership roles that involved

speaking and communicating throughout history. The chart below is not an exhaustive list of all the women of the Bible, but it highlights women who are recognized as being spiritual leaders, writers, and orators, which is relevant to establishing a history of Christian women leaders prior to Beth Moore.

Table 1
Various Leadership Roles for Women in the Bible

RULERS OF NATIONS	
Deborah, Judge and Prophetess	Judges 4:4
Athaliah, Queen of Judah	2 Kings 11:1-16, 2 Chronicles 22:2-3
Jezebel, Queen of Israel	1 Kings 16:31
Queen of Sheba	1 Kings 10:1-13, 2 Chronicles 9:1-9, 12
Esther, Queen of Persia	Esther 2:17
Candace, Queen of Ethiopia	Acts 8:27
INFLUENTIAL IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS	
Bathsheba	1 Kings 1:15-21
Huldah	2 Kings 22:14-20
The Queen of Babylon	Daniel 5:9-13
Pilate's wife	Mathew 27:19
Esther	Esther
POETS	
Miriam	Exodus 15:21
Deborah	Judges 5
Hannah	1 Samuel 2:1-10
Elizabeth	Luke 1:42-45
Mary	Luke 1: 46-55
PROPHETESSES	
Miriam	Exodus 15:20-21, Micah 6:4
Deborah	Judges 4:4-5
Anna	Luke 2:36-38
Philip's Daughters	Acts 21:9
Noadiah	Nehemiah 6:14

In the Old Testament women of Israel seem to hold higher roles than the women in the surrounding "heathen" nations. Lockyer writes that:

Israelite law was designed to protect woman's weakness, safeguard her rights, and preserve her freedom (Deuteronomy 21:10-14; 22:13; 22:28). Under divine law her liberties were greater, her tasks more varied and important, and her social standing more respectful and commanding than that over her heathen sister. [As such], the Bible has preserved the memory of women whose wisdom, skill and dignity it willingly acknowledged (14).

Deborah and Esther are examples of women who are remembered for their deeds and service to God.

The life of the prophetesses, a person who is distinguished as having the ability to discern the mind and purpose of God and the ability to declare it, is of particular importance to this study because it displays God's willingness to allow women of God to spread His messages. Though women political leaders are rarely seen in the Bible, there is an instance in Judges 4-5 where the story of Deborah the ruler is recorded. During a tumultuous time in Israel's history, her faith in God and abilities as a prophetess encouraged the people and enabled them to find the power and strength in God necessary to throw off foreign oppressors.

Deborah held other Biblical roles. She was a wife. She is remembered as a poet, orator and writer. Deborah was an agitator who could excite public discussion with the view of producing change (Lockyer 41). She was the fifth "Judge" of Israel raised up by God to deliver Israel from bondage (Lockyer 41). And, Deborah was known as a fierce warrior.

Esther, Queen of Persia, speaks for God at the risk of her own life. Her story is recorded in the book of Esther, also in the Old Testament. Charles Swindoll, author of A Woman of Strength and Dignity: Esther, writes:

Unwittingly victimized by an unbearable situation, she stepped up and determined, by God's grace, to make a difference. Throwing protocol to the wind and ignoring all her fears, this woman stood in a gap most of her peers would never have risked. In doing so, she not only exposed and foiled the plans of an evil man, who, like Adolph Hitler, had a violent agenda. She alone saved her nation from extermination (x).

She fulfilled her calling to speak the truth according to the words and timing God placed on her heart. Esther sought divine guidance during times of difficulty. She acted confidently via her faith in God's providence.

In the New Testament there are more examples. Anna's story is found in Luke 2:36-38. She is known to be the first Christian missionary (Lockyer 29). She was most likely a member of society dependent on others for her health and welfare (Spangler and Syswerda 308). Yet, she lived eighty-four years as a widow and spent most of her days fasting in the temple, praying for the coming of the Messiah and seeking a deeper relationship with God (Spangler and Syswerda 308). Anna's faith was rewarded when she became one of the very first to bare witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, she was entrusted with Christianity's greatest message.

Anna is known for living to be a great age. She was a prophetess, widow and servant of God (Lockyer 31). Her orations as a missionary on God's behalf are among her most significant achievements. Lockyer writes, "Anna was one of the godly remnant in Israel who, through centuries, even in the darkest days before Christ came, look for the Dayspring from on high" (31). Just like Esther and Deborah, Anna spoke on God's behalf driven by her calling.

Women of the Bible sometimes pop up in obscure and meaningless ways in Scripture, but many of them play a major part in making a difference for God. Many women are wives and mothers. Some are the wives of Pharaohs and others queens. Some are barren and others are the

mothers of nations. Women hosted some of the first churches in their homes (Acts 12:12). Women were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-8). Women served as teachers (Acts 19:26, Titus 2:3-5). Women of the Bible paved the way for Christian women to work for the cause of Christ. They established a high standard for the Christian women serve future generations. Biblical history portrays a parade of women speaking and acting on God's bidding. As the centuries continued, women have encountered more difficulty as they seek to have their voice heard.

A Brief History of Christian Women Leaders

Abraham Lincoln said, "No man is poor who has a godly mother." Looking through history, military heroes, political statesmen, ministers of the Gospel, athletes, media personalities, literary and musical geniuses alike typically attribute the development of their characters and success to their mothers and wives. Many women have laid down their lives for the cause of Christ. Ladies have developed the behavioral traits of men who became great preachers and philosophers. Daughters of men have propagated the message of Christ to their contemporaries. Some opened their homes to establish first churches in countries throughout the earth. Many were missionaries and preachers. This brief history is an overview a few of the women who have blazed the trail to enable women like Beth Moore to spread the Christian message.

The following chart introduces some of the women who are prominent in early Christian history. The chart depicts three types of women: those who mothered or inspired well-known Christian orators in the early centuries; those who worked to establish early churches; and those who held positions as orators, speakers, or evangelists. The list is not all-inclusive, but depicts briefly how women have impacted Christian history through the centuries.

Table 2
Overview of Christian Women in the Early Centuries

Years	Name	Known For/Accomplishments
1 st Century	Thecla	Illuminating the Word of God
~181-203	Vibia Perpetua	Being an Early Christian Martyr
? – 230	Cecilia	The Patroness Saint of Church Music
255-330	Helena	Being the Mother of Constantine
327-379	Macrina	Founder of a Religious Community for Women in the Eastern Church
325-410	Marcella	Founder of the First Religious Community for Women in the Western Church
331-387	Monica	Mother of Augustine
~347-407	Anthusa	Being the Mother of John Chrysostom
399-453	Pulcheria	Work with the 4 th Century Church
~1252	Rose of Viterbo	Young prophet and preacher
~1310	Umilita of Faenza	Nun and Preacher
1342-1413	Juliana of Norwich	The First Englishwoman to write a spiritual book
1347-1380	Catherine of Siena	Revitalized the Church
1373-1438	Margery Kempe	A Wandering 15 th Century Evangelist
1451-1504	Isabella of Castile	First to Aid the Church in the New World
1492-1594	Margaret of Navarre	Defender of the Reformation
1504-1564	Anna Bullinger	A Ministering Angel to Reformation Refugees
1521-1546	Anna Askew	She was burned at the stake because of her religious beliefs
1528-1572	Jeanne d'Albret	Defender of the Reformation
1586-1617	Rose of Lima	The First Saint of the New World
1591-1643	Ann Hutchinson	The First Woman Preacher of New England
1595-1617	Pochahontas	Famous American Indian Convert to Christianity
1614-1702	Margaret Fell Fox	Wrote the first Quaker book defending the right for women to speak: <u>Women's Speaking, Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures</u>
~1623-1698	Mary Fisher	Pioneering Missionary in New England
1646	Sarah Keayne	Excommunicated from the Boston church for "irregular prophesying in missed assemblies"
1661	Mary Dyer	Follower of Hutchinson, Convert to Quakerism Hanged in Boston for preaching as a Quaker
1669-1742	Susanna Wesley	Mother of John and Charles Wesley
1736-1784	"Mother Ann" Lee	Founder of the American Shakers
1789-1826	Ann Judson	First American Woman Missionary to the Far East
1787	Patricia Mason	Defended Women's Right to Speak
1788-1827	Harriet Livermore	Preached in Freewill Baptist and Christian Movement Churches Author of, <u>Scriptural Evidence in Favor of Female Testimony in Meetings for the Worship of God</u>
1797-1893	Sojourner Truth	Preacher for Freedom
1806	Dorothy Ripley	Christian woman who Spoke to Congress with Thomas Jefferson's approval
1808	Elizabeth (unknown)	Preacher in Maryland until 1853
1829-1890	Catherine Booth	"Mother" of the Salvation Army
1837-1915	Amanda Smith	Black Woman Evangelist

Though many of these women are not well known, they have had a significant impact on Christian history serving as spiritual leaders, teachers, preachers, and evangelists. Juliana of Norwich, Margery Kempe, Ann Hutchinson, Sarah Keayne, Mary Dyer, Margaret Fell Fox, Patricia Mason, Dorothy Ripley, Elisabeth and Harriet Livermore established a foundation for today's Christian women orators.

In thirteenth century Italy Rose of Viterbo and Umilita of Faenza were hailed as prophets (Muessig 147). Rose of Viterbo, a young girl, preached publically though never formally educated. Her ability to be filled with the spirit of prophecy was credited by witnesses to be the result of her pure mind and body (Muessig 148). Umilita was a nun who taught God's truths and principles to her congregation through preaching and reading Scripture.

Juliana of Norwich (1342-1413) is known for her book entitled Revelations of Divine Love written in 1373 (Elwell 640). She lived in the time of Chaucer, English poet, and Wycliffe, the first translator of the Bible into English. Edith Deen, author of Great Women of the Christian Faith, reflects in her book:

Few in Christendom have spoken so eloquently of the love of God as she did. The keystone of her faith is: "Our soul is oned to Him, unchangeable goodness, and between God and our souls is neither wrath nor forgiveness in His sight." She declares that God is nearer to us than our own soul, for the soul is so deeply grounded in god, and so endlessly treasure, that we do not come to know it until we have first known of God (315).

Juliana wrote her revelations after a severe seven-day bout with sickness (Deen 315). She was known as a religious recluse who lived in a cell built on the wall of the Norman Church of Saint Julian at Norwich in England (Deen 316). She lived in a time of the Black Death and the

Hundred Years' War with France, but she fulfilled her calling to write and reflect on her knowledge of God.

Margery Kempe (1373-1438), known to some as a healer, is remembered as writer and a preacher. Her place in history is significant because her life depicts a vulnerability that is common in many of today's writers, especially Beth Moore. Kempe catalogued her travels and spiritual journeys much like St. Augustine did in his book Confessions (Deen 316). In her writings, she is open about the things that distracted her from serving God completely. She writes of her triumph over sin to demonstrate a deep and meaningful relationship with God (Deen 317). This willingness to overcome oneself is a common character trait exhibited by Christian women throughout history.

Ann Hutchinson (1591-1643) is said to be the first woman speaker and preacher in America (Casey 1). Michael Casey in his article, "The First Female Public Speakers in America," suggests that Hutchinson began her speaking career by holding bi-weekly meetings in her Massachusetts home that reflected on the previous Sunday's sermon. By 1630, her audience grew to include both men and women. Eventually, she was accused of preaching and banished to Rhode Island (Casey 5). She ended up going to trial for being a preacher and she defended her position and practices until the time of her death.

Hutchinson's story demonstrates the nature of the hostility that exists toward women preachers and orators. Hutchinson inspired other women to take up the fight. Sarah Keayne, who was excommunicated from the church in Boston, and Mary Dyer, a Quaker, who was hanged for being a preacher, succeeded Hutchinson as women preachers. Margaret Fell, Quaker and preacher, wrote the book Women's Speaking, Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the

Scriptures. Dorothy Ripely, with Thomas Jefferson's approval spoke to congress. Their fight to speak and spread the message of Christ has borne eternal rewards.

American Harriet Livermore (1788-1827) converted to Quakerism at the age of 23 (Casey 6). She became a "Pilgrim Stranger" and in 1821 received the "call to preach." She began exhorting in Freewill Baptist and Christian Movement Churches. As a result of her connections with John Quincy Adams, she was given the opportunity to preach in congress. She authored a book, Scriptural Evidence in Favor of Female Testimony in Meetings for the Worship of God, defending the right for women to serve as preachers. She derived power from Mary Magdalene whom she viewed as the first ever women preacher (Casey 6).

Many works detail the trials and tribulations of Christian woman in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They denote and delve into the hostility toward Christian women speakers. Michael Casey's article, "The First Female Public Speakers in America," also focuses on the first female speakers of America. He examines the nature of women preachers through three centuries. He concludes that if women had not been preaching in America, many famous women activists and orators would never have had the opportunity to express their view points in public. Rebecca Larson in her book, Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad, 1700-1755, notes the progression of women taking preaching roles. She offers a glimpse into their experience:

Believing they were providentially led, with almost a magnetic force (as one Quaker described, "the Spirit led me forth, was to me like a needle of a compass, touched with a loadstone; for so it pointed where I ought to go, and when I came to the far end of the journey"), the female preachers witnessed the range of North American life in eight colonies; from the rolling farmlands of Pennsylvania, to the Algonquian-speaking

Indians' village of Askimminikansen on the Easter Shore of Maryland, with its low bark-covered swellings, smoke emerging from roof-holes, and the new capital of Virginia (4). There experiences were both good and bad, yet all sought the cause of Christ as a result of their perceived callings.

Catherine A. Brekus in her book, Strangers and Pilgrims, gives a detailed account of the development of women preachers from 1740-1845. Her book brings clarity to why women went from being esteemed in the church, to the role of being silent in the church. She explains:

Before the rise of the ideology of separate spheres in the nineteenth century, no clear, simple lines separated women's world from men's. In a subsistence economy, men and women worked together at home, and they relied on each other to produce goods they needed for survival (Brekus 27).

This equality transcended into the church. As roles in society changed, so did the view of women in the church. Each century brought new issues to the table for women. In the 17th century, women began to desire change. The Quakers were not the only ones rallying for change. Many African American women preachers made significant ploys for change through their ministries as well.

Women such as Jarena Lee, Julia Foote, Maria Stewart, Frances Joseph Gaudet, and many others were all known to have spread the Word of God to slaves throughout the North and South (Haywood 15). These women were known to preach to men, women, and children from various races, denominations and classes, extending to them their interpretations of the Bible. Chanta M. Haywood, author of Prophesying Daughters, adds: "When they were denied the pulpit or podium because of prejudices against women, they preached in tents, bush clearings, meeting halls, private homes and other marginal spaces. They left their children, husbands and homes to

preach the Word of God” (15). Like the Quakers, these women felt called to deliver the truth about God and Christ. Sojourner Truth, whose real name was Isabella Baumfree, is another example. Gerda Lerner, author of The Women in America History, describes Sojourner:

[Her] pithy arguments and dignified personality had tremendous impact on her audiences. She was fearless and had an overpowering self-confidence, which was based on her belief that God talked to her. This faith made her impervious to insults and attack (68).

Sojourner Truth’s faith was undeniable. She worked with many people during her life, even Abraham Lincoln (Lerner 68).

In the nineteenth century, women leaders and speakers are more evident. Catherine Booth, Phoebe Palmer, and Francis Willard serve as a few examples. Catherine Booth was a wife of a preacher and mother of eight, but that did not stop her humanitarian efforts. She was known to be a feminist whose views heavily influenced the development of the Salvation Army (Tucker 170). She worked to train her daughters to become regional leaders within the cause. Phoebe Palmer is known as the mother of the Holiness Movement. She was a social activist and founder of the Five Points Mission (Tucker 171). Palmer was most known for her revival ministry, which took her all over the United States, Canada, and England (Tucker 171). Some estimate that twenty-five thousand people were converted as a result of her evangelistic ministry (Tucker 171).

Francis Willard in her book, Woman in the Pulpit, encouraged women to pursue a ministry and not be confined to working with only other woman (Willard 20). She believed that woman could be evangelists and work in all areas of church and public life. Willard was particularly strong willed concerning the fact that women should use all their gifts for God’s glory (Willard 21). These women became inspiration for future generations. By the twentieth

and twenty-first centuries, women in both Christian and non-Christian circles could speak their mind and gain an audience. Women in later centuries have continued the work of the women before them, though in some cases the nature of their ministry has been redefined. For instance, some continue to call themselves “preachers” while others, such as Beth Moore, call themselves “Bible teachers.”

Women in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are riding the wave of success initiated by women before them. Women obtained positions in government and as governors of state. Woman began to participate freely in culture through competitive sports, casual dress and independence via travel. Their prominence in the arts and media expanded. As women developed freedoms America, Christian women deepened their influence both within the states and abroad. These women significantly impacted the areas of speaking, writing, Bible study ministry, education, arts, entertainment, music, radio, television, literature, publishing, business, politics, social change, missions, Christian ministry, evangelism, theology, marriage and motherhood.

As the twenty-first century unfolds, it is obvious that the work of women has spawned a new generation of women teachers and preachers. The difference between women yesterday and today correlates with the current emphasis on the nature of women’s roles in the home and church. The roles of the women in the church have varied greatly, but the value system that drives them remains the same. The redefining of preacher to Bible teacher in the twentieth century opened the door for women to have a broader reach in their ministries. However, the goal remains the same, to spread the message of Christ and to encourage a deeper relationship with God. The women of this century are tending to focus more on ministering to each other, instead of crusading the nation as evangelical ministers, though there are a select few who chose

to preach to both men and women. By focusing on their individual experiences with God, they are able to reach deeper in to the souls of the people who hear them teach. Also, by working under the authority of the church, instead of leading the church, many women are able to gain a new respect by those opposed to the title of “women preacher.”

Women like Florence Littauer, and Carol Kent work to teach others how to properly present themselves to the world. Littauer, for example, decided to invest herself in helping others gain understanding of their unique personality gifts (Hosier 43). Littauer works as a full time speaker and writer that works to encourage, educate and enable women to have strong communication skills. Through her conferences and seminars she works to teach a new generation of women to spread the Biblical message of Christ. Kent, author and speaker, teaches others how to speak up with confidence and how to become a women of influence (Kent).

Women like these inspire others to represent God publicly.

Emilie Barnes attended Littauer’s seminars. Barnes, author of twenty-two books, is now a speaker and writer who leads women to have a balanced life (Hosier 20). Pam Farrel, another participant in Littauer seminars, is a radio talk show host, writer, and speaker who provides Biblical leadership training for women. Farrel also works alongside her husband to educate couples on God’s design for marriage (Farrel and Farrel). Together, Farrel and her husband created an organization, Masterful Living, which provides practical insights for personal relationships.

Others promote God’s message by explaining how God got them through adverse circumstances. Corrie ten Boom, for instance, is known for being the personification of what one envisions a godly person to be (Hosier 72). Boom’s charismatic approach to life inspired a

movie, *The Hiding Place*, because she survived the terrors of German concentration camps with grace and dignity. Her ministry began in those prisons. She recalls:

Always in my travels, even now that I am in my ninth decade of life, I have carried in my hand and in my heart the Bible – the very Word of Life which is almost bursting with Good News. And there has been plenty for everyone...Plenty for the dying ones in the concentration camps, plenty for the thousands gathered in universities, in town halls, and in churches all over the world... (Hosier 77).

Elisabeth Elliot, missionary, speaker and author, also inspired a movie, *End of the Spear*. Elliot teaches on a multitude of topics, but she seeks to promote the idea that all things fit into a pattern for good (Hosier 162).

Other women take their unique gifts and plights and turn them into platforms for God. Fanny Crosby, 1820-1915, ministered through music. Crosby wrote over 6,000 hymns about God, such as: “Blessed Assurance,” “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” and “To God be the Glory” (Hosier 113). Crosby’s hymns have been sung around the world and continue to be used in churches today. Joni Eareckson Tada discovered she could speak and serve for God even though she suffers permanent paralysis of her hands and legs. Tada established a Christian outreach into the disability community and as a result has been recognized by Christians and non-Christians for her efforts in advocating for the disabled communities around the world. Jennifer Rothschild, author, speaker and singer, advocates for God despite her blindness. Rothschild writes in her book [Lessons I Learned in the Dark](#):

We learn many of life’s lessons when times are good and circumstances easy. Others, we learn only in seasons of hardship, loss, and great darkness. Although suffering can be the

harshest of headmasters, its curriculum may open the door to freedom beyond our loftiest expectations (15).

In another book, Self Talk, Soul Talk, she states that “healthy hearts are centered on others, not on self” (166). Chonda Pierce is an example of someone who overcame mental duress. Pierce, a comedienne and author, relays how God was sovereign through her journey dealing with depression (Pierce 2).

Kay Arthur, Nancy Leigh Demoss, Pricilla Shirer, and Angela Thomas promote the necessity of a deep connection with Scripture. Arthur and her husband, Jack, are the founders of Precept Ministries International, which seeks to equip people with the tools they need to study their Bible (Arthur 1). Demoss promotes the Biblical role of women and how to overcome the lies that women often believe (Demoss 3). Shirer captures the essence of this group in her book A Jewel in His Crown:

I think that as women of the [God], we should glory in our existence as the fairer sex. It is so unfortunate that in this day and age our world is full of women who refuse to enjoy who and what they are. We are in such a hurry to work like men, act like men, take positions that are Biblically given only to men, and be able to declare ourselves equal with men that we have missed the beauty of being an especially fashioned creature of the most high King (43).

Thomas helps women to discover their identity and the love God has for them (Thomas 2). As the twenty-first century concludes, many others are sure to make their mark on Christian history. Women such as these impact the world because they have a strong commitment to their values.

The Values of Christian Women

Though the ministries of aforementioned women spanned centuries, they adhered to a particular set of Biblical principles. The women overviewed here are a minimal representation of the multitude that have taken up the cause of Christ as they sought to become servants in God's kingdom. The lives and personalities of these women varied greatly but their motivation was the same. They all sought to become women who glorify God.

Each of the women identified in this paper exude characteristics that enable future generations to serve God competently. Women leaders of the Bible show that women are meant to complement the work of men (Gen. 2:18). Women such as Anna and Deborah prove that some women are called by God to spread His message. Women of the Bible were orators, poets, warriors, missionaries, teachers, and deaconesses. Some were put in charge of kingdoms. The leadership of these ladies was great and they do submitted to the authorities in their life. The women in later centuries have continued the legacy of these women as they display perseverance and embrace the callings God placed upon them.

The commonality of these women can be summed up in one word, faith. Their faith drives them to glorify God. All Christians are given the charge to spread the good news of Christ. Each woman has a unique testimony. And, each must be read through the grid of salvation history replete with testimonies that define Christianity. Faith is identified as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). This concept of faith is set between God and each individual who has dared to trust God despite what may be touched, seen, heard, or tasted.

Sincere Christian women leaders are simply seeking to become disciples of Christ. Dallas Willard, in the Divine Conspiracy, says, "A disciple, or apprentice, is simply someone

who has decided to be with another person, under appropriate conditions, in order to be capable of doing what that person does or to become what that person is.” This type of woman is seeking the heart of God to enjoy the joy of His presence. These women are passionate and seek others who are like-minded. They take risks and are clear about their purpose. They develop a plan and motivate others. Most importantly, despite everything, they persevere. Perseverance and dedication allow such leaders to stand out among their peers.

To conclude, Christian women of the past and present are driven by their faith. That faith allows them to find their direction in life. Valuing faith allows them to adhere to the Scriptures, such as Proverbs 3:5, which states, “Trust in the LORD with all you heart and lean no on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Understanding this brief background into women of faith, should establish how current Christian leaders, such as Beth Moore, justify the nature of their presuppositions, values, and beliefs.

An Exploration of Fantasy Theme Analysis

Ernest G. Bormann used to be a professor in the Department of Speech Communication at the University of Minnesota. Bormann’s work on Fantasy Theme Analysis and Symbolic Convergence Theory was inspired by a gathering of scholars from within history, philosophy, English, and speech communication who sought to bring an interdisciplinary approach to the scholarly study of the impact of religion on the culture of the United States (Bormann, *The Force* Preface). His natural interest in small group communication led him to discover a key dynamic in the development of group subcultures. The result was a discovery of a “unifying structure in the move from sacred to secular reform speaking from the beginnings of the antislavery movement to the time of the Civil War” (Bormann, *The Force* Preface).

