LIBERTY UNIVERSITY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR: A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

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by

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THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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ABSTRACT

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR: A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

—Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19

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A current ministry concern is mobilizing and engaging the congregation in service projects throughout the immediate and surrounding communities to spread the love of Christ and build the kingdom of God. The purpose of this project is to examine and shed light on an approach or approaches to effectively transform service beyond the walls of the congregation to intentional, appropriate, and relevant service within the community. This subject matter has the potential of transforming congregations from a predominant notion of interaction with self to interaction with organizations and individuals who are part of the church's mission field. In addition, there is the potential for greater and stronger neighborhoods and churches. Research of books, journals, articles, biblical passages, and data from surveys and questionnaires will be utilized in establishing past and present tendencies and in offering guidance for future movement.

Abstract Length: 139 Words

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Churches serving the physical and spiritual needs of their communities are seen as good neighbors and tend to develop a positive reputation for the cause of Christ. However, becoming an outward-focused church requires a big effort and is often missed by many churches. This project was designed with the intent of bringing to further light principles, practices, and perhaps even some procedures that will likely assist churches in their efforts to develop, implement, and sustain ministry that reaches beyond the walls of their sanctuaries and places of worship.

Believers are called to be the salt and light of the world. In regard to the light in today's setting, there seems to be a tendency for the walls and the roofs of sanctuaries and fellowship halls to conceal the light instead of the light moving beyond the walls and roofs, penetrating the farmost-reaching edges of darkness in our societies, cities, and communities. Timothy Keller, in his book *Center Church*, notes, "By his grace, Jesus lost the city-that-was, so we could become citizens of the city-to-come (Hebrews 11:10; 12:22)*, making us salt and light in the city-that-is (Matthew 5:13–16)."[1] Whether city, country, or community, within each, there is a need for continuous engagement by the institution God left for the purpose of carrying on *"all that Jesus began both to do and teach"* (Acts 1:1).

Institutions, particularly those for-profit, such as banks, professional sports teams, television stations, and the likes, have bolstered their stocks, fan bases, and ratings by having components of their organizations directly set up to engage the community. These institutions know there is great benefit in having a presence beyond their corporate walls and getting their brand or trademark out to the community. For instance, television stations will gladly send a

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1. Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 179.

meteorologist to a local middle school during the students' study of a weather phenomenon in hopes of not only bending young ears toward the science of weather but also gaining an audience and, ultimately, increasing their ratings among competitors. Sports teams will lead efforts in building and renovating houses in depressed areas of cities and communities, and they will host clinics for the aspiring young athletes or the very hopeful parents, again to enhance their standing in the community in hopes of selling stadium seats, team clothing items, and other paraphernalia to help sustain billion-dollar markets. Banks, too, provide their services by offering to come and share strategies for first-time checking account holders, protecting retirement accounts for the elderly from fraud, identify theft, and so on. These institutions are all very likely well-meaning and well-intended. They are reaching out with dedicated resources to the community to strengthen their standings in the corporate world. These types of activities are encouraged by such organizations, often written into their corporate charters, and many times are budgeted items from a business standpoint. They do their best to support and engage the community and have oftentimes been successful in improving their reputation in the community and resultantly in gaining market share.

Such framework routinely found in the corporate arena should be no less seen in charters, mission and vision statements, core values, and objective statements of churches, whether written or unwritten. Like the apostle Paul, the church and its members bear the *marks* of the Master and carry the *message* that provides hope and healing for the hurting. The church and its members should be no less diligent in moving to the neighborhoods and surrounding communities with the *brand* of love, carrying in their works and deeds the message and salvation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It would seem the last words of Christ might be of first significance to the church and its members. Prior to his ascension, Jesus stated, "But ye shall

receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Given the name of Jesus as the only name under heaven whereby men, women, boys, and girls are saved, Christ clearly wants name recognition and acceptance so through His name, God the Father will be glorified, and those who seek to identify with Him will be justified by faith in Him.

This research was accomplished to gain insight as to what it takes to further advance market share in God's kingdom, with an underlining premise of a completely opposed kingdom operated by Satan. Specifically, the research examines how the institution of the church may enhance its reputation in the community and strengthen the hands of people who bear the message of the Gospel and who are ultimately responsible for engaging the community, and seeks to establish what may be considered some key ingredients in developing and sustaining community service projects as the church goes about lovingly serving and introducing its neighbors to Jesus Christ, Savior of the world.