The development of Fantasy Theme Analysis was conceived during a seminar in 1959 that Bormann and a few of his colleagues attended. Their findings were first published by Bormann in 1969 in the book Discussion and Group Methods: Theory and Practice. In 1972, Bormann provides justification to his research in an article in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, entitled “Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Reality.” In 1985, Bormann brought together 25 years of research when he published his book, The Force of Fantasy, Restoring the American Dream. In this book he set out to show rhetoricians how they could use Fantasy Theme Analysis as a rhetorical tool. The product gave rhetoricians a way to look into the social reality of groups, especially religious ones.

Fantasy Theme Analysis

To understand the concept of Fantasy Theme Analysis, one must understand the process in which it was created. Basic understanding of the building blocks will aid in application of the theory. Once the concept has been categorized, it can be used as a rhetorical tool. Fantasy Theme Analysis has evolved over time and the transitions will be noted in the pages that follow. Bormann provides this brief explanation of Fantasy Theme Analysis on his webpage (<http://www.vayne.com/bormann.us>):

It takes the shared fantasies of a group of people, perhaps the audience for a business presentation or a public speech, and examines them for inside jokes and other cues to a shared consciousness. The criticism can then describe and evaluate the consciousness of the group to determine its heroes and villains, its hopes and fears, how the group members deal with things such as violence or acts of kindness, and such other events within and outside the community.

He develops this concept further in his other works: “Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Reality” (1972); “The Symbolic Convergence Theory of Communication” (1982) and The Force of Fantasy: Restoring the American Dream (1985).

In the article “Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Reality” introduced the scholarly community to the first complete view of Bormann’s new analytical tool. As he built on the work of Robert Bales, he classified the composite dramas that caught up large groups in symbolic reality as “rhetorical visions” (398). He explained that a *rhetorical vision* is:

Constructed from fantasy themes that chain out in face-to-face interacting groups, in speaker-audience transactions, in viewers of television broadcasts, in listeners to radio programs, and in all the diverse settings from public and intimate communication in a given society (398).

Bormann explains that once such a vision emerges typical plot lines can be alluded to in all communication contexts and spark a response reminiscent of the original emotion chaining, known as the *dramatis personae* (398). At such point, the same dramas can be developed and replayed when an occasion demands that an emotional response be generated (398).

How does all this happen? Subsystems are developed. The process can be explained in a few easy steps:

- Small groups of people with similar individual psychodynamics meet to discuss a common preoccupation or problem.
- A member dramatizes a theme that catches the group and causes it to chain out because it hits a common psychodynamic chord or a hidden agenda item or their common difficulties vis-à-vis the natural environment, the social-political systems, or the economic structures.
- The group grows excited, involved, more dramas chain out to create a common symbolic reality filled with heroes and villains.

- If the group's fantasy themes contain motives to "go public" and gain converts to their position they often begin artistically to create messages for the mass media for public speeches and so forth.
- When they need to develop a message for a specific context they often find themselves shaping the drama that excited them in their original discussions into a suitable form for a different public.
- Some of the dramas of their public rhetoric now catch members of the audience in the situation, which Bales called, "individual responses to works or art, when one is 'transported' to a world which seems somehow even more real than the everyday world."
- Those so transported take up the dramas in small groups of acquaintances, and some of these derivative dramas again chain out as fantasy themes in the new groups; thus the rhetorical vision is propagated to a larger public until a rhetorical movement emerges. (399)

According to Bormann, at the end of this process a viable rhetorical vision will develop in most instances. The possible side effect of this process is that people could get too carried away with sustaining their experiences and vision leading to the development of paranoia within a group (400).

As of 1985, this tool has become refined and offers the scholarly community a better list of terms and definitions. In regards to rhetoric, Fantasy Theme Analysis allows a scholar to move from the sacred to the secular. Bormann states clearly his purpose for Fantasy Theme Analysis in his book, The Force of Fantasy: Restoring the American Dream:

To illuminate how individuals talk with one another about their here-and-now concerns until they come to share a common consciousness and create a sense of identity and community, how they then use communication to raise the consciousness of inquirers until the latter convert to new consciousness, and how they use communication to sustain the converted and keep them committed to the established vision (3).

In layman's terms, he has discovered a way to analyze belief systems and why people dedicate themselves to that system. The tool enables rhetoricians to understand how people came to

believe what they do. Last, Fantasy Theme Analysis helps rhetoricians to discover how and why people remain dedicated to a system and how they convince others to convert to using their belief system.

Bormann seeks to combine a humanistic and social scientific perspective to reinterpret the historical record in terms of communication. At this point Bormann's desired result is for fantasy theme analysis to allow people to have a way to properly discuss "their problems, concerns, delights, hopes, fears, and dreams as they go about their daily business, their worship and social affairs" (3). He concludes:

Fantasy theme analysis views the entire process of communication, practice, criticism, and special theory as the object of analysis. To explain my scholarly viewpoint, then, it is necessary first to delineate the major features of the symbolic convergence theory of communication, which forms an important part of my perspective (4).

By connecting the analysis with a theory, he enables scholars to have a more complete perspective when studying communication events.

Symbolic Convergence Theory

Bormann describes the Symbolic Conversion Theory (SCT) as "one of the few theories dealing with the rhetoric of human symbolic interaction, fantasizing, creating agreements and understanding disagreements." His Internet "home page" explains that the theory is a general theory and exists among the theories in the natural sciences. As such, he concludes that general theories work "in all cultures at all times." The SCT was discovered during work with small group meetings. Bormann discerned that one member of a group could spark a reaction, via a

comment, that set a group ablaze with communication. This instance is now known as the “sharing of group fantasy.”

In the article in 1972 only a few terms exist as part of the analysis: rhetorical vision, *dramatis personae*, and rhetorical movement. In the book, The Force of Fantasy, the following terms are developed to explain the tool “Symbolic Convergence Theory”: dramatizing message; fantasy; fantasy theme; symbolic cue; code terms; fantasy types; archetypal fantasy; and master analogy. The definition of rhetorical vision holds particular relevance to this paper. Bormann defines it as thus:

A unified putting together of the various scripts, which gives participants a broader view of things. The appearance of fantasy themes in a body of discourse is an indication of the emergence of it. It is clearly formulated and well understood by both speaker and audience. When a number of people come to share a group of fantasy themes they can integrate them into a clear rhetorical vision (Bormann, *The Force* 8).

The scholar’s goal is to find evidence for each of these terms. As they do, they will enable themselves to collect evidence that symbolic convergence is taking place and that groups have a shared fantasy. Finding each of these parts will lead to greater understanding of the SCT, which is the power chip behind the Fantasy Theme Analysis.

Rhetorical Communities form as the rhetorical vision emerges and takes hold of participants and their lives (Bormann, *The Force* 8). It is possible for individuals to share several rhetorical visions depending upon their social realities: hobbies, politics, intimate relationships, etcetera (Bormann, *The Force* 8). In the event that the vision is all encompassing, the vision is known as a *life-style rhetorical vision*. These visions are so impelling that they permeate an individual’s social reality and in all aspects of living.

The last piece of the puzzle revolves around the role of heroes and villains within these groups. The heroes and villains are the characters of focus in a group. They are viewed as the favorable and unfavorable people whom the group looks up to or down upon (Bormann, The Force 9). Bormann in his article, “Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality”, explains:

The dramatizations which catch on and chain out in small groups are worked into public speeches and into the mass media and, in turn, spread out across larger publics, serve to sustain the members’ sense of community, to impel them to action...and to provide them with a social reality filled with heroes, villains, emotions, and attitudes (11).

By gaining insight to these characters, the critic may be able to determine more of the underlying cues and themes that exist in a group. The illusive situation with these characters is that they may be either fictional or real.

The heroes and villains are the characters that develop the group stories. Certain characters are shown in a favorable light (heroes) while others are shown in a negative one. Bormann notes that these characters can also be noted as protagonists and antagonists (Bormann, The Force 10). Because these rhetorical communities are created in organized, creative, and artistic ways, the roles of the heroes and villains is necessary for development of the group story. After all, all good stories have a hero and a villain.

The resulting definition for Symbolic Convergence Theory that emerged from this work appears on Bormann’s website:

The Symbolic Convergence Theory explains the creation of a community consciousness in the past and anticipates them in the future when fantasy sharing occurs. How a particular group approaches and shares a particular story or event will be replicated when

a similar story comes into the group consciousness at a later date. The Theory accounts for the building of cultures in organizations, tribes, families, communities, geographical areas, and so on, both in the past and in the present.

The behind-the-scenes dynamic of this theory is the sharing of group fantasies that displays symbolic convergence among participants.

Bormann delineates that “the power of symbolic convergence theory stems from the human tendency to try and understand events in terms of people with certain personality traits and motivations, people who make decisions, take action, and cause things to happen” (Bormann, *The Force* 9). By becoming adept at seeking the answers to these questions one can then learn to discern what Bormann means by seeing a fantasy theme “chain out.” Recognizing how a group member responds to a dramatic statement determines whether or not it becomes a fantasy theme within the group (William 12).

After understanding the parts of symbolic theory, one can then move on to understanding how the rhetorical vision develops within groups. However, in 1996 in an article, “An Expansion of the Rhetorical Vision Component of the Symbolic Convergence Theory: The Cold War Paradigm Case,” located in Communication Monographs, Bormann and Cragan give a detailed explanation of these phases and add in principles that associate with each phase. By understanding these stages individually one is able to then make sense of something that in the past was confusing. The phases include: consciousness-creating; consciousness-raising; consciousness-sustaining; vision-declining; and, vision-implosion (Bormann, Cragan and Shields, *An Expansion*). The ability to recognize these stages is beneficial for both the rhetorician maintaining a vision, as well as for the rhetorician studying the vision.

The issue of whether or not a vision is flexible or inflexible is pertinent to this discussion on phases. Bormann and Cragan recognize that a *flexible rhetorical vision* is sensitive to the breaking news and the changing experience of the participants in the vision (13). Those with flexible visions are willing to adapt to incorporate new characters, plot lines, scenes and sanctioning agents. However, those with *inflexible rhetorical visions* remain impervious to argument and consciousness creating efforts to change their nature (13). Inflexible visions can be disastrous because they often seek one of three overriding goals: restoration, conservation, or preservation. These goals could be positive, but they tend to fall out of step with experience and are in danger of becoming too conservative or reactionary. If people are too unwilling to adapt they can lead their groups to paranoia and unnecessary zealot mentalities.

Obviously, the presupposition behind this article is to expand the use of the rhetorical vision component of the SCT. Bormann and Cragan seek to “Use the Cold War rhetorical vision as an illustration of the emerging theory of group consciousness that is part of the SCT” (1). They believe that the Cold War rhetorical vision “exhibited large scope, international importance, and considerable duration” (1). Bormann and Cragan conclude by suggesting that through their analysis they have found 12 operative rhetorical principles.

There are some things that should be considered in what seems to be the “fine print” section of this theory and analysis. Going back to the 1972 article by Bormann, a rhetor is granted various granules of food for thought. Though this theory is comprehensive to an extent, Bormann points out that our nature does intrude upon our fantasies (Bormann, *Fantasy and Rhetorical* 405). He explains that factual descriptions of common-sense perceptions of the world frame the manifest content of the rhetorical discourse that emerges. In regards to “meanings are in people not messages” he offers:

The conventional movement that “meanings are in messages” is much too simple for the critic who wishes to study the rhetorical vision of a movement, an organization, or a community. In a very important way meanings are in messages. When members of a group chain out a fantasy they emerge from the meeting with new meanings that may not have existed before. How else can we account for the novelty and innovation? The new meanings are embedded in the messages created during the meeting. The members have appropriated them by sharing in their creation through public dramatization. The emotions associated with meaning are, also, partly in the message as well as in the people participating in the fantasy chain (Bormann, *Fantasy and Rhetorical* 406).

He explains that the rhetorical vision provides its participants with an emotion evocation.

Bormann’s best advice in regards to using fantasy theme analysis is also found in this article:

The rhetorical vision of a group of people contains their drives to action. People who generate, legitimize and participate in a public fantasy are, in Bales’ words, “powerful impelled to action” by that process. Motives do not exist to be expressed but rather arise in the expression itself and come to be embedded in the drama of fantasy themes that generated and serve to sustain them. Motives are thus available for direct interpretation by a community of scholars engaged in rhetorical criticism (Bormann, *Fantasy and Rhetorical* 406).

Bormann’s belief is that if a critic can do this, he can anticipate the behavior of converts participating in the rhetorical vision.

Criticisms do exist with regards to fantasy theme analysis. Though Bormann’s work with rhetorical visions seems to be complete, some would say that that he leaves something to be desired. In particular, the following seem to be the most outspoken against fantasy theme

analysis: Thomas B. Farrell, G.P Mohrmann, Charles E. William, and Joshua Gunn. For a detailed overview of criticisms please refer to Appendix D: Criticisms and Responses to Fantasy Theme Analysis.

In 1980 Thomas B. Farrell in his article, “Critical Models in the Analysis of Discourse,” commented that fantasy theme analysis made a “real and significant contribution to critical literature.” Farrell writes that significant benefits exist in the thought processes that group together discourse and social reality (Farrell 4). He compliments Bormann expounding on a theory that at the time was being overlooked. However, Farrell’s had a problem with the constructivist approach that fantasy theme analysis assumes. The critic’s major concerns were with the fact that the overall process and use of the theme was unclear and difficult to use.

G. P. Mohrmann may very well hold the title of “Most Outspoken” in regards to Fantasy Theme Analysis. In his article from May 1982, “An Essay on Fantasy Theme Criticism,” Mohrmann likens the analysis to that of a hobby-horse that generates a lot of interest but takes the rider, also known as the critic, absolutely nowhere (Mohrmann, An Essay 2). His distaste for Fantasy Theme Analysis is best summed up with the biting statement, “I cannot hope to understand either Fantasy Theme Analysis or the Symbolic Convergence Theory of communication until both are explicated with rigor and precision, a task yet to be accomplished” (Mohrmann, An Essay 3).

Mohrmann’s goals for the essay are to discuss: Bales’ conception of fantasy in the small group; the extension of that conception in the fantasy theme approach; Bales as a source for dramaturgic analysis; and critical applications (Mohrmann, An Essay 110). He has two reservations in regards to fantasy theme method: the theme is not a logically consistent extension

of the theoretical bases from which writers contend it derives; and, the critiques that have been published tend to be circular in their applications of dramatism (Mohrmann, *An Essay* 110).

Though his criticism spans nearly twenty-three pages, he rarely lets up on his distaste for those who use Fantasy Theme Analysis. From vocabulary to thought process, this criticism is an open and flagrant attack. He doesn't just attack Bormann in these criticisms, but all those who use the analysis. Mohrmann breaks down Symbolic Convergence Theory and Fantasy Theme Analysis piece by piece and concludes with this final criticism:

Analysis has proceeded in a manner too haphazard, and devotees must attack problems more systematically and coherently. This route taken, they may persuade that fantasy new-style is not merely a product of fantasy old-style and that, comparing favorable with alternative explanations of what occurs in the process of human communication, their approach penetrates to the quick and treats immediately of symbols and their uses in these lives we live. In short, I think we have right to expect a more methodical and more lucid elaboration of the fantasy theme approach (Mohrmann, *An Essay* 132).

The criticism was harsh, but it has provided a stepping ground for improvement of the theory to create the “proper limits” that Bormann seeks.

In May 1982, Bormann wrote a response to Mohrmann: “Colloquy I. Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: Ten Years Later.” Bormann quotes Charles Kaplan who is quoting Charles Pierce as he writes, “what else is a man to do when he has an idea...but to ride it as hard as he can, and leave it to others to hold it back to proper limits” (Bormann, *Colloquy I* 1). Bormann explains that he and his colleagues cling to the notion of Fantasy Theme Analysis because it is a worthwhile alternative to other methods of rhetorical criticisms. His belief is that others will help develop a containment field (of sorts) that will help the theory find its “proper limits.”

The article has a two-fold purpose: to update his 1972 article and to respond to the criticism. He begins by writing that Mohrmann is more interested in “destroying it completely” than discovering a way that it could be beneficial. Bormann writes:

Much of Mohrmann’s attack on Fantasy Theme Analysis is aimed at a research model that only slightly resembles it and thus misses the mark; but he does have a point when he claims that he has a “right to expect a more methodical” development of the fantasy theme approach. Investigators using Fantasy Theme Analysis may have devoted too much of their time to doing studies and not enough to indicating how their conclusions relate to one another in spelling out the theory that is emerging from their work (Bormann, Colloquy I).

At this point he makes two commitments for the article: to return to the issues raised in the 1972 article and to examine the critical argument about the nature and usefulness of the approach and the work that has been done under auspices.

Bormann replies specifically to Mohrmann as he communicates his confusion of Mohrmann’s viewpoint. He concludes by acknowledging his desire for Mohrmann to take in more of the research he and his colleagues have discovered and written about (Bormann, Colloquy I 305). The article explains why terms have changed and how research since 1972 has developed the methodology presented in fantasy theme analysis and symbolic convergence.

Mohrmann did respond to Bormann in August 1982 with another article: “II. Fantasy Theme Criticism: A Peroration.” This essay is shorter and spans a mere eight pages. Though short, Mohrmann’s directness is evident (Mohrmann, II 307). Mohrmann will likely take his distaste for Fantasy Theme Analysis to his grave. He concludes by acknowledging how pointless his criticisms seem to be against the supporters, “Whatever the eventualities, it would

be otiose of me to speculate further, profitless for me to play Hamlet on all the uses of Fantasy Theme Analysis on the stage of rhetorical criticism” (Mohrmann, II 313). It is doubtful that his criticisms will be forgotten, but unfortunately for the users of Fantasy Theme Analysis, Mohrmann is not the only contender fighting to disprove the theory.

Not long after this, Bormann published his book The Force of Fantasy. Donald C. Shields and Thomas Preston Jr. publish an article “Fantasy Theme Analysis in Competitive Rhetorical Criticism” during the same year, 1985. Both offer detailed explanations of fantasy theme (Sheilds and Preston). These new works brought about new criticisms.

Charles E. William added to the criticisms in 1987 with his article “Fantasy Theme Analysis: Theory and Practice.” William would admit in his article that both Bormann and Mohrmann have solid justifications for their points of view. In his essay he looks to discover the specific steps that should be taken when using Fantasy Theme Analysis because he believes that they are not clear (William).

William notes that though understanding that fantasy theme is formed in the same manner as public addresses, there is still a huge task that needs to be accomplished: identifying those that have been accepted by the public at large (William 13). When in a small group, he asserts that this is easily accomplished; but when it comes to public address that likeness is not so easily evaluated. Though William accepts many of Bormann’s definitions, he comes up with several questions, which lead to the gaps he sees in the theory. Building upon these questions William concludes that several gaps emerge when trying to use this tool. Later, he fills his own gaps as he admits that he assumed too much when he limited the nature of his questions to speeches (William 16). But, he sticks to his original assessment that it is still unclear as to whether or not this can be done with one speech. It is not to often critics conclude with taking

back their criticism. The next and last critic brings back the harshness seen in Mohrmann's work.

Joshua Gunn, author of "Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and Its decline in US Rhetorical Studies," brought a new face to the criticisms against Fantasy Theme Analysis and Symbolic Convergence Theory. He directs attention to flaws with Fantasy Theme Analysis. Gunn claims that scholars, who include Bormann, defend autonomous subjects and abstract populations, publics and audiences (Gunn, *Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and its Decline in U.S. Rhetorical Studis* 41). He adds to his list Mohrmann's criticisms to further emphasize his points. This response is heavy laden with accusation. All in all, Gunn is attempting to prove with this essay that three separate conceptions of the imagination exist in Bormann's work.

Gunn's theory is that there are three conceptions of the imagination: the mimetic imagination, the creative or productive imagination, and the imaginary. He believes that that the 1970's theory is limited and the defense of symbolic convergence does not just happen, it is a conscious effort (Gunn, *Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and its Decline in U.S. Rhetorical Studis* 52). Gunn concludes by explaining that what is needed is a, "theoretical reconceptualization that admits and incorporates determining social structures and psychological structures simultaneously, a theoretical perspective that fashion ideology and lesser social form as having both a mass or political and individual psychological existence (Gunn, *Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and its Decline in U.S. Rhetorical Studis* 55).

Bormann, along with John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields responded in kind with their article, "Defending Symbolic Theory form and Imaginary Gunn" later in 2003 (Bormann, Cragan and Shields, *In Defense*). They defend Symbolic Convergence Theory by explaining how Gunn's ideas simply consider critical theory developed by post-modernist writers. They

confront Gunn's accusation that Symbolic Convergence Theory is an incomplete theory of invention and his allegations that Symbolic Convergence Theory is ontologically paradigmatically inconsistent. They offer this as a rebuttal:

But the essence of Symbolic Convergence Theory's research base is in fact, a theoretical explanation of how multiple rhetoricians use their conscious imaginations to create symbolic realities. This rhetorical process only appears contradictory if one lives in a non-permeable paradigm schema. Symbolic Convergence Theory offers a rich explanation of how rhetoricians use non-rational and rational components of languages as they creatively produce their own symbolic reality (366).

They defend their theory in a nearly ten-page response with the intention of enlightening Gunn to a more informed perspective, which is that rhetorical critics are establishing a rhetorical vision. They break down each of his claims with a proper rebuttal.

They look specifically into Gunn's beliefs with the intent of discrediting his argument. Their biggest concern with Gunn's critique is that it does not evolve out of any rhetorical or social scientific research. Instead, "his ideas flow from a critical theory stance developed by other post-modernist writers" (366). They are bothered by the fact that Gunn does not refer to the main body of symbolic convergence research.

Gunn replies politely that same month in the Quarterly Journal of Speech with his article entitled "Response." He thanks them for their willingness to acknowledge differences in interpretation, but explains that he is not pleased with the accusation that he misused Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. He leaves them with a challenge to compare alternative scripts and to read more extensively about the dream work that can lead them to conclude that dreams, like that of fantasies, are "not as easy as the interpretation of Freud" (Gunn, Response 373).

In the 36 years since Fantasy Theme Analysis has been published, there have been credible criticisms and praises. Bormann and his colleagues appear to be appreciative of the questions and criticisms raised. Bormann's labors have proved to be significant. He and his colleagues are still working to establish the credibility of this rhetorical tool. Fantasy Theme Analysis does offer a way for rhetoricians to discover social reality in groups. Since Bormann's inception of this theory many years ago, much has been done with regards to proving its rhetorical significance. Bormann has given rhetorical critics a tool can be used both now and in the future.

Though some questions may still need to be addressed, Bormann states it best when he says that the theory is still being set within its proper limits. The critics of his theory offer valid assessments as to gaps within the thought process, but the willingness of all parties involved to continue to work through their disagreements with other researchers allows for some promising results in the future. A simple right or wrong plan may never develop for Fantasy Theme Analysis but it will remain in the communication field of study for a long time. Developing, Grounding, and Using symbolic Convergence Theory" written by Bormann, Cragan, and Shields offers the following reflection:

For 30 years, good fortune has enabled us to contribute to the development of Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT). SCT is a general theory of communication that helps explain broad aspects of interpersonal, small group, public, organizational, mass, and intercultural communication. SCT explains the communicative force of fantasy-sharing on human action as stemming from its ability to forge a symbolic consciousness that is constitutive of reality (Bormann, Cragan and Sheilds, Three Decades 271).

Throughout the article they discuss the heuristic value and the historical development and grounding research. They emphasize the relationship among its technical concepts. They explain the utility by describing its use in solving real-world problems and synthesize the answers to its major criticisms. Finally, they look into the future research and development.

Uses of Fantasy Theme Analysis

As a result of the inspiration provided by Bales, Bormann was able to write comprehensive definition for what he termed “Fantasy Theme Analysis.” In the years that followed the completion of this article, Bormann and colleagues studied rhetoric using these concepts to explain a rhetorical approach and apply the analysis. Other researchers also worked to use the new analytical tool. John F. Cragan worked with this new tool in 1975 in his article, “Rhetorical Strategy: A Dramatistic Interpretation and Application.” He sought to explain how the tool could be used. In 1977, Richard J. Iilka used the tool to study communism in America (Iilka). In 1978, Bormann teamed up with Jolene Koester and Janet Bennett to use the analysis to study political cartoons (Bormann, Koester and Bennett, Political Cartoons). By 1982, other researchers were seeking to use the tool to study speeches and rhetorical dramas (Koester) (Kroll) (Kume).

Fantasy theme analysis has emerged into the communication field as a rhetorical tool. The tool has since shown up in numerous books, periodicals, journals, theses, and dissertations. Bormann has been compared favorably with other theorists and has continued to further his own research. But what is even more significant is that Bormann’s work has been tested and applied by other researchers.

Researchers have referenced him in theory books, studies on groups and various rhetorical writings. The subjects fall into a variety of categories such as television, speech analysis, personal biographies, and racial differences. Researchers have used his tool to study presidents and even the World Wide Web. In a brief overview of this theory, a researcher can easily discover more than 200 uses and references to Bormann's theory.

Bormann writes in his article, "The Symbolic Convergence Theory of Communication: Applications and Implications for Teachers And Consultants," that the theory has several valuable uses:

- The SCT can be used to improve two-person, family, and small group communication (54).
- The SCT can help to determine overt meanings of messages internally within groups (55).
- The SCT provides a perspective for the analysis of communication difficulties between or among groups and communities (55).
- Consultants conducting an audit of an organization can use the SCT profitably to study the formal and informal small group cultures and rhetorical visions of various rhetorical communities with the organization, and to find the extent to which member share a common organizational saga (56).

His overall point is that symbolic convergence theory can be successfully applied to a wide variety of settings and of practical use to culture and consciousness building (60). He believes that it will be useful to counselors and consultants in small group and organizational communication, as well as those who seek resolution in family problems (60).

John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields give a better overview of the breadth of use in 1999 in their article, "Translating Scholarship Into Practice: Communication Studies Reflecting the Value of Theory-Based Research to Everyday Life." They demonstrate that the theory is active in many areas of communication field: interpersonal communication, public

communication, organizational communication and intercultural communication. They believe that “SCT helps capture the symbolic realities of large groups of people” and that scholars who have used the theory have “translated their scholarship to recruit personnel, segment markets, and lessen the problems of relationship and cultural misunderstanding.”

Cragan and Shields note that various scholars have captured the *dramatis personae* of women in mediated portrayals of interpersonal relationships with men and the meaning of the findings has a role in advancing our understanding of everyday practices. The visions we hold have an impact on how we define ideal relationships (Cragan and Shields 101). To clarify their point and to exhibit further the uses of SCT, they note a multitude of examples in various categories: interpersonal communication, public communication, organizational communication and in intercultural contexts.

Specifically, Fantasy Theme Analysis has been used in a number of individual rhetorical vision studies. R.C. Aden used the Fantasy Theme Analysis to ascertain the rhetorical vision of Ronald Regan in his 1984 presidential campaign (Aden). Cecil Kramer looked for a rhetorical vision to emerge in three of Jack Van Impe’s sermons (Kramer). Andrew A. King sought the vision of Booker T. Washington (King). And, Charles J. O’Fahey discovered the rhetorical vision of John Ireland in his St. Patrick’s Day orations (O’Fahey).

Others have used the analysis to find rhetorical visions in a myriad of other areas. Marsha Vanderford Doyle used the analysis to look into the rhetoric of romance (Doyle). Margaret Duffy used the analysis to analyze riverboat gambling in Iowa (Duffy). Thomas G. Endres sought to discover the rhetorical visions of unmarried mothers (Endres). And, Leigh Arden Ford scrutinized the book from alcoholics anonymous (Ford).

A multitude of graduate students have sought to discover rhetorical visions. Faith Mullen did a Fantasy Theme Analysis of the white supremacy rhetoric of Robert E. Miles (Mullen). Linda Flor Callahan examined the political rhetoric of Jesse Jackson (Callahan). Mary Endorf found rhetorical visions among elementary school principles (Endorf). Rhetorician Sonja Kay Foss also used Fantasy Theme Analysis during her graduate work to analyze the rhetoric in the equal rights movement (Foss). One last example out of the multitude is Keith D. Semmel who sought to find the rhetorical vision of the Beetles in 1962-1970 (Semmel).

To conclude, Fantasy Theme Analysis has been used in hundreds of applications since it's inception. The validity of the tool grows stronger with each passing year. The tool seems to adjust to each individual researcher as it provides a streamline methodology to approaching an array of topics. Bormann has provided graduate students and rhetoricians a tool that has withstood three decades of criticisms. The value in the tool is the amount of insight that is gained from analyzing unknown people and people groups.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The message of *Breaking Free* has been expressed in a variety of ways for more than a decade to groups around the world via conferences and Bible Studies. The message is delivered in a ten-week Bible study that includes a workbook and video messages. The video messages can be obtained on VHS, DVD, or downloadable files from internet locations. The message is also available in book form, Breaking Free, which was first published in 2000 and re-released in 2007.

Moore and LifeWay are working to make the message relevant to the current generation. As such, they re-taped all of the video messages in November 2008. She and her production team are seeking to keep the message fresh as they update the look of the clothes, backdrops, supplemental materials and the accompanying visual aids. The study was released in Fall 2009. Therefore, this analysis is pertinent because the message needs to be understood in its original context. Establishing its roots will enable future research to ascertain whether or not she has remained true to her initial rhetorical vision. In January 2008, as this project began, she said to her Houston Bible study class, "If I can say one thing ten years later, it is that I am still free." That statement seems to suggest that her vision is still true ten years after the fact. But what is that vision?

Application of the Rhetorical Tool

The goal is to use Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis to find answers to the three research questions set forth at the beginning of this paper: What fantasy themes can be identified in her message? Is there a rhetorical vision created by these fantasies? Is that vision consistent with an evangelical Christian doctrine?

The first step in applying Fantasy Theme Analysis is to identify what themes emerge from the messages that are going to be studied. Despite the book's complete picture of the message, it was decided that analyzing the spoken messages would lend better insight to Moore's actual feelings, which would lead to a more complete rhetorical vision. When people deliver spoken messages they convey an entire communicative package: facial expression, tone of voice, emphasis, body language, etc. As such, this author believes Moore's spoken message will provide insight to Moore's rhetorical vision in its raw form. Moore is also speaking to actual women as she delivers this message, which adds an extra dynamic to Moore's delivery. Six of the eleven videos were chosen for analysis. The messages are: "Goals of Breaking Free," "Untying the Cords of the Yoke," "Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins," "Beauty from Ashes," "The Steadfast Mind" and "The Display of His Splendor." The first message, "Goals of Breaking Free" provides an introduction to what the study is going to be about, which seems pertinent to goals of this paper. The other messages are from weeks one, four, six, nine and ten. The hope is that by analyzing the beginning, the middle and the end a rhetorical vision will emerge. As appropriate, the workbook that accompanies these messages will be used to develop the themes in the messages.

The second step will be to identify whether or not a rhetorical vision is discernable from the fantasy themes. Bormann suggests that a rhetorical vision can develop in a variety of diverse

settings from public to intimate settings (Bormann, *Fantasy and Rhetorical* 398). The chosen messages provide a good setting for analysis because it is an intimate communication setting in which Moore is delivering a personal message intended to affect an audience. The themes that emerge should tie together to create a rhetorical vision. Four concepts will be crucial to consider during this part of the analysis: discovering the personal vision that is intended to affect the audience; discovering the nature of the typical woman who gets caught up in this message; the driving force of the vision; and, discovering what sustains the vision.

If a rhetorical vision does emerge, the third and final step will be to determine whether or not that vision is consistent with evangelical Christian doctrine. Understanding the cohesiveness of her vision to this doctrine will allow for people to determine whether or not Moore's message is relevant to their life. The Baptist Faith and Message is a typical representation of an evangelical Christian doctrine. Moore has strong ties to this Southern Baptist Doctrine via her church and association with LifeWay; therefore it is included in Appendix E as an example of a doctrine that would be useful in this comparison. Specifically, doctrines like the Baptist Faith and Message create a basis for determining whether or not her vision is consistent with evangelical Christian doctrine. Based on doctrines like these is safe to assume that a person abiding by this doctrine would: believe the Scriptures are the Word of God; believe that Jesus is savior; believe that the Bible represents absolute truth; and that the Bible is a resource for understanding how to live life according to God's will. Comparing her vision to these foundational ideals should reveal whether or her vision is cohesive with Biblical standards promoted by evangelical Christians.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

The entire message of *Breaking Free* is derived from Moore's understanding of God and how He worked in her life. Moore utilizes her experiences and knowledge to cultivate understanding in those who partake of this message. She wants women to recognize that, "liberty in Christ can be a reality in life." Three foundational beliefs lay the groundwork to this message: Christ delivers captives no matter what kind of yoke binds them; Christ binds the broken heart no matter what condition it is in; and, Christ opens the eyes of the blind no matter what veils their vision.

The memories of her painful past are the catalyst for the message *Breaking Free*. Moore uses this past in a constructive way. This statement is evidenced by the fact that she advocates women overcoming past struggles and pursuing a life of peace and purpose. Though it is apparent that she recognizes the importance of grieving losses, throwing spiritual fits and working toward building a stronger faith, it is obvious that her main goal is to let the Scriptures govern her life. Her intrinsic motivation comes from Scripture, such as, Psalm 126:5-6: "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with Him." Her commitment to applying Biblical doctrines and messages will come to light as this chapter is developed.

This chapter is broken into five parts: message analysis; fantasy themes and social realities; heroes and villains; rhetorical vision; and, vision analysis. The progression of the chapter will establish context by first giving a brief introduction to each of the messages. Each question laid the groundwork for seven fantasy themes to emerge. The intricacies of each are woven together to reveal an in-depth rhetorical vision that has a clear driving action that is sustainable through time. Finally, the vision is analyzed to see if it is consistent with evangelical Christian doctrine.

The Messages

Goals of Breaking Free

Video number one, “Goals of Breaking Free,” begins with a decree much like those given on battlefields of histories past:

This is where we begin. The challenge before us is not unique. From creation’s first generations man has kicked against the confines of God’s will forfeiting his freedom and struggling his way back to his own deliverer. The challenge may not be unique, but every person who attempts the challenge is. No other life can show forth the glory of God like the liberated life in Christ. For the next ten weeks we will follow a path in God’s Word to a place we’ll call Breaking Free: a place where liberty in Christ can become a reality in life. Anyone can join me on this journey: whether you have battled life long hindrances to abundant life or simply desire to reach a new level of liberty in Christ. I’ve walked this road before and I’ve found a freedom like I’ve never experienced. More than that, I’ve found Christ like never before. Now, I’ve returned for you. Come and go with me to the place of Breaking Free.

Moore defines the goals of the ten-week journey ahead by metaphorically creating a mental freedom trail that each participant will walk down. Moore establishes herself as an experienced guide as she states, “Some things you can’t teach without living yourself.” Moore wants the audience to know that she has “lived this one” and as a result they should understand that the message she will share is real and personal.

Moore draws the women together by saying, “The challenge before us is not unique,” and makes the journey personal for each woman by adding, “but every person who accepts the challenge is.” As Moore continues, she establishes another metaphor to represent the journey ahead, a mental picture of bondage and living in chains. The bondage she speaks of is caused by mental duress that yields a person who is a “prisoner unaware.” Moore uses this concept to draw in members of the audience who believe her message does not apply to them. Moore clarifies that she did not know she was in mental bondage until God took her through the process of “making her free.” Moore puts in plain words that the process allowed her mental veil to be removed resulting in “a captive set free.”

Untying the Cords of the Yoke

The next presentation, “Untying the Cords of the Yoke,” is delivered to the audience with the expectation that the audience has spent a week studying the kings of Judah. Ultimately, the goal of the message is to have individuals realize that Christ came to set them free no matter what sort of yoke binds them. The focal passages for this presentation are found in Isaiah and Hebrews, with the majority of the time spent comparing Isaiah 61 and 53. There are two apparent goals of this message: to establish the role of Christ in the individuals life and to understand that grace and beauty is exhibited by anyone willing to allow their hearts to be

softened by the work of Christ. Ideally at this juncture, the participant of this study is starting to understand how their life parallels to the Israelites, why they are in bondage, and how Christ is the hero who will set them free.

The message suggests that participants have learned in their week of homework why Judah was in captivity under the rule of four kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Also, the week of homework was supposed to have given the participant an introduction to who Christ is and why He is the ultimate king. Based on that understanding, the participant is ready to receive Moore's message that explains the eight aspects of who Christ is: (1) Christ was like a root out of dry ground so that women can be a planting of the Lord; (2) Christ's beauty was veiled so that women's can be revealed; (3) Christ was despised and rejected so that women can be favored and accepted; (4) Christ became a man of sorrows so that women can become people of gladness; (5) Christ was oppressed and imprisoned so that women can be released from prison; (6) Christ was cursed by our iniquities so that women can become His righteousness; (7) Christ suffered so that God could be satisfied and women can be saved; and (8) Christ remained silent so that women can proclaim His great salvation.

Eventually, the hearer is to realize that Christ's life enables them to live a life that accomplishes the will of God. Moore explains that each individual can take root and prosper from anywhere. The participant's responsibility is to develop and pray for a thirst for the Lord and "to take God at His Word." She proclaims that as a woman allows God's wisdom into her life she will become beautiful from the inside out, which will result in an actual enhancement of her physical beauty. Moore encourages listeners to understand that God's liberation is available to them if they will cooperate in the process.

Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins

Session four, “Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins,” ventures into the past with the intention of gaining understanding about generational strongholds that lead to prejudice in the participants present life. Moore proclaims that prejudices in our lives stem from fear and ignorance. In order for a woman to feel good about herself and have a strong self-esteem she must know more about her own identity. The message is compiled from several focal passages: Exodus 20, Isaiah 61, Genesis 11, Matthew 12-13 and John 13. The message leads women to overcome the negative associations with their past identities and find their new and highly esteemed identities in Christ.

Moore empowers the audience by having them recognize that generational prejudices are a stronghold in their lives because they are too rarely acknowledged and too widely accepted. Moore sanctions a war to move past “the way we were raised” and to a place where acknowledgement and acceptance make us part of the solution and not part of the problem. Moore explicates: “Though prejudice may be natural, like other practices of our flesh nature, it is sin. We have been given a super-nature in which prejudice has no place.”

The women are expected to have a general understanding about their previous prejudice as a result of the homework they did before attending Moore’s lecture. The women were to have looked into the “ruins” of their lives to ascertain knowledge about how God wants to transform the broken and mangled into beautiful monuments for His glory. Women are expected to know about the areas of devastation or defeat that have been apparent in their family lines for generations. They are also expected to have a general understanding of how that affects their life and God’s intention to establish them as godly leaders capable of improving life for future generations.

In order to become women with high self-esteems and concrete identities women must realize five things about prejudice: the obstacle in overcoming prejudice is fault (prejudice may not have originated in our hands, but the problem is in our laps); the origin of prejudice (Genesis 11:1-9); the oppression of prejudice (attitude eventually become actions); the opportunist in prejudice (the enemy will use it to divide the kingdom and thwart obvious authenticity); and the offer to overcome prejudice (minds must totally be renewed). The call is for the woman to ask God to change their hearts and renew their minds. To fulfill this daily a woman should accept opportunities to study, worship, and fellowship with other believers.

Ultimately, the goal is to realize the oppression of the past and to understand that God's ways are to become the ways of life. Women are to move past their own innate selfishness and adopt God's opinions. Moore addresses the audience's here-and-now concerns with a continuous flow of challenges they are to overcome. Moore's conjectures establish that just because women are affected by "generational sins" does not mean they have to live a life tainted by them. Moore enables the hearer with scriptures like Ezekiel 18, which explains that God does not punish innocent people. The idea is that women are to change now for their families. Women are to stop prejudice and heinous sin, submit to God, and rebuild their lives according to God's original plan for humanity.

Beauty from the Ashes

Session six, "Beauty from Ashes," provides justification to the dismal aspects of a woman's life. The metaphor for this subject matter is encapsulated by the notion that fine metals often go through a refining fire. Women are like precious metals to God that often need to be refined to become all that they can be. Therefore, the difficult situations a woman encounters are

like fires that God allows or appoints to help bring “beauty from the ashes.” Moore uses the books of Isaiah, Job, 1 Peter, Jeremiah, and 2 Corinthians to fully develop this premise.

The essence of this message is to realize that not every bad situation a woman encounters is the result of some deep seeded unidentified sin. Sometimes bad situations are brought about because of other people’s choices. At other times “the enemy” is doing his destructive work. According to Moore and the Biblical passages, refinement cannot be avoided. These “fiery trials”, as depicted in 1 Peter 1:6, manifest in our lives as trials, temptations, or tests. Scriptures from 2 Corinthians suggest that whatever the reason, all are intended to refine God’s people into objects of beauty. The refinement process removes the “dross” from an individual’s life and is absolutely necessary to help an individual fulfill their God given callings.

At this point, the women are expected to completely relate to this concept because they have spent time exploring their dreams and childhood memories. Participants are to exhibit understanding with regards to the fact that God wants them to fulfill their dreams, give them crowns of beauty, oils of gladness, and garments of praise. Moore establishes that women are to be the bride of Christ and enter into covenant relationships with God. Women are to believe that the benefits of this relationship are internal and spiritual in nature. The result is that women are free to: believe in God, glorify God, find satisfaction in God, experience God’s peace, and enjoy God’s presence. All of this culminates in an absolute difference in a woman’s life.

The Steadfast Mind

In session nine, “The Steadfast Mind,” the hearer is educated on the importance of having a mind that knows how to discern deception. Moore tells women that it is possible for their minds to be at peace in any situation. At the onset, women are warned to be aware of the

oppressive tactics that the enemy is using all around them. Moore reminds women that they are subject to oppression by the enemy when their hearts and minds are not protected with Christ. Apparently, an invisible war is happening in the spiritual world; therefore, women need to know how to protect themselves from the consequences of this war.

As Moore works through passages from Isaiah, 2 Corinthians, and 2 Timothy, she describes what people can expect from this spiritual war and how they can overcome it. Moore directs women through 2 Timothy 3:1-5, which foretells that current times may seem difficult, but they are only going to get worse:

You should know this Timothy; in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that (New Living Translation).

This passage and the verses that follow are intended to give each woman an identity and to enable women to recognize that this invisible spiritual world exists whether they like it or not. Women are to gain motivation from these passages to understand that Scripture is inspired and usable by followers to achieve good work. The passage also provides evidence for a woman's purpose and a woman's source of faith and peace.

The Display of His Splendor

At this point in the video series, women are watching their eleventh and final video, “The Display of His Splendor.” Women have journeyed for ten weeks through tough Biblical material. Moore anticipates that women have come to realize that freedom is priceless and worth fighting for. Moore informs women that they should be distinctively different than when they began the study. The journey to freedom may be ending for the participant, but Moore addresses the here-and now concern, “What do we do now?” The lecture continues by depicting how each participant can make “liberty in Christ a reality in life.” By now, women believe that God has intended benefits for their life. They believe that no weapon wielded against them from the dark world will prevail against them. The women have learned what it takes to love God with their entire heart, soul, mind and strength. Now, it is time for the women to believe that their life is intended to be a display of God’s splendor, renowned, glory, satisfaction, peace and presence.

The first step is learning how to maintain liberty. Moore uses the apostle Paul and one more illustration about the Israelites to have women understand they can live out liberty through confession and daily repentance to God. Women are to understand the vital role of God’s truth in their life and recognize when they are slipping back into bondage. Women are to subject themselves only to God and make Him their only idol. Women are to seek to live according to Biblical standards. The ultimate goal is to enter into a binding agreement with God that states a firm commitment based on truth. At this point, the women seem to share a common consciousness as a result of the truths they have learned to discern, recognize and praise. Apparently, they have cried together, studied God’s Word together, and heard Scripture spoken to them. The ten-week journey is over and Moore has prayed that everyone has endured and fared positively.

Moore ends the lesson with a story of personal heartache. Her vulnerability exudes from her message as she reveals that women are not always able to maintain their liberty and binding agreements with God. Moore illustrates this with a rope held by two women, which represents her connection to God. Moore reveals that the connection between God and people occurs at salvation, but instances in our life can break the connection. As she cuts the rope with a large knife, she shares that at 19, not one year after her calling, she broke the binding agreement she made with God. She reveals that an earthly relationship became more important to her than God. Thankfully, after some time God set her free from that relationship and restored the agreement. Yet, after several years, she broke the agreement again and the sorrow she felt during that time made her want to die. God, in His mercy, restored her a second time. Though she hopes her covenant with God is not broken again, Moore shares the story to encourage women that they will not always be perfect, but the God who loves them and cares for them is.

Women are to bond themselves to God and Christ. They are to strive for heaven and seek to know God above all. She ends the lecture with verses from Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has appointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the broken hearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord's favor has come and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. To all who mourn in Israel He will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, and festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the Lord has planted for His glory (61:1-3).

These verses are a fitting end to this journey because they encapsulate all that Moore seeks to reveal to the participants of her study. As the women in the audience are standing to their feet she reads them a poem she wrote about her journey to freedom. Moore's final prayer is that all who hear this message will seek freedom, comfort, and guidance from the one and only God.

Fantasy Themes & Social Realities

The discovery of fantasy themes generates a response to the first research question established at the beginning of this paper: What fantasy themes can be identified in Moore's message? The six messages yielded seven fantasies. The discovered fantasies reflect the nature of why the message was written: to help women find liberty in Christ. Throughout her messages, Moore seeks to promote Biblical truth and methods for adhering to the message of God's Word. These fantasies depict the undercurrent of belief's hearers subject themselves to as they receive, accept and apply the message of *Breaking Free* to their lives. Simultaneously, the fantasies reveal the types of social realities participants are engaged in.

Various character traits emerge that will eventually merge together to show what Moore believes a typical woman to be like. Moore attempts to meet women's deep felt emotional needs associated with their hearts, souls and minds. Moore addresses women's innate need to feel beautiful physically and spiritually all while detailing how they can know and understand the unique destiny God has for their life.

Fantasy Theme 1: Women can experience mental and emotional freedom as they overcome their oppressive circumstances.

The first fantasy is by far the most extensive. The social reality of this message is first introduced in the “Goals of Breaking Free,” and can be seen throughout the six remaining messages. The message of the theme is that women are able to overcome the mental brokenness associated with disastrous emotional circumstances in their lives by tapping into the power of the Spirit of God. As a woman submits to God’s authority and relinquishes her mind to God, God renovates her mind from the inside out and dissipates the hurt, pain, and mental anguish associated with her previous emotional hurt.

Additionally, Moore requires women to be dedicated to the process. Moore asks participants to make a commitment in front of God in the first message:

I want us to pray together. We’re going to give God these next weeks and we’re going to allow Him to do a work in us, have a freedom in our lives, allow Him to look into the deepest parts of our heart and teach us how to live in victory. Would you join me please?
(Moore, Goals).

Furthermore, this message suggests that no matter what sort of horrible circumstances a woman endures in the physical realm, God can enable them to live a life free from the oppressive repercussions they feel. No one is excluded from the journey:

There is not a certain kind of person more prone to bondage than the rest. It is Satan’s job and his dark kingdom to do everything he can to set the free captive, and he’ll take anybody he can get. No respecter of person because he has no respect, so we are exiles learning how to live in liberty and we’ve been unified as one person (Moore, Splendor).

To make this a reality women are to embrace God as “The Deliverer.” As they do so, they are “set free” from mental bondage and oppressive circumstances.

Women get caught up in this message for multiple reasons. First, nearly all women can attest to having mental hang-ups. Some women are obsessed with beauty. Others are obsessed with family, career and professions. Others simply yearn to live a life without fear. Two key elements make this fantasy desirable: knowing “real truth” and “living in victory.” Moore establishes right from the beginning that each woman involved is unique and not alone in her desire to become free from her oppressive circumstances:

This time ladies you and I hit the pavement. This particular journey is going to be about us and our relationship walking on a freedom trail to the place of complete liberty in Christ (Moore, Goals).