The Statement of Limitations

The investigative research of this project will be limited by criteria as follows: First, the churches included in this research are from the Southeastern region of the United States. Churches are represented in states from Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Virginia. Second, the churches surveyed are considered by Outreach Magazine (2012) to be in the top one hundred fastest-growing churches in America. In addition, these were all extremely large congregations with average attendance ranging from a few thousand to over twenty-two thousand at given weekend services. The research is only a sample and should not be considered as indicative of every church in America.

With the sample size limited to a particular region, the study could be considered by some as culturally biased. While culture will be addressed in the literature research, there may be drawbacks in attempting to transpose some of the findings to various other regions of the country. The research is limited in that all regions of the United States were not factored, nor were cultures and countries around the world included. In fact, the investigator's research and findings could be considered biased as the church he pastors is in the region surveyed (Florida).

By no means will the literature research be exhaustive of all that has been written or said regarding matters of outreach, community service projects, growing the kingdom, or of the various models and programs associated with reaching beyond the walls of the congregation. No panacea is figured to be derived. Communities, cities, and countries each have their own idiosyncrasies; therefore, no cookie-cutter approach, silver bullet, or universal remedy will be presented for any debility a church may have regarding outreach. This work is accomplished to take a look, in general, at how some churches may develop and sustain community service projects as they go about sharing the love of Jesus in a very real way.

The Theoretical Basis for the Project

The foremost impetus for this project is rooted in the words of Christ: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Several scriptures stimulated a greater impulse to prepare for and execute tasks in loving others as Christ did while on earth. Starting with Leviticus 19:18, moving to Matthew 19:19, then to Matthew 22:37–39 (the Great Commandment), and ending up with Luke 10:25–37 (the Good Samaritan). These scriptures point to the essence of what a Christian is to be and to do. Spencer Perkins states, *"Stripped of all the theological debates and boiled down to its raw essence, Christianity and Christians will be judged by two actions: how much we love

God and how well we demonstrate that by loving our neighbor."[1] Moreover, such scripture should serve as driving forces to encourage Christians to assist others toward the type of relationship they have with God through Christ. A basis for this research is to examine the scripture and literature and compile input from surveys in order to assist churches in enhancing ministries in helping their "community" connect with God.

Realizing the church was created for the mission and not the mission for the church, one must consider if an institution is in fact a church if it is not carrying out the Great Commission and engaged in developing the community for and striving to connect the community to Christ. James Meeks, pastor of Salem Baptist Church on Chicago's South Side, in an interview with *Leadership Journal*, states, "You can't have a healthy church if it isn't working to improve an unhealthy community."[2] Healthy churches engage the community in which they are established. As was the case of the story involving the Good Samaritan, the church must be concerned with what is happening on the Jericho Road and then be willing to assist its neighbors, particularly when grave contingencies present themselves as is evidenced by even the first glance at communities surrounding many churches today.

On two occasions, Jesus urged his disciples to go out into the highways (Matthew 22:9 and Luke 14:3) and hedges (Luke 14:3) and *bid* them to come and go *compel* them to come in to the marriage and feast that had been prepared. The *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, in its use of *go out* (*exerchomai*), impresses upon the reader that the disciples of Christ are "to go or come forth with mention of the place out of which one goes, or the point from which he departs."[3] The term

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2. Spencer Perkins, *Who is my Neighbor,* http://www.cbeinternational.org/?q=content/who-my-neighbor (accessed November 22, 2012).

3. James Meeks, interviewed by *Leadership Journal*, "Redeeming a Needy Neighborhood," *Leadership Journal* 27, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 40–45.

4. J. Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996).

bid seems to imply a personal, name-by-name invitation given to each individual. The term *compel* lends itself to an invitation with a summons that necessitates the urgency of the invitee's attendance. The task of today's disciple should be no less different. God wants his house filled. To move further toward this end, the church that truly loves its neighbor will want them in the house and will engage the community in a loving call, albeit a pressing call to come and be a part of the wedding (Christ to His bride, the church) and the ensuing feast (eternal fellowship with God).