Moore deepens the desire in a woman’s heart to overcome their oppression by stating that the truth women innately seek can be found in God. And, as they learn to memorize and incorporate God’s truth they will become empowered.

The second strong appeal is an underlying sense that victory is possible. Past failures can dissuade women from having high self-esteem, therefore the redemptive nature of victory over any circumstance appeals to women looking to have a fresh start in life. The culmination of these two elements results in a woman becoming a warrior for God that can overcome any situation that is in her path. Victory requires sacrifice. Moore tells participants that sacrifice is worth it:

Any sacrifice we make in our quest for freedom will be wholly consumed and blessed by God. You need to know that. Let that encourage you today. Ladies in order to be free, to be liberated in Christ, we’ve got some sacrifices to make (Moore, Goals).

The end goal comes to fruition as the woman gains proper perspective of who she is in Christ. The benefit is that a woman learns more about herself and her own identity, which enables her to develop a strong self-esteem.

The third reason women get caught up in the message is because Moore establishes that every woman benefits from the study. Whether or not she feels in bondage is not relevant because she establishes that it is possible to be in bondage and not realize it:

I did not know that I was in bondage until I began as a young adult to study God's truth. And when His truth began to set me free, the veil dropped from my eyes and I began to see how long I had lived in chains (Moore, Goals).

As a result, women are compelled not only to learn something new about Scripture, but also want to discover if they are in bondage.

There is a great deal of evidence to prove the existence of this message. Four particular points emerged ahead of the rest. First, Moore creates a freedom trail that weaves from the first message to the last. Second, Moore makes clear that oppression is possible in a woman's life. Third, she notes that freedom is possible. Fourth, her story of overcoming childhood victimization proves that people can overcome tragedy and move forward to positivity and freedom. The proof becomes apparent as the participant deepens their relationship with Moore via this series of messages. Look how Moore perceives this relationship:

I'm going to tell you how I feel about this. I just want people in God's Word. I, I'm not big on it being this particular teacher, that particular teacher and certainly not this particular teacher, I just want people in God's Word. But for this time, He has divinely manipulated us together for this series. The reason is there is something in your life, and

there's something in my life that He wants to give a new freedom to. There is a new liberation He wants to give every single one of us (Moore, Yoke).

Obviously, Moore believes that women can experience mental and emotional freedom as they overcome their oppressive circumstances.

Through the Biblical, historical and personal messages presented Moore teaches that a relationship with God will set them free from the bondage in their lives. Looking through the six messages, an underlying process appears to help a woman achieve the goal of mental and emotional freedom: understand the history of bondage, work to overcome bondage and, live free from oppressive circumstances. To overcome bondage a woman must: submit to God's authority; relinquish her mind to God; allow God to renovate her mind and dissipate previous hurt; and, understand that God can help her overcome anything. Moore wants to guide as many people down the freedom trail as possible:

Anyone can join me on this journey whether you've got lifelong hindrances to abundant life or simply desire to reach a new level of liberty in Christ. I've walked this road before and I've found freedom like I've never experienced. More than that, I've found Christ like never before. Now I've returned to you. Come and go with me to the place of breaking free (Moore, Goals).

Metaphorically, Moore is setting herself up to be a spiritual version of Harriet Tubman that frees slaves from the evil and bondage that suppresses them by leading them down a path that secures their freedom.

Moore also seems to realize that not all people would tend to believe that an invisible enemy could oppress them. Moore addresses this point by clarifying her personal views that state both believers and non-believers can be oppressed:

First of all, point number one is this: the people of God can be very oppressed by the enemy. The people of God can be very oppressed by the enemy. Now I don't know if the people watching us by film could hear those groans in here or not. But I'm sure that they had some groans as well. Because you know that's true and I know that's true.

Because I met the Lord's Christ when I was about this big and I can assure you that in the next 35 years of living I certainly knew what it was like to be a Christian and yet live oppressed (Moore, Goals).

By saying it twice, it reiterates her belief that a woman can be oppressed whether they choose to realize it or not. Moore adds to this later by saying:

We can be saved, the Holy Spirit can dwell in us and yet we can continually live in defeat because the enemy can out do us if we are not totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to equip us. That's what we're going to learn to do. We've got to know that we're being swarmed otherwise, unless we wise up in the Word of God and learn what our rights are and how to use the equipment God has given us (Moore, Goals).

Clearly, Moore wants women to understand the woe's of bondage and oppression in their lives.

Additionally, freedom is possible if a woman is willing to acknowledge the roots and source of freedom:

We're going to learn what it means to live in the Spirit of God because, and you'll learn this over and over again until it is engraved upon your heart, where the Spirit of the Lord is, tell me...there is freedom. Let's say that together. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (Moore, Goals).

Throughout the remaining messages the participant sees that Christ became a man of sorrows so that she could become a person of gladness. And, a woman sees that liberation is possible for

those willing to cooperate in the process. Ultimately, the resounding theme is to understand that freedom is worth fighting for.

The last evidence of this message is Moore's personal story of overcoming child abuse and negative relationships. Moore's experiences give testimony to the fact that she believes women can truly overcome their mental and emotional bondage. By sharing her story, she clearly wants participants to agree. At this point, recognizing the fantasy is not a challenge. Look at how her deep connection to this topic is displayed:

I can't tell you all the things going through my heart in this moment, as I think back on my life from the time I was a little bitty girl until now. And I think about the wonderful season of my life and I'm also mindful of many hurtful things that happened along the way and then today as we come together to study this series, I look at your faces and I imagine the faces of those who are listening and watching by film and I want you to know that you are worth it. You are worth it. Because something's you can't teach without living yourself and I want you to hear something from me today ladies, I have lived this one (Moore, Goals).

As her story develops through this series of messages, a woman discovers that she is neither helpless nor hopeless. Despite overwhelming tragedy, it is possible for a woman's mind to be protected from future hurt and healed from previous hurt (Moore, Steadfast).

For a woman to take this message to heart they have to go through the previously stated underlying process. The affect of bondage and types of bondage in a woman's life will be developed later in fantasy theme four. In this fantasy, it is important for a woman to simply understand the history of bondage, understand how they can work to overcome bondage and to see a picture of what it is like to live free from oppressive circumstances.

Moore provides both positive and negative examples of bondage. The essence of the examples throughout the six messages observed in this analysis show that those who choose to ignore God and His providence live in bondage and that those who choose His freedom live blessed and happy lives. The following examples display three key insights to understanding bondage: know where bondage comes from; learn from the Israelites example; and apply the discovered truths to modern life.

The metaphor of “chains’ represents the weight that our spiritual mental, emotional, and physical bondage has on us. They are strongholds in our life:

I’ve had people ask me from time to time, Beth what does the word stronghold mean? It means exactly what it says, pull that word apart and look at it. Anything that has a strong hold on your life besides the Lord Jesus Christ is a stronghold. Anything that is mastering you, any place where you know life tends to get out of control and it is not of God, that’s something we want to deal with (Moore, Goals).

To understand the bondage, it is apparently important to understand that women must not settle for anything less than the freedom Christ desires to give. Based on Galatians 5:1 Moore says:

It is for our freedom that Christ has set us free...He paid much to high a price for us to be held in needless chains. We honor so great a sacrifice when we take Christ at His fullest. Mediocrity is life in the shadows of a small cross. He gave His all so that we might receive His all. (Moore, Yoke).

The charge is to break the chains of bondage. Later Moore describes the desire behind Christ giving His all:

He wanted the chains to be broken. The chains will begin to break when we get down on our knees and take responsibility for [our actions]. [We ask] God to forgive us for our sins. God honors that (Moore, Ruins).

To deepen the insight, she provides an example through the Israelites.

The Israelites example develops from the book of Isaiah, which is a focal point in the majority of the six messages. Moore states clearly why the message within Isaiah is important, “this book is about captivity and about deliverance from captivity” (Moore, Goals). The Israelites are used to show the personification of the ideal. Moore wants participants to derive hope by viewing the Lord bestowing courage and confidence to His people. Moore paints a picture through Scripture that shows the Israelites moving past the oppression put upon them by their culture.

Moore modernizes the example by getting women to be aware of the oppression not only in their lives, but also in culture:

I think you’ll see through our study of the Word that warfare will grow and grow and people will become more and more oppressed by the enemy. I think you can tell that by listening to a secular radio station, many times by watching TV. There are all sorts of ways you can see people are growing more and more oppressed, even the people of God.

We’re going to learn how to deal with that so victory can become the way we live and not the great exception to our lives. (Moore, Goals)

Moore extends the fantasy as she follows the Israelites through Judges 6 and parallels their lives to the woman hearing the message. Moore develops what stronghold’s look like when women ignore them:

Now what happens is, often when we're oppressed instead of working with God cooperating with Him, and going to a place of freedom, it is our tendency to hide in shelters. Now let's think about what this could be. We're oppressed enough, we can just go into isolation. We can hide behind our desk jobs. We can hide behind all sorts of busy things at church; we can hide behind all sorts of activities, what I'll call the captivity of activity. We can do all of that. We want to go on to victory, instead of hiding in the shelters that could become strongholds on their own. Anything that treats the symptoms instead of going to source is a shelter. That's not helping us at all. We want to go to the source. Not only the source of problem in us, but the source of life and that is the Lord Jesus Christ (Moore, Goals).

According to Moore, the solution to this problem lies in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world." To move out of shelters and away from bondage and strongholds women have to find a way to renew their minds, "by the renewing of our minds, then we'll be able to test and approve what God's will is, His good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Moore, Ruins).

To realize God's will women must work to overcome bondage by submitting to God's will and recognizing that each woman's journey to freedom is unique. To get the women excited about the journey, Moore gives the participants another pep talk:

Ladies we are not saved from our sins to live the rest of our lives in defeat. What we are hoping to accomplish through the next ten weeks through the power of the Holy Spirit and the demonstration of His Spirit at work, we are hoping that we are going to see that from then on, once these truths take root in our life, we are going to find that victory will

become the rule of life and defeat is going to be the exception. We'll know what to do about defeat. We'll recognize it in its earliest stages (Moore, Goals).

The first step to overcoming bondage is that a woman has to submit to God's authority over her life. According to Moore, this step is a crucial key to freedom:

We're going to find out through our series that authority is an extremely important part of freedom. We're going to learn to walk in the confines of God's will, not so that we can be confined ladies, but so that we can be set free. That's the wonderful paradox and that's something we're going to all adopt as our mentality by the time we get to the end of this series. We want to walk in the freedom of God's will, that is where our liberty will be. So anything that is out from under the umbrella of God's authority is a place where we can easily be oppressed (Moore, Goals).

Based on Isaiah 1:8, Moore makes it clear that obedience is profitable and rebellion leads to devastation. Moore adds:

It is time for us to take our places in prayer and in Bible study, not positions of authority. I am saying that if we're in God's Word and we're seeking His face we're going to know what we're supposed to do with that and we're to do it with an attitude of submission under God (Moore, Steadfast).

As this develops throughout the six messages, it seems that a woman who successfully submits: recognizes God's authority as "the Deliverer," recognizes the authority of His Word, and submits to the authority of His Holy Spirit's direction.

Recognizing God as "the Deliverer" boosts a woman's confidence that God is fully capable of setting her free. Moore makes God the hero by saying,

He wants to do us a favor. He wants to do us a favor of setting us free. He just wants a little cooperation. He was despised and rejected so that we could be favored and accepted. Some may say, “Now, Beth what in the world is going to make this time any different? I’ve wanted to be liberated long before today, what makes you think that this time could be any different?” God is what makes this time different. When He places upon your heart that the time is now, that this is the day of your salvation, that the time is now for us to be delivered from any area of bondage that we might be free in this generation to proclaim His name (Moore, Yoke).

God is the hero; but Jesus, God’s Word, God’s Holy Spirit, and His warriors are presented as the ultimate sidekicks:

Remember, greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world. All the things the evil one can devise are destroyed when met by truth. Don’t allow him to intimidate you or overwhelm you. Christ is victor. We are simply being rained to accompany Him to victory. Through prayer and the study of God’s Word, chains are being broken and captives are being set free. Breaking free is a place where knowledge is indeed power, so hang in there mighty warrior. The liberated life is worth every drop of sweat this journey demands (Moore, Steadfast).

The unidentified antagonist here is Satan, but God’s warriors are unexpectedly the people who are living free in Christ. By adapting these truths about freedom and believing that God is alongside them on the freedom trail, a woman realizes that not only can God do anything but He also wants her to experience the full measure of an abundant life.

The next component of submitting to God’s authority is to recognize the authority of His Word. God’s Word makes it clear that freedom is possible through Christ. To attain freedom, it

is necessary to become a Christ follower. A woman must believe in fulfilled prophesy, such as, the prophesy in Isaiah 9 that foretells that Jesus is the person who will break the physical yoke of bondage people have to their sin. The reality of this prophecy coming true further empowers the modern woman because they know that when they keep their minds steadfast on God they can have peace in any situation (Moore, Steadfast).

The last piece of the puzzle is to submit to the authority of His Holy Spirit's direction. Moore uses Peter's example of denying Christ to show that when the power comes from within we are unable to have the strength we need to stay pure and strong against the enemy (Moore, Ashes). The indwelling of God's Spirit in each person is what enables her to communicate effectively with God. Without God's Spirit a woman is left without the internal guide she needs to lead her down the freedom trail that Moore is blazing down.

Each person has a unique freedom trail journey. Moore encourages each one to realize that even if they are in the worst sort of bondage, they are exactly where God wants them to be:

For every single one of us, no matter where He plants us and wherever you're planted, God planted you unless you are in a sinful situation. We may think this cannot be a place where God can work, and yet His Word says as long as you have got my Word and my Spirit, and wherever I plant you those roots can dig down and grow and I will prosper everything you do in the Spirit. Everything you do, the love of God's Word. Christ was like a root out of dry ground so that we could be a planting of the Lord (Moore, Yoke).

Once a woman is secure with where they are at in the journey. Moore reminds them that the journey is both internal and external:

In the beginning it's the externals we try to really hand over to God, the internals the heart and the mind are the last things to go, amen? We live it out in the externals.... Now what

happens is this. A crisis comes and we have a bad reaction to it. And we think to ourselves I had no idea I was even capable of acting that way any more, but what God has done is brought something to the surface that He wants to deal with, amen? Now instead of going and crawling under the nearest rock we have to bring it to Him and say, “OK, God, I had something in there I didn’t even know I had” (Moore, Ashes).

Recognizing this type of bondage and oppression is different for every woman. Each person’s struggle and biography are different.

The good news is that once a woman gets the authority situation under control, they are able to move forward to living free from their oppressive circumstances. With God’s help women are able to identify the situations in their life that are oppressing them. A woman living free should be able to realize that: God wants them to have victory; God is able to overcome anything; God truth’s are the basis of determining reality; and, God’s leadership is the only leadership that matters. What does freedom look like? Moore explains:

We cannot avoid fiery trials. We cannot. Living the most righteous life, pursuing godliness, doing everything we could possibly do, serving ourselves half to death, we still will not avoid fiery trials, we’re going to go through them because our faith is going to be tried and proved because you see it’s not just about us. It’s also about the people who are near us. Sometimes the things that we go through are not just for our sakes, they’re for our children’s to see, for our lost friends to see, for them to see a different kind of reaction to difficult times. We are going to go through fiery trials and the Word of God says why do we act surprised at times when they happen when I’ve told you that they were coming? I do not believe in a gospel that says that if you’re living right and if you have enough faith nothing bad will ever happen to you. That is heresy and so many

people have been hurt. Christ said, “I’m going to just tell you in advance in this world you will have trouble. But you can take heart, I have overcome. I can get you through it.” (Moore, Ashes).

It seems disheartening to realize that when bondage is defeated and women are living free that there are always possibilities for it to rear its ugly head again. Apparently, accepting that fact is part of being free:

Are we going to stand there and take one glance in the mirror of God’s Word and walk away and forget what we’ve heard or are we going to be set free by the perfect law of liberty? We’ve got to have a response to that. We’ve got to grow in the truth instead of just growing in head knowledge (Moore, Steadfast).

Growing in truth and developing a relationship with God seems to be the key to overcoming oppressive circumstances. To embrace it seems important to recognize that God’s leadership is the only leadership that matters.

Moore believes that if a woman wants to truly overcome and live in victory she has to make an agreement that binds her to God:

I’m going to do exactly the same thing [write a letter and make a physical reminder] as we bind ourselves in agreement with God, coming before Him with truth. In other words we’re not, we’re not making up anything. We’re not making a bunch of promises we don’t think we can keep. We’re not saying that, that anything is in us that is not. But we’re coming before Him and as purely as we know how Lord I’m laying it out here. This is where I am. But I want to tell you Lord, “I want to walk with you in liberty for the rest of my life” (Moore, Splendor).

By making this agreement with God, women are choosing to move past their bondage by turning it over to God. As a result, God redeems them and they are no longer in captivity. The agreement is about willingly giving up the things that make the individual's life miserable. What if the agreement is broken? Well, it seems there is room for that on this freedom trail. Life is life and people are not perfect. The good news is that God is always willing to forgive. God will allow a person to keep recommitting to Him.

What keeps a woman from experiencing mental and emotional freedom from their oppressive circumstances? Four things. First she likely does not know how to live free. Moore would say that this woman is living like the people in Nehemiah who were freed from Babylonian captivity, "they don't know how to live free" (Moore, Splendor). Second, she has forgotten to submit to God's authority. Moore would remind this woman, "God does not punish innocent people, but he does get upset when we deliberately disobey" (Moore, Ruins). Third, this woman has decided to submit to the enemy. If this woman was a believer, Moore would tell them to remember that even though they can't be possessed by the enemy they can definitely be oppressed by the enemy, which is not a fun world to live in (Moore, Goals). Last, the woman is likely caught up in the "captivity of activity." This woman has become distracted from her purpose in God. Instead of accomplishing their unique purpose, she is caught up in activities that do not benefit her life.

To wrap up, it is helpful to gain a better perspective on what a person who has embraced this fantasy looks like. Based on the information that emerged from this analysis, the type of person caught up in this message is a person who is open to spirituality in their life. They have openness to God working in their life, but might not be convinced that God's ways are the only ways. This woman can be in any stage of life, but she has likely been driven to the contents of

this message because of a tragedy of some sort or some deep seeded need to try and figure out if a relationship with God is possible. Others might all ready be followers of Moore and simply submit to the message because she acts as a spiritual authority figure in their life. Still others might be on a whimsical journey to discover more about God. This woman's intentions may be selfish or unselfish, but she is subjecting herself to the message because she wants to change her life for the better. Most likely, this woman has an inner struggle that even her closest friends may be unaware of, but she knows her soul is hurting and she is willing to do anything to achieve peace, including learning more about God.

At some point this woman would have to decide if they believe that they have the power to overcome their oppressive circumstances. If a woman buys into this message, she will likely try to get herself involved in some sort of social community that would reaffirm the things she is learning from this Bible teacher. If she is not involved in a church, she will join one. If she doesn't all ready own a Bible, she will likely go out and buy one. She will begin to make changes that assert that she is on board with believing the messages Moore is teaching. After all, if she is going to believe that God can truly overcome anything, this woman will do whatever it takes to help God do this in her life.

The woman changed by this message will begin to show outward signs of living differently. She likely exhibits the following traits: she openly submits to God's authority; she knows that liberty from oppression is possible; she exhibits knowledge about bondage; and, she believes God can do anything. She likely also believes in the authority of God's Word and recognizes God as her "Deliverer." She may or may not have made a commitment with God to accept Jesus as Savior. All of these traits will eventually turn into heart-felt beliefs. The goal for

this woman is to believe body and soul that God wants her to live a happy and free life no matter her circumstance.

Fantasy Theme 2: Women can be totally changed by becoming Christ followers.

The message of this theme can be seen throughout the six messages. The reality is that women who become Christ followers are transformed. Metaphorically, a woman caught up in this part of the message is like a caterpillar entering a cocoon. In this instance, the cocoon is Christ and she is entering into a relationship with Him. She is a woman working to transform herself into something better. Her motivation comes from wanting to be different. Women commit themselves to this message when they pray a prayer like Moore did at the close of her first message, “Goals of Breaking Free”:

God we want to be different. And we invite you to do a work in us, Lord, that we cannot even explain. We dedicate the next weeks of our lives entirely to you God. And we pray Father that we will not be the kind that raises up a hand to hinder or stop you, because sometimes the truth is going to hurt. Sometimes it’s going to be confrontational, but God you desire to have the fullness of our lives to surrender so that you can cause us to live in the victory that Your son died on the cross for us to have. It is for freedom that You have set us free. You do not want us to return to another yoke of bondage. Now God I lift these lives to You. We humble ourselves before You and we ask you to do a mighty work in us and through us Lord. So that we can proclaim your name for the rest of our lives. You alone are God. There is no other Savior. Thank you in advance Lord, for everything you’re going to do. We give You every bit of the glory. Let no flesh glory in Your presence. You and You alone are God. In Jesus’ name. Amen (Moore, Goals).

As a result of this deep down heart commitment, women set themselves up to be changed by becoming Christ followers.

Switching from a secular lifestyle to one where God is in control can result in an obvious change in a woman. Their personalities are altered and the focus of their life changes. Women embracing the message of this theme are able to exhibit understanding with regards to the fact that God wants them to fulfill their dreams, give them crowns of beauty, oils of gladness, and garments of praise. Moore suggests that women fully embrace being a Christ follower by becoming the bride of Christ. This marriage of souls prepares them to enter into a covenant relationship with God. The changes exuded are both internal and spiritual in nature. Women become vessels that glorify God. Women are willingly consumed with finding satisfaction in God, experiencing God's peace, and enjoying God's presence. All of this culminates in an absolute difference in a woman's life.

A majority of women seem to display a need to transform in one way or another. Women are given the opportunity to embrace a new lifestyle, which in this case is becoming a Christ follower. The interesting thing about this is the fact that the transformation is partially subconscious in the life of the woman. Moore mentions this affect:

You may not ever know, but I'm going to tell you other people will notice it in you. It won't just be an inner beauty, it will be a beauty that also comes to your face, comes to your actions, comes to the things that you say, grace of speech that comes to those who are free in Christ (Moore, Yoke).

The obvious appeal is that embracing the lifestyle will increase their quality of life. Women are able to get wrapped up in this fantasy because Moore serves as a positive mentor who can direct

them down a path that leads them to success on every level: personal, family, work, community and beyond.

The evidence for this message is two-fold. First, a genuine salvation experience changes a person. Embracing Christ as Savior and becoming his follower dictates a 180-degree turn in the other direction. Moore would say,

That was the purpose of the cross. No one came and caught Him against His will. He came here to walk the way of the cross...Christ was crushed by our iniquities so that we could become His righteousness. Oh listen to that...He was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him. Why did He do that? So that we could become His righteousness...“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.” Not just to wear it. Look at that, “to be sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Moore, Yoke).

So, the first part of this change happens as a result of a woman believing that someone loves her enough to give their life. If that message is taken to heart, they are likely going to be willing to embrace the message of Christ, which means they will likely become Christ followers. If they do become Christ followers, then their life begins to transform.

The transformation is the second evidence of this message. Moore believes that transformation is absolutely possible, “I have lived the journey that we’re going to study together and I want you to know that God’s Word transforms lives. Let me hear you say amen. God’s Word transforms lives” (Moore, Goals). Over and over again, Moore reiterates that a woman needs to transform in order to live “free.” The obvious assumption is that “a woman will be changed by becoming a Christ follower.” However, though Moore believes everyone can transform, it is possible that not everyone will:

I want you to look first of all at the very first verse in Isaiah 53. “Who has believed our message.” We’re going to be talking about belief versus unbelief in our study. It is imperative if we desire to be a people liberated in Christ that we become a people who take God at His Word. Are we ready to believe what God reveals to us? That was His question as He began this prophetic chapter of Scripture. In fact, do you know that this chapter of Scripture is the most often quoted Old Testament chapter in the New Testament? That’s how important it is (Moore, Yoke).

The first key to transformation is believing that it is possible. What does transformation look like? There is a process. First a woman has to become a Christ follower. Second they must transform into different people.

For a woman to truly become a Christ follower a woman must recognize, believe and receive. Realizing Christ suffered on the cross is the catalyst. The woman’s burden is deepened as she comes to the ultimate realization that she is responsible for suffering that Jesus experienced on the cross. As they recognize that their iniquities are the reason that Christ, the perfect Son of God, endured imprisonment and oppression on Earth they are brought to a decision. The next step is to believe that Christ is Savior.

Using Scriptures such as Isaiah 53:1, Moore declares that believing changes people. Most importantly, Jesus is the person who enables them to live free:

Christ suffered so that God could be satisfied and we could be saved. This is the good news preached to the poor, we are told, in that last portion of Isaiah 53. In verse 11, “After the suffering of his soul God will see the light of life [and that’s that light coming out of that resurrection,] and be satisfied and by His knowledge my righteous servant will justify many.” By His knowledge my righteous servant will justify many. Ladies, that’s

you and that is me, and we find out that Christ had to suffer because the penalty of sin had to be paid. It had to be paid (Moore, Yoke).

Christ was despised and rejected so that women can be favored and accepted. In response, the only thing women have to do to become believers is to believe that Christ died on the cross for their sins, ask Him to forgive them for those sins, and accept the free gift of salvation. Making this decision does not come without benefits.

One benefit is that after a woman accepts the free gift of salvation they are free to pursue an individual relationship with God. A woman is also given God's Holy Spirit, which allows her to commune with God. Another benefit is that "the enemy" can never possess a woman:

But if you are in Christ, you have got a tight lid on the top of you and nothing else is getting in once the Holy Spirit has moved in. You are sealed. You are sealed in this lifetime, but we can be terribly oppressed and I know that from personal experience.

That's what this series is about (Moore, Goals).

Arguably the best benefit for a woman caught up in this fantasy would be she is able to embrace God as "the Deliverer." Jesus is the earthly representation of God as deliverer, which is described in Isaiah 61:1:

The spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn and provide for those who grieve in Zion, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes. The oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the

display of His splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated. They will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. With these empowering benefits in hand a woman is then able to move forward to the transformation process.

Based on analysis of these six messages, it would seem that four steps are involved to a complete transformation. First, a woman relinquishes their mind to God by crying out to Him and allowing Him to renovate her mind in such a way that their previous hurts are dissipated. Using a story of Median in Judges 6, Moore shows that she believes that if a woman cries out to the Lord for help she can have victory over her bondage:

How many of us have noticed in our lives, ladies, that God will allow things to get so bad at times for the very purpose of finally forcing us to look up? How far down will we go before finally the chin lifts up? He is the lifter of the head, we'll finally look up and scream, "Help!" Do you know what ladies, you don't have to come up with some big long prayer, some big impressive vocabulary, you can just scream "Help!" And God begins to come to our rescue. He brought them [Median and his people] to a place where they would cry out so that He could make them victorious. Victory always begins with a cry for help. Cry for help. What I like to think of here is the poverty of Spirit. That we have when we have just come to the end of ourselves, and when we come ready to admit with hand waving, my plan is not working. Anybody at that point? Or they're just thinking, I, I'm beginning to get a clue here and something's not working in my plan. And we cry out for help. Amazing things are about to happen (Moore, Goals).

Crying out for help invites God in and helps a woman to believe that she is a person who is capable of being healed and free.

The next part of relinquishing the mind comes into play when a woman allows God to renovate the way she thinks. A woman has to get to a place where suffering is put into the proper perspective. They have to realize that no matter what they go through in life, Christ suffered to a deeper extent. Comprehending His suffering enables a woman to come to grips with the pain in her life. Look how Moore puts this:

What made Christ's suffering worse? Listen. He who had no sin became sin for us.

That's what makes it different. This is what we cannot comprehend. It was not just that it was His one and only son that gave up life in this human body upon this earth only to be resurrected three days later, that wasn't all the point. The loss and pain came from the fact that God Himself, His holiness in the form of humanity, the fullness of the Godhead bodily was hung on a cross and upon Him was laid every iniquity, every sin, every perversion, everything you could even imagine, He literally had to become sin and that's why His Father turned His face. We can't even comprehend that kind of suffering. For God to go through the great exchange. No, that's something beyond us (Moore, Yoke).

Just because Christ's suffering was greater, does not mean that woman's suffering is insignificant. Moore reminds ladies:

Old hurts, wounds that we will not uncover before Him and let Him cleanse and heal become strongholds. Letting go, letting Him do the refiner's work, letting Him finish the process. How we hinder Him when we keep it covered and when we keep nursing that hurt over and over again it goes on for years and years and some people will go to the grave with that same hurt in their life. Decades later never letting Him bring it to a thing of beauty when it never would have been allowed if God could not have made it into

something beautiful. However bad it may have been. That seems so hard for us, but that is God's promise (Moore, Ashes).

Additionally, she encourages women to go to God:

God is not intimidated by your questions, go into His Word and begin to look for answers. They're there and what you can't find in God's Word, you just live by faith and believe based on everything else you were able to learn until you see Him face to face and then you'll know (Moore, Yoke).

All of this can seem a bit overwhelming, but if a woman makes the content of this message a reality in her life, it ought to be apparent how she becomes transformed into something different.

The next phase of transformation occurs when a woman becomes willingly consumed with the things of God. Psalms 1:1-3 shows why a woman would desire this consumption:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the ways of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on His law he meditates day and night and he is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in seas and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

A woman immerses herself in God's truths so that she can be blessed and prosperous. Moore accomplished this in her own life through prayer:

This is something God began to ask me to pray for myself years ago, Lord, just make me have such a thirst for your Word, God, I, whatever you have to put me through to send me to your Word, but Lord I want to be able to say the words of the psalmist in Psalm 119, "Oh how I love your law, I would have perished in my affliction had I not delighted in your Word" (Moore, Yoke).

But, later she tells women that to do this effectively takes a lot of work:

We take captive every thought, that's all we've studied all week long is how to take the mind captive to the things of Christ. I pray you've had some real breakthroughs this week just like I have, but you see what Isaiah 26:3 called the steadfast mind, the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 10:5 calls the captive mind. And it's all the same thing. A mind that is stayed on Christ. The mind that continually is caught up in truth and discerns what is deception. That's what God is desiring to work in us (Moore, Steadfast).

As a woman becomes consumed with the things of God, it usually manifests itself in a way that they begin to exemplify the truths of God's Word.

A woman truly transforming will begin to apply the truths she is learning to her life, which will eventually lead to her sharing those truths with others. Moore shows this process through Ephesians:

Turn with me now to Ephesians, chapter 4. I'd like to read verses 15-16. I'd like for you to also notice with me the context of these Scriptures is the body of Christ being built up into the fullness, the whole measure verse 13 says of Christ. In fact, let me go ahead and start with 14 in Ephesians, chapter 4, "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men and their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." As each part does its work (Moore, Ruins).

Doing "the work." Learning and apply truth. This is what this phase is all about. Moore would say that understanding the truth and constantly partaking of it is vital part of life (Moore, Splendor).

Finally, a woman goes into the last phase of the transformation process, which involves a life-long commitment to God. She begins to go deeper into living free in Christ and embraces a new level of freedom with Him. Life becomes a continuous pursuit of living and applying truth. The truth is what sets a woman free. Moore's would use the Israelites to prove this sentiment:

These are captives like us, captives like we've been, hearing God's Word and crying out amen and amen and then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord and that's a word that means to fall prostrate. They literally went on their faces bowing down and praising God with their faces to the ground. What I want you to know is that those words amen and amen that, amen is a Hebrew word so there's no Hebrew translation for it, it is Hebrew. But it's also translated in a number of other places in the Old Testament as truth. So what they were saying and I want you to celebrate this with me, when he just began to open up the Scriptures they started crying out "Truth, truth!" Oh ladies that for the rest of our lives we would recognize truth that it would be like water to thirsty souls. That every time we heard it no matter who was the one preaching it, we would just throw open our arms and open our heart to God and just say hit me with truth. That we would have an appetite, that we would know how to discern truth from lies and I mean they knew as soon as he opened it the Spirit of God began to discern in them. This is truth (Moore, Splendor).

Becoming a Christ follower is what enables a woman to transform into a person who lives by the Word of God, which is her new established truth. That truth changes how she thinks, acts and responds to life.

A woman caught up in this fantasy would likely exhibit several character traits: she knows freedom is possible; she embraces God's Word as truth; she respects the power of God's

Word; she is openly a Christ follower; and, she reveres God. The only thing that would keep this woman from realizing this fantasy would be: refusing to accept Christ as Savior; refusing to be a Christ follower; ignoring God; and not relinquishing control of her life to God. The result of this transformation is that a woman is completely changed from the inside out.

The woman wrapped up in this fantasy displays a willingness to let their mind be controlled by an outside force. They are changed “completely” because they have submitted to living their life as a Christ follower. As they allow God’s Holy Spirit to transform their mind and as they work to live according to God’s Word. A person newly transformed exhibits distinct changes in character and friends and family may be concerned that she has wrapped herself up in a cult, but eventually they will see that she has simply transformed into a kinder, nicer, better version of herself who looks to put friends, family and strangers before herself in order to honor God with her new servant-like attitude. This woman will openly talk about how “Jesus saved her” or how “Jesus changed her life.” She will express her belief in heaven and openly pray to God. Her life will not be muted by tragedy she has experienced and she will seemingly be happy no matter what her circumstance.

Fantasy Theme 3: Women can experience “oneness” with God. They can simultaneously experience being God’s favorite child.

Women have the ability to be “one” with God. The message of this theme reflects the positive aspects of being in a relationship with God. The fact that each person can have a unique relationship with God seems impossible, yet Moore does not reveal any disbelief regarding this matter. Moore is convinced that as a woman pursues an apprentice type relationship with Christ by becoming “one” with God, they will embrace the fact that they are “God’s favorite child.”

The implication of being God's favorite is that He always sees a woman's potential and is willing to appoint experiences necessary for her to fulfill her destiny. God takes a vested interest in each individual. The benefit of this message is that a woman is free to experience God on any level. She can cry to Him for help. She can feel His love. She can learn from God, talk to Him, and get personal direction for her life.

Most every woman desires a comforter. Women get caught up in this message because they desire to have a being they can call upon twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. God's personal interest is appealing and comforting. The obvious reward is that a relationship with the Creator will yield blessings, prosperity and purpose for each woman's life. Not only are the benefits of this relationship substantial, they are also free gifts God's children receive as a result of embracing God's plan for their salvation. In the end, the relationship enables the woman to develop a sense of purpose while having the encouragement of a being who sees their full potential.

There is a two-step process to getting caught up in this message. First, a woman begins to enjoy the benefits of salvation. Second, a woman pursues a unique relationship with God. The evidence of this message can be seen when Moore describes the trust relationship with God:

Beloved let me tell you something, when you get there if you have walked in trust, even when it was blind, even when you thought to yourself, everybody I know thinks I'm an idiot for following God on this thing when all my circumstances look this way, do you know you're going to get to heaven and say I am so glad I believed Him! Hallelujah! He was trustworthy! (Moore, Steadfast).

Furthermore, the relationship is unique because technically a woman is "God's slave." The term slave is often viewed as negative, but in this case it is glorified because each woman is what

Moore calls a “bond slave.” Bond slaves are different because they willingly choose to submit to a master who treats them fairly and with respect. Moore calls herself a “bond slave”:

I decided at a particular time in my life that I just wanted to be the bond slave of Christ, that I wanted to turn in my yoke of slavery, not so that I could walk without a yoke, but so that I could walk in slavery to the liberating life of Christ because where the Spirit of the Lord is, what ladies? There is freedom. There is freedom(Moore, Splendor).

A woman takes this relationship too a new level as she accepts that she is also God’s favorite.

Moore explains how this is possible:

I want to tell you what that Hebrew word means for favor it’s the word “ratson,” that’s the original Hebrew word for favor, and it’s a word that means delight. It means good will, it does mean favor, it means grace...It means kindness and one of the words that I love in the synonyms was willfulness, it means that He wills Himself, He makes the choice of His will. He doesn’t have to check with another soul to just do you a favor. Amen? He doesn’t have to ask anybody. He can just decide that you are and each one of you are the apple of His eye and you are His favorite and it is His sovereign right to treat you like the favorite child that you are. Only in Christ can we all be His favorite, and I just love that about Him (Moore, Yoke).

During the previous fantasy a woman began the transformation process. In this fantasy, the woman has moved on to deepening her relationship with God and taking advantage of the relationship she is able to have.

Christ is “the bridge” for women to have this relationship. Through His sacrifice and the woman’s belief, repentance and acceptance of salvation, she is able to commune with God. The woman knows she can call on God for help and she knows that God desires her to live out her

dreams. The benefits of the relationship include: being able to talk to God; being able to listen to God; being able to learn from God; being able to find comfort in God; living prosperous in the life God has given; being able to feel secure; and, knowing the purpose God intends for her life.

With these benefits in hand, a woman is able to pursue a unique relationship that is like an apprenticeship. Through this apprenticeship, a woman begins the process of becoming “one” with God. God works in the woman’s life via the Holy Spirit to teach them everything they need to know about living life and embracing their destiny. They are working with God who sees their potential and who is willing to show them their unique giftedness:

God sees the potential of His children. God sees the potential of His children and appoints the experiences necessary for them to fulfill their destinies. Oh listen to that with your heart. I’ve got to read it again now, that one’s got to have an amen! God sees the potential of His children and appoints the experiences necessary for them to fulfill their destiny. If God has appointed something for you even if it’s hardship, even if it’s a difficult time, it’s part of the plan so that you can fulfill your destiny in Him. You see what He called him? He called him mighty warrior, long before he was one. I want you to know that as we get started in this journey together that God is calling you a mighty warrior. You’re sitting back and thinking have you taken a good look at me? Now Lord you may mean the rest of the ladies in this room, but you cannot possibly mean me. I am the least of the least and He said, “No, you are exactly the one I’ve chosen. You are a mighty warrior.” He said, “Now I’m going to teach you how to live like one.” Are you ready to learn how to live like a mighty warrior? Or are we just ready? Are we just sick of deceit and ready to live like mighty warriors? (Moore, Goals).

This unique internship type program helps a woman to be successful in their time here on Earth all while preparing them for the place they will eventually serve, heaven. To become a warrior involves sacrifice. A woman has to continue seeking truth and all while being willing to stay clean before God with a daily time of confession and repentance to keep herself free from the chains of bondage (Moore, Splendor).

Not only is a woman a life-long apprentice, but also she is God's favorite child. Moore reminds ladies, "Christ was despised and rejected so we could be favored and accepted" (Moore, Yoke). It isn't necessary to extensively reiterate this point because it has all ready been proven, but note that a woman who is an apprentice of God will likely exhibit the following character traits: she has a teachable spirit; she is secure in who she is; she is trusting; she is submissive; and, she is a good listener. Overall, this woman likely comes across as very peaceful. A few things can keep a woman from realizing this fantasy. Moore would caution a woman to be aware of pride:

We can always know that we may be in the early stages of a problem when the Word of God just ceases to hit us. Something, somewhere. We're beginning to have the uprising of the ego. We're beginning to have a pride problem. There is some kind of stronghold. Let that begin to be a flashing yellow light to you, if you find that day after day, now I'm not talking about one isolated time, but I'm talking about when you find three or four days in a row, I mean God's Word just does nothing for you, nothing. Then let's begin to see that as a checkpoint and let's ask Him. Listen, God will tell you. What in the world Lord has got me right now? And when we say, "Lord, would you just bring anything forth that may be the problem here" and something comes forth we don't have to sit there and wonder if that could be it? Amen? The shoe fits, put it on and wear it to the place of

repentance. Because that's God saying that's the problem, let's begin to see pride is absolutely the enemy of ministry without a doubt (Moore, Splendor).

Additionally, a woman would need to make sure she is living free from oppression and idol worship of any kind. God is adamant in the Word that He is displeased when people put other things before a relationship with Him. This woman believes that a unique relationship is available to her and she is more than willing to pursue a relationship with God. As she pursues this relationship, she becomes closer and closer to God, which enables her to become "one" with Him.

A woman wrapped up in this fantasy will live her life like she is unstoppable. If asked, she will admit that she has a relationship with God that is growing deeper each day. She will rejoice in minor accomplishments because she will believe that even the simplest tasks, like laundry, can be done to the glory of God. She will find comfort in knowing she is God's favorite and revel in the fact that God takes a personal interest in her life. And, she will not be envious of other Christ followers who are also God's favorite. She will believe her life has a purpose, even if that purpose is insignificant according to the world's standards.

Fantasy Theme 4: Women experience bondage when they do not listen to God. They find fulfillment and satisfaction by embracing Christianity as a lifestyle.

Moore would not suggest that every bad circumstance people experience is the result of bad listening skills. However, she does suggest that some of the bondage women encounter is the result of not listening to God. When a woman is not accountable for their personal sin they are disregarding God's Biblical message that fulfillment and satisfaction are possible. Their bondage only increases when women try to fend for themselves without God's help. To be free

from bondage women have to embrace Christianity as a lifestyle and take responsibility for her part when it comes to the suffering of Jesus on the cross.

The message of this theme comes to life throughout every message, but is most obvious in the first two messages “Goals of Breaking Free” and “Untying the Cords of the Yoke.” Four elements weave together the theme of this message: recognize the cause of bondage; acknowledge areas of bondage; listen to God; and adapt the message of Christ into a lifestyle. The end goal of this message is wrapped up in accepting Christ as Savior. However, a woman cannot get to that point unless they choose to listen to God. Moore states, “If we haven’t gone to the cross and believed that Jesus is the key to our freedom then we can’t accomplish anything else.” Without the salvation provided by the cross of Jesus, people are subjected to becoming more and more browbeaten by the enemy. Those who do not become Christ followers are more likely to be taken in under the enemy’s wing. And, in order for fulfillment and satisfaction to be the standard a woman must learn to walk in the freedom of Christ without relying on anything else. Moore uses secular media to evidence the subjugation the enemy has on modern day women who are not Christ followers.

Women may get caught up in this message because they do not want to be enslaved to an oppressor. There might be something appealing about no longer being required to submit to the strict societal standards of beauty, fame, and fortune. Women could relate to feeling “trapped” in one way or another by their marriages, family, or vocations. Guilt, no doubt, also plays a role in who embraces the message of this theme because most would not want to be responsible for the anguish of another. Women who realize they are responsible for the suffering of Jesus on the cross often want to make amends and find redemption for the part they have played in the

process. And, women may like the hopeful message that those who accept the Scriptures as truth are rewarded with knowing for sure they will one day go to heaven.

Three major evidences surface to prove this theme exists. First, bondage is possible. Second, believers can be in bondage. And third, bondage can be overcome. A Christian is held captive by anything that hinders the abundant and effective Spirit-filled life that God has planned for her. The Israelites are used as the prime example of what bondage looks like in real-life. Bondage occurs when a Christian is held captive by anything that hinders the abundant and effective Spirit-filled life that God has planned for her.

First, bondage is possible. According to Moore women experience bondage in four different ways: testing, chastisement for rebellion; lack of submission to God's authority; and weakness in warfare. As women are tested they are being subjected to situations that will refine them. Testing allows for a woman to deepen her relationship with God. At other times, women are not adhering to the will of God and are put in bondage as a form of punishment for blatant sin against God. A surprising aspect to bondage is that in order to be truly free a woman must become a bond slave to God. Moore uses Scripture to explain that submission to God's authority is the only way to live free. Women seem to get caught up in this aspect of the message as they relate to feeling trapped. Some feel trapped by marriage, family and vocation. Others are caught up in the monotony of life. Recognizing their bondage allows them to move to a safe place underneath the wings of God. In a relationship with God a woman can feel safe and secure as God frees her from whatever type of bondage she is experiencing. Women can also experience bondage as a result of "the Enemy's" attack on them.

Second, believers can be in bondage. Moore was in bondage, trapped by her circumstances, and living defeated. Nevertheless, she stopped worshiping her idols, submitted to

God, and became free. Her previous life is a picture of a “believer” in bondage because she became a believer at an early age. When Moore broke away from Christ in early adulthood, she lived in sin, which led to her being defeated and trapped by her circumstances. Now her life and ministry represent a woman who has learned to listen to God. And, she would now say that embracing Christianity as a complete lifestyle brings her satisfaction and fulfillment.

Third, bondage can be overcome. Bondage can be overcome when women choose to stop worshipping the idols in their life and listen to God. Choosing not to ignore God and His providence leads to happy and blessed lives. Women have to commune regularly with God to stay free from captivity:

The daily confession, if we catch things in the early stages where it’s just in the thought life, is just beginning to be a little, a little speck in the thought life, that when we have God deal with that in that stage before it ever goes to the word life and then to the externals of life into our actions, when we confess sin every single day we’re up on that thing, we’re up on it, we’re already dealing with it before it turns into an action (Moore, Splendor).

Not only that, a woman has to learn to deal with bondage immediately, even when bondage is just an inconceivable thought. Women have to be constantly aware of God so that they can catch bondage in the early stages before their thoughts become actions that lead them to turmoil. To overcome bondage a woman must move past selfishness and adopt God’s opinions and truths. Doing this successfully does involve a process.

First a woman needs to be able to recognize bondage. Bondage manifests itself in many ways, but usually it comes to life when pride, idolatry, unbelief and legalism become strongholds in a person’s life. Four types of bondage exist: testing; chastisement for rebelling; lack of

submission to God's authority; and weakness in warfare. The first type, testing, comes into life when God purposely allows women to go through situations to see how they will handle them:

In other words, God will bring us through a season when He allows us to be oppressed by the enemy because He desires to test us and mature us and grow us. One perfect example of someone being led by God into a time of oppression by the enemy is Christ in the wilderness. So we know that if He has Christ put through a time of testing through the oppression of the enemy, we're going to go through some of those same things. So sometimes it will be testing (Moore, Goals).

The next type deals with rebellion:

Also we're going to find that another reason we can experience oppression is as chastisement for rebellion. Chastisement for rebellion. Now that is exactly the point that we see happening in Judges, chapter 6. They had done evil in the eyes of the Lord. In fact, what did that first verse say? Again. Do you see the cycles? Do you see the repetition? So He literally handed them over for a season to the enemy so that they would learn better and we're going to see that His plan worked (Moore, Goals).

Moore reminds women again why they should remember to submit to God's authority:

We're going to learn to walk in the confines of God's will, not so that we can be confined ladies, but so that we can be set free. That's the wonderful paradox and that's something we're going to all adopt as our mentality by the time we get to the end of this series. That we want to walk in the freedom of God's will, that is where our liberty will be (Moore, Goals).

The final area of bondage is weakness in warfare:

It can just be that we don't know how to do battle with the evil one who seeks to oppress us. Ignorance, and I mean that in the purest sense of the term, just not knowing how to fight the good fight can cause us to be terribly oppressed. There are many who think if I just ignore him and just desire to walk with God I'm going to be fine, but we find out that doesn't work for very long, especially if you're beginning to be a threat to his dark kingdom, then the oppression will come. And we've got to learn how to fight the good fight, so just not knowing can cause us to be oppressed (Moore, Goals).

These four matters quickly lead to a dismal life. And, in almost every instance they can cause a woman to stop listening to God.

Not listening to God has a detrimental affect in the life of a woman. Moore uses the life of the Israelites to show what can happen when a person does not submit to God and refuses to listen to the life guidance He provides. In the Israelites case, God told them not to worship other gods. They did not listen and the ended up being subjected to slavery. Moore says,

God willingly tells His children why they are being oppressed if His children are willing to listen. God wants us to know. God wants us to know the reasons why we continue being oppressed. Notice in verse 7 through 10 that's exactly what He does. He sends a prophet to them who speaks to them and says, "You want to know why you're being oppressed? God set you free from the Egyptians and He said He would go before you and you would always be victorious but do not turn to other gods and you did exactly what He told you not to, and therefore, you're being oppressed." I love that about God. Because you see if He just fixes it and that's what we want Him to do. "I don't want to get into the reasons why Lord, let's not be encumbered by that. Lord, just set me free! Just set me free. I don't need to know why I got in this mess, let's not dig up all those old

bones. Just set me free.” God said, “I want you to know what went wrong. So the next time we’re in the same situation, we make different choices.” He wants to teach us if we’re willing to listen. But so often people are not willing to listen. We go on into denial (Moore, Goals).