From scripture and the life of Jesus, one can readily see who their neighbor might be today. Sinners and publicans were his friends. He was concerned about the poor, the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, the lame, as well as children; and he offered them hope. He reached out to those whom society had condemned, such as tax collectors, criminals, prostitutes, and adulteresses. When reading the Old Testament, an individual will continually come across God's concern for the poor and the needy and His rebuke to His people for not carrying out or for not demonstrating His goodness to others. The New Testament repeatedly speaks of Jesus's compassion for those who were less fortunate and His desire for people to be reconciled with God. With this noted, He left the church, individual and body, to continue to do what He started to do and to teach.

A further basis for this work is simply a matter of moving toward perfecting the work Christ left for His disciples to accomplish. Drawing again from the corporate world, a few years ago, there was this huge push within businesses and the military to provide *quality service*. Quality service entailed an organization deliberately and routinely evaluating and adjusting, where needed, its key processes to allow for continuous improvement. The church has key processes, one of which is disciple making. This project takes a look at the front end of this

process in that the church is not so much a receiving post as it is a sending post. More often than not, churches will wait on the community to come to it (receiving post). Christ told us to go to the community (sending post). The project takes on the idea of improving the sending process. In doing so, theoretically, the processes of maturing the saints for the work of the ministry (those already in the church) and of reaching prospects for discipleship (those in the community who are unchurched) will be improved somewhat in unison. To improve on the front end (going to the community) and to improve the process in general, there has to be a sincere look at what has worked and is or is not working today. There has to be a sincere look at how the church goes about serving the community, which consists of individuals who are prospects for salvation and members of the church.

At the risk of being redundant, Acts 1:8 appears to be mainly about connecting people to Christ. In so many words, Christ was telling those gathered to go and tell of his wonderful works. They were instructed to go to Jerusalem (their own community) first and share the love and hope Jesus himself had so earnestly and exhaustingly rendered. Jesus knew the communities of this world would remain filled with hurting people, primarily in need of a Savior. Jesus is indeed the answer for the world today. Armed with the mind-set of Christ and those who made up the early church, churches of today and tomorrow can grow stronger (spiritually), builder better communities, and above all, expand the kingdom of God for His Great glory and honor.

A Statement of Methodology

Beyond the introduction and overview, the proposed design of this project will include five chapters. The division of this project will proceed as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This division of the project serves to answer the questions as to why this topic of "Loving Your Neighbor: A Guide to Developing and Sustaining Community Service Projects" is important and even necessary in the ministry of a church. Within the introduction, one will find a statement of the problem and a vector toward the ultimate aim of the project—avenues of greater connectivity between church and community. Then, a statement of limitations will describe the framework for this project. The theoretical basis will primarily tie the project to a biblical basis and identify statements by individuals who have sought diligently for their churches to engage the community. The introduction will conclude with a literature review of books, journals, Internet sources, magazines and scripture.

Chapter 2: Models and Approaches in Engaging the Community

Chapter 2 will further define the mandate and the need for the church to engage the community. The chapter will present several models and approaches in engaging the community. The aim of this chapter is to educate the reader on some things being accomplished to set the framework to foster a synthesizing of ideas that may be used by churches in general to serve their communities.

Chapter 3: A View of Churches Surveyed: Findings and Discussion

Chapter 3 will take a look at the key components of churches considered to have successful outreach programs. Surveys sent to church leaders will help determine how they go about reaching out to the community and how they sustain their efforts in doing so. Principles, practices, and procedures used by these churches will be highlighted and incorporated into this section of the project.

Chapter 4: Ingredients and Components Necessary in Developing and Sustaining Community Service Projects

Chapter 4 will speak generally to recommended guidelines in developing and sustaining community service projects within a church. There has to be some essential ingredients and components applicable in developing and sustaining community service projects regardless of the section of the community or the side of town to which a church desires to minister. This chapter will explore necessary ingredients and components all of which has as their ultimate goal the introduction of Jesus to the community and the redemption of mankind to God through a personal relationship with Jesus.

Chapter 5: Guidelines and Principles and Closing Remarks

Chapter 5 will bring together a synthesized cluster of ideas based on the literature and research. The guidelines and principles discovered will be delineated and discussed. The hope is to present a series of guidelines and principles which can be undeniably associated with developing and sustaining outreach. It is wise to go into this battle for souls (outreach) with some type of game plan. This section seeks to present this plan. In the end, there will also be some suggestions for further study and a few concluding remarks regarding the study.