Women are to recognize that not listening to God will often immediately lead them into bondage in one way or another.

Women are to also learn that God does not fancy people who worship other Gods. Moore emphasizes in her messages the importance of not worshiping other gods. God’s in this instance can take on any form: other humans, other entities, graven images, personal obsessions, and other named gods from other religions. Moore clarifies that worship of any god beside the one true God of the Bible results in bondage.

Now I’m going to tell you something. I can’t think of anything more terrifying or on the other hand more depressing than worshiping myself as God. And I’m going to tell you one reason. Because I have to live with this woman all the time and you have to live with yourself all the time and I just want to say that if I’m as good even on my best day as God gets, show me the nearest bridge and just let me take a dive! This better not be as good as God gets. I want the real thing or I want nothing. Nothing. I’ve got to have the holy, perfect, almighty El Elyon. He is the real thing (Moore, Steadfast).

The moral of the story is listen to God when He says, “Don’t worship other gods or put other idols before me.”

The issue of bondage has some real life applications. Moore creates identity with the audience by giving them Biblical evidence that generational sin is also a source of bondage. In one case Moore describes how the generational sin of prejudice affected her life. Women are

encouraged to embrace God's plan and learn from both the positive and negative outcomes of prejudice in the Bible. Moore strives to identify and relate to the listeners by sharing a story about her "Nanny" who was prejudice and did not even realize it. The audience is empowered to make positive changes with regards to prejudice and to understand that God will pour blessings into their lives by learning to "ditch color-blindness and become color-blessed" (Moore, Ruins). Women are encouraged to not succumb to the fact that it was just the way they were raised, "Though prejudice may be natural, like other practices of our flesh nature, it is sin. We have been given a super-nature in which prejudice has no place" (Moore, Ruins).

Another real-life example of bondage is when women allow themselves to become "prisoners unaware":

Our prison doors are locked from the inside. If we are being oppressed, if we feel like right now we're just imprisoned by defeat. Do you know what? We hold the key, and we're going to learn about those keys are over the weeks to come. And it locks on the inside because here's the wonderful news; Satan can presume no authority over us. Say that back to me. Satan can presume no authority over us. He has none. He lost that on the cross of Calvary when Christ died in our place. He lost that. Christ overcame him; he is the defeated foe. There is no doubt about it. But, because we will not deal with truth so often in our lives, we get caught in the strongholds. Satan cannot presume authority and we're going to learn how to quit giving him permission. The enemy has no authority to hold us once we're ready to get out (Moore, Goals).

To deal with this, Moore encourages women to get to a place where they can come to grips with reality:

We've come to grips with the fact that we have all sorts of reasons why we may have ended up in bondage, but that only we could take responsibility for any sin that resulted from it. Now it was not to make us feel like we were wretches or that we were trash but so that we would bring it forth, put it out on the table before God, agree with Him which is what confession is, it means to agree with God about it, repent of it and say Lord I don't want to go there any more. Facing it off says I'm staring it straight in the face here and I can tell you I don't want to go back there any more. I want to live in freedom away from those chains, and we've known that part of that process has got to be repentance and not just once, but literally daily ladies. I like to think, we don't want any grimy build-up, amen? (Moore, Splendor).

By coming to grips a woman is able to start the process of adapting God's message as a lifestyle, which will enable them to live a life of faith as they work to understand Jesus and listen to God's advice along the way.

The good news associated with this fantasy lies in the fact that women who accept, believe and receive the message of Christ can overcome their bondage and become completely satisfied and fulfilled. Women who embrace Christianity as a lifestyle, accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, and live a life of faith are protected from being possessed by the enemy and sealed for eternity in heaven. It begins by living a life of faith and understanding that everything a person experiences in life is for a reason:

You've never gone through anything that wasn't supposed to mean something. If it doesn't mean anything in years to come, somewhere along the way we would not uncover it and we would not let Him have it. Do you remember that verse Romans 8:28 when it says "He will work all things together for good for those who love him and are

called according to His purpose.” It is a conditional promise, it said, “I am fully capable of working anything together, but your part of it is do you trust me here? Will you give it to me and let me work it out for you?” (Moore, Ashes).

To adapt the message women first have to realize that even though life can be lived without bondage and oppression, life will still have it’s hardships. At this point, understanding the life and work of Jesus comes into play.

First thing to note is that, “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” because evil men working on behalf of the enemy want to see God’s people fail (Moore, Steadfast). Moore also points out that it is important to understand the difference between humanism and humanitarianism. Moore wants women to know that humanism revolves around self-worship and humanitarianism is something else entirely different and can be seen in the life of Jesus (Moore, Steadfast). The key here is getting to know both Jesus and God better:

And we talked about that before we reach out for the hand of God and ask Him for provisions, how important it is to study His heart. Do you recall with me that we talked about knowing His personality? Knowing His promises and knowing His practices. Now I want to show you something, these are wonderful times when you get to know God well enough in Scripture, that you can begin to count on seeing certain things out of His personality. What I’m about to show you is so very much like God, it’s a time when you’re going to be able to look at this and go that is so You I could have picked this one out. This is so you (Moore, Steadfast).

To build on this it is important to tap into the power of prayer. Communing with God is what gave Jesus his success. The last thing of note is to remember that Jesus watched out for those

trying to deceive Him. Jesus' enemy seeks to taint the truth of God's Word. Like Jesus, women have to be close enough to God that they can discern when truth is not being presented to them.

A woman caught up in this fantasy exhibits a life that in her mind is fulfilling and satisfying. She is working to take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ while working to demolish arguments and pretensions that are set up against the truths of God's Word. This woman will likely show signs of many specific character traits. First, she will absolutely believe that Jesus Christ is her Savior and accept God's message as truth. She works to maintain a lifestyle that is in accordance with Scripture. She demonstrates a sense of empowerment because she knows she can live free and she knows that she will never be possessed by the enemy. She goes to God when she needs help and is always willing to listen to the instruction God provides her. And, the only God she will claim to worship is the God of the Bible.

Many things keep a woman from the reality of this fantasy. Obviously, if they refuse to submit to God's authority and choose to live sinfully and selfishly they will be unsatisfied and unfulfilled. Another fault they could display is "fending for themselves without God." Moore would remind ladies:

I want you to think about that for just a moment, because on our own, without the filling of the Holy Spirit, without learning what to do with the sword of the Spirit and according to Ephesians 6 that's the Word of God, I want to tell you He's too much for us. We can be saved, the Holy Spirit can dwell in us and yet we can continually live in defeat because the enemy can outdo us if we are not totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to equip us. That's what we're going to learn to do. We've got to know that we're, we're being swarmed otherwise, unless we wise up in the Word of God and

learn what our rights are and how to use the equipment that God has given us (Moore, Goals).

Another obvious deterrent would be that a woman is not a true believer and is possessed by the enemy. And last, a woman could be prejudice. To overcome prejudice a woman must choose to deal with it:

We are coming to a time when we can no longer remain silent. To remain silent is to remain part of the problem. I am wondering if we could, through the Holy Spirit, come to a place, speaking the truth in love. Now understand the attitude, because any kind of attitude other than speaking the truth in love is also a sinful response to the original problem, so then we join them in a different kind of sin, but it is still wrong, but in speaking the truth in love (Moore, Goals).

This fantasy is involved but its truth is simple. Women experience bondage when they do not listen to God. They find fulfillment and satisfaction by embracing Christianity as a lifestyle. Ultimately, this woman seemingly does everything she possibly can to listen to God and apply the truths of His Word to her life. And, in times of trouble she will ask God for help.

An encounter with a woman caught up in this message would likely be pleasant. If she is living obediently under God's authority her demeanor will be attractive to those in her social circle. She will display a carefree attitude and seem willing to go above and beyond when serving others, even complete strangers. She would openly be under God's direction at all times and will likely surround herself with those who can teach her and encourage her to understand God's authority in her life. She will display a teachable spirit and desire to learn more and more about God's ability to enhance and guide her life. Christianity will be her lifestyle and she will openly admit to listening to God, even if she is not exactly sure how she is able to do so.

Fantasy Theme 5: Women can enhance their physical beauty by studying God’s Word.

To build from the previous metaphor of a butterfly, this is where the woman begins to emerge from her cocoon and become the person God wants her to be. The reality of this message seems to be that studying God’s Word makes a woman more beautiful. The fundamental nature of this message is that when a woman immerses herself in all things God, she becomes more beautiful. The Scriptural foundation for this message is Ecclesiastes 8:1, “How wonderful to be wise, to analyze and interpret things. Wisdom lights up a person’s face, softening its harshness.” As women absorb the Word and wisdom of God, His beauty will begin to radiate from their being. The result is that a new inner beauty radiates and they are physically transformed as the sternness of their face is changed and muscles are relaxed. Moore would say, “The purpose is to make us objects of beauty, we may be wasting away on the outside but as God refines us we are becoming more and more beautiful” (Moore, Ashes).

Throughout her messages, Moore emphasizes the fact that God becomes more enthralled by with a woman’s beauty as they grow in their relationship with Him. Virtually every woman desires to feel more beautiful. The obvious appeal is that a woman’s beauty will be enhanced. The fact that someone is “enthralled with her beauty” is a clear self-esteem booster. In addition to this enhancement they are viewed in a more positive light by others and by God. The participant’s responsibility is to develop and pray for a thirst for the Lord and “to take God at His Word.”

A few evidences exist for this message. First she would address the skeptics who do not feel that a lesson on beauty and God’s refining fire should be a part of breaking free from bondage and oppression:

Our series is on breaking free. What does the refiner's fire have to do with breaking free? Because do you realize in the long term in our lives, one of our greatest hindrances to the filling life of Christ, to the abundant life, to the affective serving life, one of the biggest hindrances we have is not being able to let go of things that have hurt us (Moore, Ashes).

Second, she would show women that God is in fact enthralled with their beauty:

Psalm 45:10, "Listen O daughter consider and give ear. Forget your people and your father's house, the king is enthralled by your beauty, honor Him for He is your Lord."

Oh what a wonderful Scripture. Oh it is my prayer that by the time we've walked this journey together that you will begin to see that God is enthralled by your beauty.

Whatever your age, whatever length of time you've walked with Him, the freedom that God brings to life when the sternness of the face relaxes, and the fullness of the spirit takes over and He looks down upon someone's life who is totally surrendered to Him, who is withholding nothing from Him and the king looks at that child and he says I am enthralled by your beauty. It doesn't matter what the rest of the world thinks about our physical appearance. When we walk with Christ in His Word, the king is enthralled by our beauty. The beautiful bride of Christ (Moore, Yoke).

Finally, she would tell women that it is possible for every single woman to become more beautiful because it is possible that a woman's face and demeanor can actually change when they study God's Word:

I want to tell you something and you can laugh at me if you want to, but based on the authority of the Word of God, I think I can tell you safely that by the time you end this Bible study, you're going to be prettier than you are right now. Now I really do mean that, because you see what God is going to work in us through His truth, and I can give

you a Scripture that says this perfectly because Ecclesiastics 8:1 tells us that God's wisdom literally changes the sternness of the face, that as God teaches us, as we gather His truth and as we become a spirit-filled people He's going to radiate from us. God's Word is going to be better than any face lift we could get, any amount of cosmetics we could have and you all I'm teasing in one way but in another way I am very serious.

There is a beauty that comes in the lives of people who love God's Word and have been set free because the sternness of the face is changed (Moore, Yoke).

How does a woman achieve this? There is a process involved.

Based on Ecclesiastes 8:1, the first step would be to believe that a transformation is possible via Christ:

Christ's beauty was veiled so that ours could be revealed. Did you notice the comparison between the two? Christ's beauty was veiled so that ours could be revealed. This is almost impossible for me to imagine and yet Scripture says in Isaiah 53:2 that he had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him. Nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. I almost cannot even comprehend that, and yet the Word of God says that it's true (Moore, Yoke).

Second, a woman needs to submit to God's refining process. God desires to submit a woman to a spiritual refining process so that He can remove her impurities and restore her to the woman He intends her to be. When God allows a woman to go through hard times, sometimes that is because he is working to remove the "dross" from her life. Moore says:

Whatever the reason the purpose of refinement is always to make us objects of beauty and I thought I would say to anyone that is a little allergic to the word objects, you can write down vessels of beauty. In other words there is a purpose to every season under

heaven. That's what Ecclesiastes says, and if this is your season or when your season comes, when there is really true authentic suffering, you can know that God is out to make something beautiful in this situation and that sounds so sappy, but it is the truth, I've watched Him do it (Moore, Ashes).

To help God in the process a woman would need to make a conscious effort to get rid of actions, attitudes, and emotions that distract her from developing the mind, heart, soul and body that resembles Jesus. They would need to develop a steadfast mind and immerse themselves in the things of God.

Finally, a woman is able to just enjoy the process of becoming more beautiful. This transition does not happen over night, but over a lifetime of living life in one long obedient response to God. A woman may not realize she is radiating God's beauty, but she is. Moore puts it this way:

You see one of the things God has done for me in my ministry because I was a captive, I can see one in a second. I can tell in any group, especially those up front that I can see straight into the faces of, I can tell you who really is living in freedom and who is bound in chains. And I have no idea why they're in bondage, but I can tell you, I'd be able to tell you just from the muscles in the face I can tell you from the relaxation in the spirit of God when someone is just free. There will come a beauty to you. You may never be able to see it. We may be like Moses coming down off the mountain after he had been with God and had literally soaked in His radiance, he came down that mountain and he didn't even know that his face shown. You may not ever know, but I'm going to tell you other people will notice it in you. It won't just be an inner beauty, it will be a beauty that also comes to your face, comes to your actions, comes to the things that you say, grace of

speech that comes to those who are free in Christ, because our critical spirits come from the fact that we're miserable and we want to hope everybody else is miserable too (Moore, Yoke).

The ultimate goal of God the refiner is to see His reflection in the precious metal of His creation, which in this case is the life of a woman. As the process occurs, others will notice a change and see God's beauty radiate.

A couple of things can keep a woman from realizing this fantasy. Obsessing over vanity according to cultural standards and ignoring the study of God's Word would keep a woman from becoming more beautiful. A woman caught up would exhibit the following character traits: she would be approachable; she would be secure; she would display a knowledge of God's Word; she would exhibit wisdom; she would seem clear-minded and submissive to God's plan for her life. Overall, Moore enhances women's physical identity as she explains that going through the process of this study will make them prettier, a Scriptural truth from Ecclesiastes. Moore reminds each hearer that God believes they are beautiful, but allowing His Word to soften their heart will transform her in such a way that her physical appearance will actually improve.

Seeing this woman on the street may not cause a person to stop dead in their tracks in awe of her beauty. Based on the evidence this analysis provides, to some it may be impossible to see a woman caught up in this message as beautiful. However, it would be pertinent to suggest that this woman would exude a sort of quiet, humble confidence that lets others know she is content with how she is viewed. She would walk and act like she is content with knowing that God looks down upon her and thinks she is beautiful. She would do her best to do activities that would help her absorb God's wisdom and seem to have an unquenchable desire to learn all she could about Him. She would also be doing all that she could to submit her mind to God.

Fantasy Theme 6: Women following God can make a positive impact on themselves and others by mirroring Christ's walk.

A woman mirrors Christ walk as she seeks to exude character traits that Christ exhibited while on Earth. The result of living the life of a Christ follower is that she can improve the quality of life for herself and others. The woman promoted in this message mirrors Christ as she lives a life in tune to God. She is a woman who is an exceptional wife, mother, and friend. This woman is a paragon of virtue: trustworthy, industrious, organized, and loving. This woman is able to order the priorities of her world. Her home is both efficient and welcoming. She is involved in her community and is likely willing to help the poor.

The woman embracing this message is saved by grace and a special creation of God made in God's own image. That woman knows her true home is heaven and that her blessings are a result of God bestowing them upon her. She likely makes wise investments with her time and money. This woman is beautiful because her inner beauty radiates for all to see. This woman reveres God and fears Him appropriately, as such her relationships and responsibilities are wisely balanced. She exemplifies the truth spoken by Jesus Christ as she seeks first God's kingdom and righteousness. A close look at the woman truly embracing this theme would reveal a woman who is invaluable example of a woman who knows how to set her priorities in managing the time, resources, and giftedness that God has given her.

Women get caught up in this aspect of the message as they yearn to be the perfect creation God originally designed them to be. Through each message Moore reveals Christ-like traits. Women are able to see the impact Christ made in the world and are encouraged to make a similar impact. By changing her approach to life she can live a life that is fulfilling, satisfying,

and purposeful. This life change will overflow into the lives of others and enable the woman to leave a legacy in her world. The idea is that satisfaction leads to happiness. Happiness leads to a better quality of life. Happier people tend to treat others better.

The response is for women to become spiritual warriors. Women are to trust God and realize that the attack against them is not only personal but also corporate. Every believer across the world endures attack from the dark spiritual world. Women are to become aware the enemy's tactics: secrecy, shame, deception and distortion. Finally, women are suppose to learn to wield their "swords of truth" (Bible) to fight the spiritual warfare around them. An obvious concern that is raised in this message is a sense of not knowing whether each individual can fight this battle. Moore addresses this here-and-now concern by explaining that Christ protects all who serve Him and call Him Lord (Moore, Steadfast).

A good first step for a woman to take would be to embrace living a satisfying and fulfilling life. Moore provided an example:

Do you know it's interesting to me that in a study done by the Antidefamation League, it shows that people and I'm quoting "who feel good about themselves and have a strong self-esteem are less likely to be prejudiced." Isn't that interesting? How interesting.

That those with stronger self-esteems, those who know their own identify, and let's say especially for us in Christ, those who know their identity in Christ, do not need to put others down so that we can feel lifted up. We can be comfortable getting down on our knees in front of one another and figuratively, if not literally, washing one another's feet (Moore, Ruins).

Another profitable step would be to exhibit Christ-like character traits like showing love and having a good attitude. Loving one another is based on a verse Moore presented, John 13:34,

which says, “A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have love your, so you must love one another.” Attitude change is also important:

We may think, well this is harmless, it’s just something we joke around about. No, sooner or later attitudes do take action. Not only that, ladies, but God looks upon the heart. He looks upon the motives and the attitudes of our hearts and minds, but ultimately they do take action and people get hurt and I’d like for you to see how God feels about this (Moore, Ruins).

A better attitude impacts a woman’s personal life, family life and even how she interacts with others in the community.

The power to have a good attitude comes from having no doubt in who brings the victory in life. A woman who recognizes that God her father can overcome anything is able to make some drastic adjustments:

Till you start raising a family, all these things happen, things started coming up from my background. I began to remember all the things that had happened to me as a child and I broke it again. And if I thought my sorrow was something here at a mere 19 years old, nothing could have gotten me ready for the misery. I am here to tell you and I don’t mind testifying to you that I asked God over and over, just take me home, and maybe you cannot even imagine that, but if you had loved God like I had loved God and I had loved Him with the best of my know-how and what I had going in me. I really had loved Him and, “I felt like I have failed you so miserably that Lord, I cannot live with my sins. I can’t. I can’t.” And I just would have as soon gone home, but you know what? God did not let me off that easy. It would have been far easier than crawling back and going, “Not this again.” I mean I wanted to just quit. And God said, “The gifts and calling that

I have put on your life, I knew that in advance, and they are irrevocable. Get back to business and this time you learn what has you in bondage and you seek the freedom of living in my Word.” and that is when a love affair in me started in God’s Word(Moore, Splendor).

And, once an individual has transformed her life, that change overflows.

As a person experiences healing in the devastated parts of their life, they are able to become part of creating a positive future for up and coming generations. They are able to be compassionate toward others, even if they cannot necessarily understand the struggle:

When someone’s gone through a terrible time and you’re thinking teach me, I want to learn, but for the life of me, I don’t know what to say to you. And I was finally able to put it into words. I said, you know really all we need, and I think I’m speaking for most people who were victimized as children, you know what is the most wonderful thing I ever hear from anyone? Beth, I am so sorry that happened to you. I cannot tell you what it did for me the first time I heard someone say that. Just, I am so sorry that happened to you. They didn’t have to come up with explanations. They didn’t have to tell me what to do about it. They just said they were sorry (Moore, Ruins).

The idea is that each woman should use the gifts God gives her to serve and bless others. How a woman accomplishes that is based on her temperament and personality. The only thing that will keep her from realizing this fantasy is selfishness and not caring about others.

In the end, this type of woman will make a positive impact on others by mirroring Christ’s walk. It might not be evident to those she is helping that she is exhibiting Christ’s character traits, but she will exude some sort of inner compassion that is different from the average person. This type of woman will likely be industrious, compassionate, involved in the

community and is involved in helping the poor and needy. She makes a positive impact on her family and believes that God can overcome in any situation. She is willing to apply God's truth to her life and believes in the power of God. She will display a belief that her life is better with Christ in it and will engage with others in order to show the love she feels from God. She will display a forgiving attitude and believe that God can overcome any situation.

Fantasy Theme 7: Woman can ascertain God's intended destiny for their life.

The message of this theme is not extensive. The reality is that for a woman to achieve her destiny, she must understand how to live in victory over the oppression in their life. By doing this, she is enabled to accomplish the unique destiny God intends for her life. With God's help she can discover this destiny and make steps in her life to achieve it. However, not every woman knows that they have a destiny for their life. But, Moore's message suggests that not only does each woman have a destiny but also each woman has a unique destiny that they alone can carry out.

The evidence suggests that living in victory is possible and that fulfilling a unique destiny is possible. To accept this fantasy a woman must all ready be at a place where she believes that God understands her sufferings and is willing to help her overcome them. Ideally, this woman is all ready in the process of healing. A woman is living in victory and liberty:

This is supposed to be your life, this is supposed to be my life, not the exception, ladies, but the rule. Listen to this verse. Isaiah 54:17, some of you may already have this engraved on your heart. "No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This..." Listen to this, I love this. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me." Your heritage is to be

able to speak the truth when you're being oppressed. There is no weapon that has the right in the hands of the evil one or in the kingdom of darkness to be lifted up against you. You have the right to refute that because you are in Christ (Moore, Goals).

Living in victory is about daring to journey to a different place, even if that journey is sometimes painful. They realize that God is willing to do anything to help them be a "display of His splendor" (Moore, Splendor).

This woman realizes that fulfilling her destiny is possible. Moore clearly used the Israelites as an example of a people who had overcome their oppression and gone on to fulfill their destinies. The key to success is know that God determines if people prosper. Moore bases this concept on Psalm 1:

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the ways of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night and he is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers." I want you to look at that promise. That is a promise out of Scripture. It's not talking about a physical kind of prosperity. Although God has the right, sovereignly to prosper us any way He sees fit, but the promise is that what He calls us to put our hands to we'll not fail if they're in His name and they are in His strength. Now He is the only one that gets to inspect that fruit and say if it's a success. Sometimes we may look at something and we may not know for years that that bore any fruit at all. It's for God to say and so often He'll show us, but He says, "For those who love my Word you will be like a tree planted by streams, planted by streams of water." We're going to be a planting of the Lord (Moore, Yoke).

A woman living this way exhibits a few traits: they believe God, they glorify God; they find satisfaction in God; they experience God's peace; and, enjoy God's presence.

Believing God is what helps a woman from slipping back into bondage (Moore, Steadfast). They believe that their troubles are momentary and meant to bring forth good:

He said believe me when I tell you that what I am doing in you, it seems like it's taking a life-time right now, but in the scheme of eternity, it's a breath. When I get you here and you see what treasures I laid up for you because of what we went through together and the proof of the belief that was in you, you're going to know it was more than worth it. He said I have something waiting for you that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. I look at those words, "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day"(Moore, Ashes).

Also, living according to Biblical standards will help a woman glorify God with their life, which will lead to them finding satisfaction and experiencing deep peace.

Living in victory can be intimidating. Moore reminds women of Judges 6:1, which says, "I will always go before you and I will always bring you victory" (Moore, Goals). Moore comforts women who do not feel that they can live in victory:

He said "If you are afraid" now get this if you're not afraid just stay right here. But if you happen to be afraid, why don't you go on down and listen to what they have to say? I'm telling you the dust didn't settle, he was up and running. Why? Because he was scared to death. And you know what? That's OK with God. Now ladies what this shows us is that God recognizes our fears and our insecurities. I feel the Spirit of God sometimes says to me, "You know Beth, I understand that you're not real happy about

this. I understand that you're scared to death of this. I understand that you may be crying over this, cry, shake, whatever, but do my will child. Do my will; I have victory for you" (Moore, Goals).

Sometimes life can be rough, but Moore says that all women are able to live in victory based on the authority provided in God's Word.

Finally, each woman can fulfill their destiny as they work to accomplish the will of God (Moore, Yoke). A woman can prosper from anywhere. They can also know that God cares about the details of their life. The best way for a woman to succeed would be to make a covenant with God that acknowledges that His truth is her truth:

One we're making voluntarily with God, to make a covenant. It also means and this is something that I think can apply to every single one of us in this room, this is something we understand even if we don't really understand the whole role of covenant in life. It means to make a firm commitment, to make a firm commitment. I am wondering today before we continue on in our own individual paths on the freedom trail, I am wondering if before we do that we could agree to make a binding agreement with God and that's a question that only you individually can answer (Moore, Splendor).

Moore encourages women to actually write this out on paper, but the key here is that a woman is saying that she will consistently seek to glorify God with her life.

Women who are self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God will not be successful in fulfilling their destiny. The woman who succeeds has a steadfast mind and

is submissive and obedient to the things of Christ. A good picture of someone who displays these traits is Beth Moore. She describes her journey:

You see I began with a confidence in myself. I now have zero confidence in myself. My confidence is in Christ. What I'm going to tell you as we leave one another's company and we go on our separate ways, bind yourself to Christ! Bind yourself to Him. And if you tear that agreement, you get back at it and you tie it again and by the time you see Him face to face you may present Him something that looks just like this, it may have 10 knots in it, but beloved, by the time you've tied 10 knots in it you're probably going to be this far from Him. Keep pulling in (Moore, Splendor).

This is how women ascertain God's intended destiny for their life.

Observing this woman in action would be like observing a hero action movie. All good hero movies revolve around the hero achieving their intended destiny against an antagonist figure. In this sense, a woman is empowered by her relationship with God and she believes that no enemy can prevail against her. She believes she is robed up and able to display God's splendor, glory, renowned, satisfaction, peace, and presence. She is bonded to Christ as his slave and finds ultimate happiness in what she perceives is the presence of God. Most importantly, this woman will live her life in a way that inspires others to believe that victory is possible.

Heroes/Villains

The battle in these messages is between one hero and one villain. They each go by many names, but the story remains the same. Satan wreaks havoc in this message because he enslaves people in two ways. One way is with the misery and suffering that comes from making women think there is no good God worth trusting. The other way is with pleasure and prosperity,

making women think they have all they need so that God is irrelevant. To be freed from this bondage, women must submit to the hero, God. They must confess that the pleasures and prosperity of life do not compare to the worth of God. But, Satan hates this repentance and does all he can to prevent it. That is his bondage. God is the victor because He is sovereign. Satan is not sovereign over His captives. God is. God is the one who liberates women from the snare of the Devil.

God is the three-in-one hero. He is God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in one, but each part of his entity has specific traits within this message. God is the protector and deliverer. He is the one who frees women from bondage. God gives woman a purpose and has a specific will for each individual's life. Through Jesus, God became the hero that was prophesized in Old Testament Scripture. Jesus veils his beauty so that women can become more beautiful. Jesus became despised and rejected so that women could be favored and accepted. Jesus frees women from their iniquities and has a power women can learn to harness. Most importantly, Jesus death on the cross is the reason that we can be set free. The best part of God's hero quality is that through his Holy Spirit each woman is given an inner guide that allows her to directly communicate with Him. Romans 8: 31, 37 states: "If God is for us, who can be against us?...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ...No, in all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." This is the God Moore wants women to embrace. A God who will set them free no matter their circumstance.

The archenemy is Satan. He is known through most of the messages as "the enemy." Satan is the villain who seeks to put women in bondage and make them feel impoverished, defeated, and worthless. Satan encourages self-worship and has his own brand of humanism. He

is an opportunist in bad situations and is continually looking to recruit people for his dark kingdom. When each message is broken down, different hero/villain traits emerge.

In “Goals of Breaking Free,” this enemy is recognized throughout the message as the one who is the oppressor. Apparently, this oppressor is the one who holds woman in their mental bondage. Though this villain appears to be nameless, some references to Bible passages allude to the fact that he is the Devil or Satan of the Bible. This sentiment is deduced based on the fact that the heroes, God and Christ, are clearly defined. Biblically, the arch enemy of God and Christ is the one known as the “Angel of Light,” “Lucifer” or “Satan.” Moore uses the Biblical story of the Israelites to show the power of God and to develop God into clear hero. Moore strengthens the argument by illuminating the fact that God and Jesus will free a woman from bondage in much the same manner as God delivered the Israelites (Moore, Goals).

In “Untying the Cords of the Yoke,” no apparent villain emerges in this message. However, it does seem that a person being held captive is looked upon in a negative way. Moore makes a point to say that she can pick out those who are in spiritual bondage, which suggests that there is something overtly negative that stands out from those living in “captivity.” The hero Jesus is described as “the messiah” in this message. Moore leads the audience to look upon him as a mighty warrior who can look straight into the heart of his people. Moore reminds hearers that Jesus was a suffering servant. Moore paints the picture of Christ “becoming sin” and taking a beating that marred him beyond recognition. Ultimately, Christ died on the cross, crushed by our iniquities so that we can be freed from our bondage and sin to become more beautiful (Moore, Yoke).

In “Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins,” the clear hero is God. God is available to set people free from the sin and prejudice. God is the deliverer who seeks to help people overcome the pain

of sin and prejudicial bondage in life. The enemies of this session are the polar opposite of God's perfect intentions. The aforementioned "enemy" from previous sessions is further villainized with Biblical references like Matthew 12:25, which describes him as an opportunist in bad situations. "The enemy" also seeks to pit us against each other in order to distract us from God's plan of harmony. The Holy Spirit, another hero, is established as an inner guide to help in the journey of overcoming prejudice (Moore, Ruins).

In the "Steadfast Mind," the enemy, who at this juncture is clearly labeled as Satan, is seeking to lead people to self-worship via his own brand of humanism. Consequently, from now until Christ returns women will have to learn to deal with escalating spirituality that is both deceptive and demonic in nature. As this warfare intensifies, the enemy, described my multiple Scriptures (Acts, Matthew, Revelation, and Isaiah), will work to convince a great multitude of people that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit do not exist (Moore, Steadfast).

Understanding the battle between God and Satan is clearly important to the development of these fantasy themes. They provide the basis for positive and negative character traits in the life of the women.

Rhetorical Vision

The identification of Moore's vision provides the answer to the second research question pointed out at the onset of this paper: is there a rhetorical vision created by these fantasies? The seven fantasies become a vision when they are weaved together to create a Biblically based social reality. Beth Moore's rhetorical vision emerges from the fantasies eloquently. According to the research her vision can be synopsized as follows:

Moore believes a woman should embrace God with her entire heart, soul, mind, and strength. Accomplishing this feat is the only way a woman can live a life of freedom, satisfaction, purpose, and fulfillment. Moore believes that women who become repentant servants glorify God with their lives and increase in both their spiritual and physical beauty. Moore not only believes that a woman can develop a deep, sustainable, satisfying relationship with God she also believes that woman can teach others to do the same. Moore trusts that true freedom and wisdom can be found as believers subject themselves to the authority of God's will and providence. Most importantly, Moore has faith that every woman has a God-given, unique destiny that can be achieved by ascertaining God's call and submitting to His will. Ultimately, none of this can be fulfilled unless a woman accepts the free gift of salvation available through the belief in Jesus Christ's virgin birth, crucifixion on the cross and resurrection.

The components of this message are seen time and time again in every aspect of this message.

The vision is driven by a deep, satisfying, peace-providing relationship with God. The sustainability of the vision rests in the enduring quality of the Christian faith and message.

Moore is riding the wave of generations before her. Believers have existed for centuries and women and men like Moore continue to propagate the message and convert followers.

The appeal of this rhetorical vision can be seen in the development of each of the contributing seven fantasy themes. This vision suggests that there can be continuity in the heart, soul and mind. Women are able to find purpose, fulfillment and freedom from the confines of their mundane, ordinary lives. Women are able to make positive changes to their character and life, which results in them becoming more beautiful. Women are introduced to a relationship that only yields positive benefits. Women are taught that God is a person who loves them

unconditionally and is continually available to them when they need guidance or someone to listen to them.

Women are put at ease as they are taught that one day they will have a home in heaven. In heaven there will not be any pain, suffering or physical hardships. Women are taught that if they endure on Earth and “fight the good fight” they will be rewarded in heaven. The appeal is obvious. Women who embrace this vision are able to find peace, serenity, and purpose for their lives. And, women are able to become content despite their circumstances. This social reality may seem like an imaginary utopia to outsiders, but followers exhibit a true sense of joy and happiness as they embrace this lifestyle.

Moore creates a sense of identity between the message and her audience by being vulnerable. She works to prove that anyone can join her on this journey. Moore uses her own experiences of “walking this road before” to establish the fact that doing her study will result in a positive outcome. Moore builds credibility with her audience by reminding them of the journeys she has taken them on before when they studied David, Moses, and Paul. Moore identifies with the video audience by saying that she “imagines the faces of those watching.” Moore creates a personal connection by telling the audience, “You are worth it” (Moore, Goals).

Moore addresses the audience’s here-and-now concerns by making the message real and personal. She guides listeners to imagine how the Israelites actually felt in the stories of the Bible. Moore transitions by having the audience translate the feelings to their own life. Moore then compels the hearer to understand how they can harness the power of Christ by allowing Him to come and work in their life. She justifies the hearer’s place in the world by telling them that God has planted them exactly where they are supposed be. Throughout the message Moore addresses the audiences need to have certain questions answered by suggesting that most of their

questions will be addressed in the coming weeks of study. Moore's second suggestion is to remind the hearer that God is always willing to hear their questions.

A woman who embraces this vision is likely completely enthralled by God. This woman can exist at any stage of life. This woman is likely a suitable wife, mother and friend. This woman is a paragon of virtue: trustworthy, industrious, organized, and loving. This woman is able to order the priorities of her world. She likely has a husband who trusts her and her children likely praise her. Her home is both efficient and welcoming. She is involved in her community and is likely willing to help the poor. The ideal woman is saved by grace and a special creation of God made in God's own image. That woman knows her true home is heaven and that her blessings are a result of God bestowing them upon her. She likely makes wise investments. The ideal woman is beautiful because her inner beauty radiates for all to see.

Additionally, this woman would embrace freedom and likely believe that: oppression is possible in a woman's life; God can set her free from oppressive circumstances; God can overcome anything; God wants her to live happy and free despite her circumstances be willing to submit to God's authority; she has received the free gift of salvation from Jesus Christ; it is possible to have a relationship with God; her life has a purpose; God takes a personal interest in her; that bondage exists; she could listen to God; God things she is beautiful; when she studies God's Word her beauty is enhanced; God can bring victory to her life; she could absorb God's wisdom; she has a unique destiny; it is possible to cry out to God; and, that she benefits from a relationship with God. She would also be willing to submit to God's authority, Word and Holy Spirit. She would likely be living free from bondage and find her relationship with God fulfilling and satisfying.

The message seems to be driven by freedom from bondage and oppression. Moore creates a sense of identity between the message and her audience by being vulnerable. She works to prove that anyone can join her on this journey. Moore uses her own experiences of “walking this road before” to establish the fact that doing her study will result in a positive outcome. Moore builds credibility with her audience by reminding them of the journeys she has taken them on before when they studied David, Moses, and Paul. Moore identifies with the video audience by saying that she “imagines the faces of those watching.” Moore creates a personal connection by telling the audience, “You are worth it” (Moore, Goals).

Whether or not the audience recognizes it or not, the vision also drives women to accomplish a particular set of goals. They are working to experience mental and emotional freedom as they overcome their oppressive circumstances. They are working to be completely changed by becoming Christ followers. They are working to be “one” with God as they embrace being His favorite child. They are studying God’s Word to enhance their physical beauty. They are listening to God to be released of bondage and to find fulfillment, freedom, and satisfaction by embracing Christianity as a lifestyle. They are working to impact themselves and others in a positive way as they mirror Christ’s walk. In the end, they are working to ascertain God’s intended destiny for their life.

Finally, the vision seems to be driven by an underlying question: Why do bad things happen? As Moore establishes that God allows bad experiences to happen in order to produce “beauty from the ashes,” she is acknowledging a woman’s inherent need to feel beautiful. Moore becomes an advocate for God here by expressing that every thing he allows to happen to us is for our good. Of course, this does not include the times where blatant sins produce obvious consequences, but it does lend some justification to certain circumstances people endure. As an

example, she tells the story of losing her adopted son Michael, enduring the death of her mother, and sending her daughter Amanda off to college (Moore, Ashes).

The vision appears to be sustained by the shared consciousness between Moore and the participant. The ultimate sense of shared consciousness in this message peaks as Moore reveals that Jesus shares consciousness with each of them. She uses Scripture to proclaim that Jesus can see into every aspect of their life, even the matters that are seemingly hidden. Though seemingly invasive, the reality of this is to understand that God loves them no matter what they are going through. More importantly, despite how they may each feel, there is at least one person in the world who can understand them completely. Other evidences of shared consciousness include verbal “amen’s,” common scripture readings, laughter, and prayer times.

The vision also seems to be sustained by pre-established common beliefs. Based on the messages, the assumed beliefs that are brought to the table include: God through his love will provide a “happily ever after”; God prioritizes character over comfort; the mind is a battlefield; and, the blessing of liberty in Christ can only be realized as Christ becomes Lord of the mind. The Scriptural context for some of these beliefs is Isaiah 26:3: “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.” In the end, women believe that the process of giving their minds to Christ is worth all the blood, sweat and tears they shed through the course of time it takes for them to attain their own personal “liberty in Christ” (Moore, Steadfast).

Additionally, the first and most obvious assumption is that the participant believes in God. They may or may not be a Christ follower, but to embrace the vision that is a choice they will ultimately have to make. The participant would also have to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, which more frequently references as proof for her points. For those points to

make an impact there would have to be a shared belief that the Word of God has the power to change lives. Last, it also appears that there is a common understanding of who “the enemy” is. The enemy, who is clearly a villain in this message, is not directly identified in the first part of this message; therefore, it is assumed that the participant would have an understanding of the enemy prior to being a participant of this study.

The last way this vision is sustained is by Moore’s establishment of common ground between herself and the participant. Moore creates that sense by consistently using “You and I” statements, such as, “This time you and I hit the pavement.” The audience shares a common consciousness initially through the bond they have via their individual attempts at their homework. The consciousness is further enhanced as Moore directs them through the Bible in order to deepen their understanding of what God desires for them.

Moore also builds a bond between the participants by showing them what they have in common. Moore addresses the concerns of those who feel defeated by implying that they can overcome defeat. Moore teaches that they can be victorious as they learn to surrender to God. She tells them that victory is possible for those willing to become “mighty warriors.” An obvious concern that is raised in this message is a sense of not knowing whether each individual can fight this battle. Moore addresses this here-and-now concern by explaining that Christ protects all who serve Him and call Him Lord. (Steadfast Mind)

Vision Analysis

The third research question gives the latter research relevance. Knowing a speaker’s rhetorical vision is beneficial, but knowing how that vision fits in with the community that makes it thrive contributes to the understanding of the vision’s sustainability. Outsiders are also able to

have a better understanding of the vision within its proper context. Initial research into the life of Beth Moore revealed strong ties to a Southern Baptist Heritage. It was later discovered that her church, publishers, and ministry were tied together by a particular doctrine.

Moore's association with LifeWay, Broadman and Holman Publishers, and her church, which is a part of the Southern Baptist Convention, automatically delineates that her ministry is subject to the Baptist Faith and Message. However, it is more relevant to consider whether or not the vision is consistent with general evangelical Christian doctrine because that better encapsulates those who she ministers to. Regardless, there are clear parallels and those parallels emerged in the presentation of this message as well. As noted in the methodology, Appendix E: Baptist Faith and Message offers an example of an evangelical Christian doctrine.

This part of the analysis seeks to understand whether or not the rhetorical vision and fantasies that emerged in this study are cohesive with evangelical Christian doctrine. The Baptist Faith and Message doctrine provides a detailed overview of how to interpret a wide-range of theological issues: Scripture; God; man; salvation; God's purpose of Grace; the church; baptism and the Lord's supper; the Lord's day; the kingdom; last things; evangelism and missions; education; stewardship; cooperation; the Christian and social order; peace and war; religious liberty; and the family. A few points in particular seem important to evangelical Christian doctrine:

- With regards to Scripture: The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to Man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction.
- With regards to God: There is only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful

and all knowing: and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past present and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence and being.

- With regards to Man: Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created him male and female as the crowning work of His creation.
- With regards to Salvation: Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.
- With regards to Education: Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
- With regards to Stewardship: God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and binding stewardship in their possessions.

Knowing this overview of the doctrine is helpful in determining whether or not Moore's vision is consistent with evangelical Christian doctrine.

The fantasies seem to delineate underlying plan of salvation. They lead a person down a natural path of salvation, spiritual growth, and living successfully as a Christian. With fantasy one the issue at hand is embracing freedom as a possibility, which correlates with the first step of

the salvation process, embracing salvation as a possibility. The second fantasy gets a woman to make a salvation decision, accept deliverance, and to begin the transformation process. The third fantasy correlates with what Christians call spiritual growth. The remaining fantasies get a woman to start living based on her decision to be a Christian. In fantasy four she deals with her bondage. In fantasy five her self-esteem is enhanced as she realizes she is beautiful and accepted for just who she is in Christ. In fantasy six the woman learns to live like Christ and be other focused. And, in fantasy 7, the woman learns to live in victory so that she can have a happy and fulfilling life with God.

Moore incorporates Scripture on a variety of levels. Her life verse, Hebrews 4:12, confirms her belief: “For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any two-edged sword.” Moore’s entire *Breaking Free* message is designed around Biblical passages. The messages studied in this analysis often ended and began with Scripture reading. Every major point that was made was based on Scripture. Moore often speaks of revelations God made to her through His Word via her Bible reading. Therefore, since her incorporation of the Holy Bible is interwoven with Biblical passage after Biblical passage and because she embraces the Scripture as a lifestyle, it is concluded that Moore does believe the Scriptures are the Word of God.

Appendix A: Statement of Beliefs for Living Proof Ministries also adds credibility to this interpretation because it emphatically states, “We believe that all scripture is ‘God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.’”

Looking deeper into the fantasies that drive the vision, it is also evident that Moore believes that the Word of God is a significant source of power. Moore often states, “God’s Word transforms lives” (Moore, Goals). And she believes that it is important for woman to, “take God at His Word,” which inspires participants to recognize the Word of God as true. In one way or

another Moore is continuously challenging women to, “wise up in the Word” and to realize, “the Word of God can equip us” (Moore, Goals). Moore also promotes God’s Word as “Perfect Law” (Moore, Steadfast).

Not only does Moore promote the power of God’s Word, she also promotes the benefits of God’s Word. In fantasy theme five, it became clear that God’s Word allows women to become wiser and more beautiful. The study of the Word also protects women from spiritual warfare (Moore, Goals). Moore reminds women that the Word also frees them from bondage, “Through prayer and the study of God’s Word, chains are being broken and captives are set free” (Moore, Steadfast). All in all, the Word of God is put in a positive light and repeatedly affirmed as the ultimate truth, which confirms that this part of her vision aligns with the Baptist Faith and message.

Evangelical doctrine looks to God as holding the solitary role of Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. The doctrine suggests that God is holy, perfect, powerful and all knowing. God is the father who reigns with providential care over the entire universe. God is the son represented by Jesus Christ. Jesus lived on earth and perfectly revealed and did the will of God taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities, yet did not sin. The earthly reign of Jesus allowed for reconciliation between God and man. The doctrine also defined God as the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of God, fully divine. It was this spirit that inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures and illuminate truth. It is this Spirit that empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. Based on this definition of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit as the triune God it is concluded that Moore does promote a belief in this God. The evidence for this is provided by the fact that these three combined to be the three-in-one hero of Moore’s *Breaking Free* messages.

God, as hero, also provides victory in a woman's life. God comes across as all-powerful. He is a being who exhibits love, shows compassion, and manifests all that is desirable as a Father figure and friend. He is also a disciplinarian who expects a great deal out of His children. Ultimately, the sacrifices one makes to be "refined" by Him lead to a life that is satisfying and fulfilling.

At different points, Moore acknowledges all three aspects of God. She effectively works to teach women about the varying roles of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God. In short, God is the one woman are to pray to and build a relationship with, the Holy Spirit is the one who enables a woman to commune God and discern God's will, and Jesus is the Savior who came down in human form to die on the cross for the woman's sin.

Moore also promotes Jesus Christ as Savior, another crucial point to evangelical Christian doctrine. In fact, the majority of the message, "Untying the Cords of the Yoke," is dedicated to promoting Christ as Redeemer, Savior, and Lord. Appendix A: Statement of Beliefs for Living Proof Ministries serves as further evidence as it suggests:

- We believe that Jesus Christ is "the way, the truth, and the life."
- We believe that "salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to many by which we must be saved.
- We believe "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Jesus is also a hero. Moore uses Scripture like Isaiah 61:1-3 to promote Him as a Savior and Deliverer of people.

Additionally, Moore often makes comments that, "We can be saved" and comments that, "it is for our freedom that Christ has set us free" (Moore, Yoke). Moore notes that women need

to honor the great sacrifice of Jesus as they work to glorify God with their lives. Throughout the messages Christ is not only presented as Savior, but also the standard example of how a woman should live life. Therefore, as a result, the vision and fantasies seem to be in alignment on this matter as well.

One section of the doctrine states, “All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society.” As Moore carries out her ministry, she is fulfilling that obligation. Moore’s vision and message promotes many aspects of the aforementioned doctrine. Moore attests to the fact that the Holy Bible is the Word of God. Moore advocates that her God is God alone. The research within this paper noted that God was a hero of this message and fulfills his role as Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.

Moore teaches women how they can have a relationship with a triune God who is intelligent, spiritual and personal. Moore encourages women to recognize that they are special crowning work of God’s creation. Moore educates women that the only way they can attain salvation and redemption is to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Moore is a teacher and educator who seeks to enlighten seekers to understand all the treasure and wisdom the Christian faith has to offer. Moore is a good steward who recognizes that God is the source of all blessings. Based on a general understanding of evangelical Christian doctrine and thorough research into Moore’s message, it is concluded that Moore’s vision aligns Biblically to evangelical Christian doctrines.

Chapter 5: Future Research & Conclusions

This study opens the door to a multitude of future research assignments. The identical premise and research questions could be used to expand this analysis to include all eleven of the video messages. The analysis could include use of the book, workbook, and actual interviews from Beth Moore and the audience hearing her messages. Upon the release of the updated version of these video messages, this unchanged analysis could be applied to the updated versions of the messages to determine the differences between the messages and any fantasy themes. Research can be continued in Fantasy Theme Analysis, Beth Moore's Works and with the application of other communication and social theories.

Continuing with Fantasy Theme Analysis

This study only took advantage of part of Ernest G. Bormann's in-depth rhetorical tool. Certain fantasies were discovered to enlighten the reader to a perceived rhetorical vision. During the conceptualization of this project it was anticipated that the research would yield a vision that could be analyzed for its legitimacy within the Evangelical Christian faith. The research allowed for conclusions to be drawn in this matter; but Bormann's theory could be used to analyze the messages of this paper in a more exhaustive manner. Finding the rhetorical vision

is only the tip of the iceberg. The theory can be used to discover how a vision chains out into the community and to determine what type of emotional responses the message generates.

Additionally, the theory can be used to discover rhetorical movements.

The discovery of a rhetorical movement would be significant with regards to the life of Beth Moore. Moore is in the prime of her life. She is selling out arenas, publishing book after book, and she is in high demand in Christian circles. Determining whether or not her message has sparked a rhetorical movement could prove beneficial. This research could open the door to see how women in her field: dramatize themes to make them popular to new converts; create visions that are sustainable; create excitement for a common symbolic reality; develop messages for specific contexts; and how they make their public rhetoric personal works of art.

In addition to this, work could be done to discover Moore's symbolic cues, code terms and archetypal fantasies. Ultimately, the theory could be exhausted throughout all her works to determine how Moore creates a community of consciousness through the major phases of Symbolic Convergence Theory: consciousness-creating; consciousness-raising; consciousness-sustaining; vision-declining; and, vision-implosion. The evidences provided in this paper would also be enhanced if the fantasies were tested within social groups of women who follow her teaching. Surveying these women would provide statistical evidences to whether or not these perceived fantasies are true.

Finally, this paper was written from an evangelical Christian perspective. As a result, the findings could be changed if analyzed by a researcher with a different point of view or worldview.

Analysis of Moore's Other Work

A review of Moore's life made it obvious that her ministry reaches into a variety of media outlets. Figuring out how her rhetorical vision affects her conferences, other books, Bible studies and media engagements would bring clarity to the extent that this vision affects her life. The examination of her work would refine her vision to be more definitive and complete. Other questions about Moore could also be answered: How does she choose her messages? What are her methods for communing with God? How has "living free" changed her life in recent years? How does she deal with those who disagree with her message? How does she deal with atheists and agnostics? What are her intentions for future ministry? What authors and speakers does she respect? Who does she learn from? How does she incorporate the truths she learns from others into her messages? What limitations does she have with publishers that are Biblically and denominationally grounded? How does she overcome her denominational roots to reach those outside her church?

The list of research for Moore could go on and on. The fact of the matter is that no one has tapped into studying women such as Moore. Who is testing the validity of their messages to make sure they align with the converts preconceived values, beliefs, and attitudes? What sort of hostility exists toward woman speakers preaching and speaking for God in the 21st century?

Applying Other Methods

The options for applying other communication theories to Moore's work are limitless. A few that would surrender attention-grabbing results: Burke's Pentad, Face Management Theory, Narrative Paradigm and, Politeness Theory. The application of these theories would enable scholars to learn more about women speakers and their methods.

Is Moore being persuasive? Kenneth Burke, rhetorician, believes that persuasion depends largely on a speaker's ability to achieve identification (Breaden 72). According to Burke, identification happens when an attitude or action is changed. Applying Burke's Pentad to Moore's work could open the door to understanding her speaking techniques. Furthermore, looking into her persuasive psychological techniques would bestow depth to this analysis.

James Benjamin, author of Principles, Elements, and Types of Persuasion, writes that there are ten expectations to persuade people psychologically: receivers expect rational support; audiences respond to emotions; receivers react to source and message; receivers expect sources ideas to fit with their own experiences; receivers respond to other receivers; receivers generally want the source to succeed; receivers will co-operate with the source; receivers need structure; receivers will tend to go on mental holidays (attention wanders); and receivers need stylized redundancy (Benjamin 62). How does Moore lead people through this process all while incorporating people's intelligence and their ability to be open minded?

The application of Erving Goffman Face Management Theory would be informative. The goal of his theory is to look into personal relationships in order to explain the interactions and experience that people have as they try to manage their identities. His theory is based on the assumption that face, defined as, "our public self-image, or the image of ourselves that we portray during interaction," is central to the coordinated and continued flow of interaction, known as "face management" (Goffman). He deepens this idea as he discussed the fact that people desire to get people to believe in the face they are trying to display. Goffman develops the idea of "facework" as being something that people use to either support or maintain our own and others presented self image, which has the capacity to be threatened by those who are perceiving our intended image.

Brown and Levinson in their book, Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena, establish Goffman's theory further as they look into "face threatening acts." They attempt to deepen Goffman's concepts of protection and prevention. The theory, known as Politeness Theory looks into social distance, relative power, and absolute ranking. Future research could develop how Beth Moore deals with the aforementioned issues associated with Face Management Theory and Politeness Theory. Additionally, making a connection between Face Management Theory and Symbolic Convergence Theory could also strengthen the power of the fantasy themes. Combining theories could help a researcher to discover projected person, audience impact and resulting group formation.

Final Conclusions

Beth Moore is a very dramatic speaker. Moore knows how to use her voice, eyes, gestures and accent to her advantage. Moore does not waste time getting to the heart of women because she feels she relates directly to them. Moore has risen in the rank as one of America's top Bible Teachers despite the fact that she started out as a stay-at-home mom with no formal theological training. Her teachings do not offer quick fixes but proclaim the truth of the Bible plain and simple. Her frank communication style helps women to become passionate about the Word of God.

Chapter One established that Moore was worth studying because she is an effective female communicator that is making an impact in her field as a speaker and author. As such, she is likely to become an important part of Christian history. Additionally, at the time of this study, a rhetorical criticism of Moore's message and technique did not exist. Women speakers are also able to benefit from insight into her structure and audience adaptation techniques. Finally, those

seeking insight into her life, ministry, and message are able to glean information from this criticism. Chapter one also introduced the research questions. The goal was to use Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis to find answers to three questions: What fantasy themes can be identified in her message? Is there a rhetorical vision created by these fantasies? Is that vision consistent with an evangelical Christian doctrine?

The first step in applying Fantasy Theme Analysis was to identify what themes emerged from the messages that were studied. The messages are: "Goals of Breaking Free," "Untying the Cords of the Yoke," "Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins," "Beauty from Ashes," "The Steadfast Mind" and "The Display of His Splendor." After studying these, it became possible for the first research question, what fantasy themes can be identified in her message, to be answered. The messages yielded seven fantasy themes:

- Women can experience mental and emotional freedom as they overcome their oppressive circumstances.
- Women can be totally changed by becoming Christ followers.
- Women can experience "oneness" with God. They can simultaneously experience being God's favorite child.
- Women experience bondage when they do not listen to God. They find fulfillment and satisfaction by embracing Christianity as a lifestyle.
- Women can enhance their physical beauty by studying God's Word.
- Women following God can make a positive impact on themselves and others by mirroring Christ's walk.
- Women can ascertain God's intended destiny for their life.

Each of these fantasies capitulated information pertinent to identifying a rhetorical vision.

The second step was to identify whether or not a rhetorical vision is discernable from the fantasy themes. The identification of Moore's vision provides the answer to the second research question and shows how the seven fantasies become a vision when they are weaved together to create a Biblically based social reality. Beth Moore's rhetorical vision emerged from the fantasies eloquently.

According to the research her vision can be synopsisized as follows: Moore believes a woman should embrace God with her entire heart, soul, mind, and strength. Accomplishing this feat is the only way a woman can live a life of freedom, satisfaction, purpose, and fulfillment. Moore believes that women who become repentant servants glorify God with their lives and increase in both their spiritual and physical beauty. Moore not only believes that a woman can develop a deep, sustainable, satisfying relationship with God she also believes that woman can teach others to do the same. Moore trusts that true freedom and wisdom can be found as believers subject themselves to the authority of God's will and providence. Most importantly, Moore has faith that every woman has a God-given, unique destiny that can be achieved by ascertaining God's call and submitting to His will. Ultimately, none of this can be fulfilled unless a woman accepts the free gift of salvation available through the belief in Jesus Christ's virgin birth, crucifixion on the cross and resurrection. The components of this message are seen time and time again in every aspect of this message. The vision is driven by a deep, satisfying, peace-providing relationship with God. The sustainability of the vision rests in the enduring quality of the Christian faith and message.

The appeal of this rhetorical vision can be seen in the development of each of the contributing seven fantasy themes. This vision suggests that there can be continuity in the heart, soul and mind. Women are able to find purpose, fulfillment and freedom from the confines of

their mundane, ordinary lives. Women are able to make positive changes to their character and life, which results in more inner beauty. Women are introduced to a relationship that only yields positive benefits. Women are taught that God is a person who loves them unconditionally and is continually available to them when they need guidance or someone to listen to them.

If a rhetorical vision did emerge, the third and final step was to determine whether or not that vision was consistent with evangelical Christian doctrine. Understanding the cohesiveness of her vision to this doctrine will allow for people to determine whether or not Moore's message is relevant to their life. The Baptist Faith and Message is a typical representation of an evangelical Christian doctrine. Based on doctrines like these it is safe to assume that a person abiding by this doctrine would: believe the Scriptures are the Word of God; believe that Jesus is savior; believe that the Bible represents absolute truth; and that the Bible is a resource for understanding how to live life according to God's will. Comparing her vision to these foundational ideals revealed that her vision is cohesive with Biblical standards promoted by evangelical Christians and their doctrine.

Finally, as previously stated there are many opportunities for this research to be extended. Overall, this project seemed to be worthwhile. Bormann's theory proved to be an effective tool for opening the door to understanding speaker's rhetorical themes. This analysis should prove beneficial to those wanting to understand Moore and her rhetorical vision. The study broke down her life message and provided insight into her rhetorical vision while simultaneously providing insight into her actual life. It is expected that this research will act as a springboard for other scholars to investigate the fascinating life of Beth Moore and other women speakers.

Bibliography

- Aden, RC. "Fantasy themes and rhetorical visions in the 1984 presidential campaign: Explaining the Reagan mandate." Speaker and Gavel 23 (1986): 87-94.
- Arthur, Kay. How to Study the Bible. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 1994.
- Beauty from the Ashes. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.
- Benjamin, James. Principles, Elements, and Types of Persuasion. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997.
- Bormann, Ernest G. "Colloquy I. Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: Ten Years Later." Quarterly Journal of Speech (1982): 288-305.
- . "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality." Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1972): 396-407.
- . The Force of Fantasy: Restoring the American Dream. 2nd Edition. Southern Illinois University Press, 1985.
- Bormann, Ernest G., John F Cragan and Donald Shields. "An Expansion of the Rhetorical Vision Component of Symbolic Convergence Theory: The Cold War Paradigm Case." Communication Monographs 63 (1996): 1-28.
- Bormann, Ernest G., John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields. "Three Decades of Developing, Grounding, and Using Symbolic Convergence Theory." (n.d.).
- Bormann, Ernest G., John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields. "In Defense of Symbolic Convergence Theory: A Look at the Theory and It's Criticisms After Two Decades." Communication Theory 4 (1994): 259-294.
- Bormann, Ernest G., Jolene Koester and Janet Bennett. "Political Cartoons and Salient Rhetorical Fantasies: An Empirical Analysis of the '76 Presidential Campaign." Communication Monographs 45 (1978): 317-329.
- Breaden, Barbara L. Speaking to Persuade. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1996.
- Brekus, Catherine A. Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740-1845. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Bridgewater, Mary Ann. Prayers of the Faithful. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008.
- Callahan, Linda Flor. "A Fantasy Theme Analysis o the Political Rhetoric of the Reverend Jessie Louis Jackson, the First "Serious" Black Candidate for the Office of the President of the United States." The Ohio State University, 1987.

- Casey, Michael W. "The First Female Public Speakers in America (1630): Searching for Egalitarian Christian Primitivism." The Journal of Communication and Religion 22.1 (2000): 1-28.
- Cato, Amy. Beth Moore April Pressley. January 2007.
- Chambers, Oswald. My Utmost for His Highest (Updated Edition). Grand Rapids: Discovery House Publishers, 1995.
- Christianity Today. "Beth Moore." July 2003. Christianity Today.
<<http://www.christianitytoday.com/cw/2003/julaug/18.66.html>>.
- Cragan, John F. and Donald C. Shields. "Translating Scholarship Into Practice: Communication Studies Reflecting the Value of Theory-Based Research." Journal of Applied Communication Research 72.1 (1999): 108-110.
- Deen, Edith. Great Women of the Christian Faith. Chappaqua: Christian Herald Books, 1959.
- Demoss, Nancey Leigh. "Portrait of a Woman Used by God." Biblical Womanhood in the Home. Ed. Nancey Leight Demoss. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002.
- Doyle, Marsha Vanderford. "'The Rhetoric of Romance: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of Barbara Courtland Novels.'" Southern Speech Communication Journal 1997: 24-48.
- Duffy, Margaret. "High Stakes: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the Selling of Riverboat Gambling in Iowa." Southern Speech Communication Journal 1985: 117-132.
- Dunn, Patrick. "Dynamic Faith." Albuquerque Journal 14 April 2007.
- Elwell, Walter A, ed. Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. 2nd. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Endorf, Mary. "The Rhetorical Visions of Elementary School Principles." University of Minnesota, 1986.
- Endres, Thomas G. "Rhetorical Visions of Unmarried Mothers." Communication Quarterly 1989: 134-150.
- Farrel, Bill and Pam Farrel. Red-Hot Monogamy. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2006.
- Farrell, Thomas B. "Critical Models in the Analysis of Discourse." Western Journal of Speech Communication 44 (1980): 300-314.
- Ford, Leigh Arden. "Fetching Good Our of Evil in AA: A Bormannean Fantasy Theme Analysis of The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous." Communication Quarterly 1989: 1-15.

Foss, Sonja Kay. "A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the Rhetoric of the Debate on the Equal Rights Amendment, 1970-1976: Toward a Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements." Northwestern University, 1976.

Goals of Breaking Free. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.

Goffman, Erving. Interaction Ritual. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967.

Gunn, Joshua. "Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and its Decline in U.S. Rhetorical Studis." Quarterly Journal of Speech 89.1 (2003): 41-59.

—. "Response." Quarterly Journal of Speech 89.4 (2003): 373.

Haywood, Chanta M. Prophesying Daughters: Black Women Preachers and the World, 1823-1913. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003.

Hosier, Helen Kooiman. 100 Christian Women Who Changed the 20th Century. Grand Rapids: Baker House Book Company, 2000.

Hundley, Mandisa. Idol Eyes. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007.

Iilka, Richard J. "Rhetorical Dramatisation in the Development of American Communism." Quarterly Journal of Speech 63 (1977): 413-427.

Kent, Carol. Speak Up with Confidence. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2007.

King, Andrew A. "Booker T. Washington and the Myth of Heroic Materialism." Quarterly Journal of Speech 1974: 323-327.

Koester, Jolene. "The Machiavellian Princess: Rhetorical Dramas For Women Managers." Communication Quarterly 30 (1982): 165-172.

Kroll, Becky Swanson. "From Small Group to Public View: Mainstreaming the Women's Movement." Communication Quarterly (1982): 139-147.

Kume, Teruyuki. "A Dramatistic Analysis of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Two Fireside Chats in 1933." Academic Literature and Language Division (1982): 1-21.

Larson, Rebecca. Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad (1700-1755). New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1999.

Lerner, Gerda. The Woman in American History. Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1971.

- Living Proof Ministries. About Beth Moore. 2007. 21 Apr 2007
<http://www.lproof.org/about_beth_moore.asp>.
- . Mission Statement. 30 November 2009.
<<http://www.lproof.org/AboutUs/OurMission/default.htm>>.
- . "Mr. and Mrs. Keith Moore Renew Their Wedding Vows." 2003. Living Proof Ministries. 18 March 2008 <<http://www.lproof.org/anniversary.htm>>.
- Lockyer, Herbert. All the women of the Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- McFarlane, Hilary. "The Balanced Life: Reconciling Personal Faith with Practicing Dogma."
The Women's Study Bible. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- Mohrmann, G.P. "An Essay on Fantasy Theme Criticism." Quarterly Journal of Speech 68.2 (1982): 109.
- . "II. Fantasy Theme Criticism." Quarterly Journal of Speech 44.4 (1980): 265-273.
- Montgomery, Leslie. Were it Not for Grace. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005.
- Moore, Beth. A Woman and Her God. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007.
- . Breaking Free. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2000.
- . Breaking Free: Making Liberty in Christ a Reality in Life. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1999.
- . Feather's From My Nest: A Mother's Reflections. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2005.
- . Stepping Up: A Journey Through the Psalms of Ascent. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2007.
- . To Live is Christ. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- . Voices of the Faithful. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, n.d.
- . When Godly People Do Ungodly Things. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002.
- Muessig, Carly. "Prophecy and Song: Teaching and Preaching by Medieval Women." Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity. Ed. Beverly Mayne
- Kienzle and Pamela J Walker. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998. 146-158.
- Mullen, Faith. "Ten Years of Hate: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the White Supremacy Rhetoric of Robert E. Miles." University of Nebraska at Lincoln, 1991.

O'Fahey, Charles J. "Reflections on the St. Patrick's Day Orations of John Ireland." Ethnicity 1975: 244-257.

Pierce, Chonda. Laughing in the Dark. New York: Howard Books, 2007.

Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.

Rothschild, Jennifer. Lessons I Learned in the Dark: Steps to Walking by Faith Not by Sight. Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2002.

—. Self Talk, Soul Talk. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2007.

Schultze, Quentin. Here I Am. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005.

Semmel, Keith D. "The Pepperland Perspective: A Study of the Rhetorical vision of the Beetles 1962-1970." Bowling Green State University, 1980.

Sheilds, Donald C. and C Thomas Preston. "Fantasy Theme Analysis in Competitive Rhetorical Criticism." National Forensic Journal 3 (1985): 102-115.

Shirer, Priscilla Evans. A Jewel in His Crown. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.

Spangler, Ann and Jean E Syswerda. Women of the Bible: One Year Devotional. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Spitza, Carole and Kathryn Carter. "Women in Communications Studies: A Typology for Revision." Brummett, Barry. Reading Rhetorical Theory. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2000. 904-921.

Struck, Jane Johnson. "Beth's Passion." Today's Christian Women 2007 May 2005: 31-33.

Swindoll, Charles. Esther. Nashville: Word Publishing, 1997.

The Display of His Splendor. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.

The Steadfast Mind. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.

Thomas, Angela. When Wallflowers Dance. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005.

Tucker, Ruth A. Women in the Maze: Questions and Answers on Biblical Equality. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1992.

Untying the cords of the Yoke. Dir. LifeWay Christian Resources. Perf. Beth Moore. 1999.

Whately, Faith. Beth Moore April Pressley. February 2008.

Willard, Frances E. Woman in the Pulpit. Chicago: WTPS, 1978.

William, Charles E. "Fantasy Theme Analysis: Theory vs. Practice." Rhetoric Societ Quarterly
Winter.17.1 (1987): 11-20.

Appendix A: Statement of Beliefs for Living Proof Ministries

Belief	Scriptural Reference
We believe that Jesus Christ is “the way, the truth, and the life.”	John 14:6
We believe that “salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to man by which we must be saved.”	Acts 4:12
We believe “if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”	1 John 1:8
We believe “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”	1 John 1:9
We believe that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” and can fully redeem and powerfully use even those who consider they have been “the worst.”	1 Timothy 1:15
We believe God “is patient, not wanting any to perish but everyone to come to repentance.”	2 Peter 3:9
We believe that all scripture is “God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”	2 Timothy 3:16
We believe that every believer in Christ is the “temple of the Holy Spirit.”	1 Corinthians 6:19
We believe we have been “baptized by one Spirit into one body” and recognize the value and equality of all members of the body of Christ. We are “all one in Christ Jesus.” We actively support the unity of all believers eclipsing all denominational, economic, or ethnic diversities	1 Corinthians 12:13 Galatians 3:29
We believe we have “different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit.”	1 Corinthians 12:4
We believe that “our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a Savior from there the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so they will be like His glorious body.” “And so shall we forever be with the Lord.”	Philippians 3:21 1 Thessalonians 4:17
Until then, we believe we are to strive to “live holy and Godly lives as we look forward to the day of God.”	2 Peter 3:11,12

Appendix B: Bible Studies By Beth Moore

Bible Study	Year
Moore, Beth. <u>Breaking Free: The Journey, The Stories</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2009	2009
Moore, Beth. <u>Esther: It's Tough Being a Woman</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2008.	2008
Moore, Beth, Kay Arthur, Priscilla Shirer. <u>Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2008.	2008
Moore, Beth. <u>Stepping Up: A Journey Through the Psalms of Ascent</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2007.	2007
Moore, Beth. <u>A Woman's Heart: God's Dwelling Place</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2007. (Revised Ed.)	2007
Moore, Beth. <u>Loving Well</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2007.	2007
Moore, Beth. <u>Daniel: Lives of Integrity and Words of Prophecy</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2006.	2006
Moore, Beth. <u>The Patriarchs: Encountering God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2005.	2005
Moore, Beth. <u>Living Beyond Yourself (Updated)</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2004.	2004
Moore, Beth. <u>When Godly People Do Ungodly Things: Arming Yourself in the Age of Seduction</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2003.	2003
Moore, Beth. <u>Believing God</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2004.	2003
Moore, Beth. <u>The Beloved Disciple</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2002.	2002
Moore, Beth. <u>Living Free</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2001.	2001
Moore, Beth. <u>Jesus the One and Only</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2000.	2000
Moore, Beth. <u>Breaking Free: Making Liberty in Christ a Reality in Life</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1999.	1999
Moore, Beth. <u>Living Beyond Yourself</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1998.	1998
Moore, Beth. <u>To Live is Christ</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1997.	1997
Moore, Beth. <u>A Heart Like His: Seeking the Heart of God through a study of David</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1996.	1996
Moore, Beth. <u>A Woman's Heart: God's Dwelling Place</u> . Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1995.	1995

Appendix C: Books By Beth Moore
(Ordered by Release Date)

- Moore, Beth. So Long, Insecurity: You've Been a Bad Friend to Us. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 2010.
- Real Freedom: The Journey, The Stories. Nashville, TN: LifeWay Church Resources, 2010.
- , Beth. A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations form Praying God's Word. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2009.
- A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations form When Godly People Do Ungodly Things. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2009.
- Voices of the Faithful: Book 2. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009.
- Looking Up When Life is Looking Down. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- Arm Yourself Against the Enemy's Schemes. Nashville, TN: LifeWay Church Resources, 2008.
- Experience a Fresh Explosion of Faith: A Taste of Believing God. Nashville, TN: LifeWay Church Resources, 2008.
- John: 90 Days with the One and Only. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations form Breaking Free. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations form Believing God. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- The Beloved Disciple. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- To Live is Christ. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008.
- Get Out of that Pit. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007.
- Get Out of that Pit: 40 Day Devotional Journal. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007.
- Breaking Free (Paperback). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007.
- Breaking Free Day By Day. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007.

- . Jesus: 90 Days with the One and Only. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007.
- . My Child, My Princess. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007.
- . David: 90 Days With a Heart Like His. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006.
- . Praying God's Word Day By Day. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006.
- . Loving Well Journal. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006.
- . Feathers From My Nest: A Mother's Reflections. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005.
- . Voices of the Faithful. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005.
- . Discovering God's Purpose for Your Life. Addison, TX: Dunham Books, 2004.
- . Believing God. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2004.
- . Believing God: Devotional Journal. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2004.
- . Things Pondered. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2004.
- . Further Still. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2004.
- . The Beloved Disciple. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003.
- . A Parable about the King. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003.
- . When Godly People do Ungodly Things. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002.
- . Jesus the One and Only. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002.
- . Praying God's Word: Devotional Journal. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.
- . To Live is Christ. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001.
- . A Heart Like His: Devotional Journal. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001.

- . Feathers From My Nest: A Mother's Reflections . Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001.
- . David: Seeking God's Heart. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001.
- . A Heart Like His. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999.
- . Breaking Free. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.
- . Praying God's Word. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.
- . Breaking Free: Discover the Victory of Total Surrender. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.

This partial list does not include Spanish Editions, Booklets, or other Miscellaneous Publications, such as prayer cards and some Devotionals.

Appendix D: Baptist Faith and Message
 Written by the Southern Baptist Convention
<http://www.Bible-researcher.com/baptistfaith.html>

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

- A. God the Father. God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

- B. God the Son. Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6;

15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

- C. God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners

who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

- C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24, 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16, 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the

New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to Biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on Biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.