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A Review of the Literature

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> And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be
> written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that
> should be written. Amen.
> <div align="right">—John 21:25, King James Version</div>

In order to complete this project, the investigator reviewed several types of publications from multiple sources. The author used sources from published books, journals, magazines,

Internet sites, and the Holy Bible. The following list of sources is demonstrative of those utilized to complete this project.

Books

Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City, by Timothy Keller, is an outstanding textbook on engaging one's city and community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are basically three premises of core commitments offered, and they are drawn from a theological vision for ministry. To be a *center church* in the city or community, the approach must be Gospel-centered, city-centered, and movement-centered. According to Keller, the Gospel of grace found in Jesus Christ is able to change everything from the individual heart to our community to the world. A Gospel-centered approach is fully capable of reshaping the content, tone, and strategy of all that we do as a church and all that we see happening in the community. Keller notes "a few of the ways that the gospel changes us: discouragement and depression; love and relationships, sexuality, family, self-control, witness; human authority, guilt and self-image; joy and humor, and attitude toward class." [4] A city-centered approach requires the church to look beyond its own interest. To do this, it becomes necessary that the church view the culture of the city positively and come to grips with the idea that our communities are wonderful, strategic, and often an underserved place to share the Gospel message. Finally, a movement-centered approach further extends the church's focus beyond self-interaction and strictly edification within to one where the ministry is focused beyond the walls—connecting with the community and building the community for the glory of God.

Robert Lewis, in *The Church of Irresistible Influence,* has worked diligently to present the twenty-first-century church in a light that is influential and impactful in the community. In

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5. Keller, 48.

this work, Lewis demonstrates a real working model of how one church had bridged the chasm

of church and community. He routinely makes reference to what he calls *i2* (irresistible

influence). This vision is based on the words of Jesus found at Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so

shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

heaven." Lewis presents several lessons and experiences from the views of the Fellowship Bible

Church. Some of the lessons and experiences will be referenced later in this project. Lewis first

proffers a question: "What will it take to reconnect your church with your community?" The

second tenders a case to expand the outreach vision through new partnerships and adventures.

The third puts forth requirements for the twenty-first-century church. Lewis notes that "we are

not only reconnecting with the people of our community as salt and light, but we are also

reconnecting with a long neglected part of our Christianity: the part that believes the Great

Commandment (Matthew 22:39) to 'love your neighbor as yourself' is just as essential to the

spread of the gospel and to the sanctification of church members as the Great Commission

(Matthew 28:18–20)."[5]

Breaking the Missional Code, by Ed Stetzer and David Putman, offers churches a step-

by-step process for understanding and strategizing to meet the needs of their communities. They

lead off with a serious discussion about understanding the people in the community so that

churches can become the type of church needed to help the community. They push to the

forefront how getting involved in the community is not an option; rather, getting involved is a

mandate from Christ. Stetzer and Putman propose that churches look at their backyards as

foreign missionaries who have taken time to dissect the communities they serve and deliver the

Gospel to those in foreign lands. These authors often speak of the culture and context where

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6. Robert Lewis, *The Church of Irresistible Influence* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 14.

churches are built. Both seem to stress the importance of analyzing and understanding the community in order to reach it. In analyzing and understanding the community, the relationship between community and church is enhanced. Stetzer and Putman note that "the gospel has and always will travel best along relational lines."[6]

Mark Mittelberg, in *Becoming a Contagious Church,* speaks of churches raising their evangelistic temperature in order to reach their communities for Christ. Mittelberg expresses the need for contagious churches in reaching lost people. He speaks of a six-stage process for accomplishing this outreach objective. In stage 1, the church must be living an evangelistic life. Stage 2 requires instilling evangelistic values in the people of the church. Stage 3 involves establishing the right person as the leader of the effort. Stage 4 entails training and equipping the church (100 percent) with evangelism skills. Stage 5 calls for mobilizing the church's evangelism specialists (10 percent). Stage 6 appeals to the unleashing of an array of outreach ministries and events in the community. Mittelberg stresses it is the method that changes and never the message. He begins his conclusion by stating that "the gospel message is unchanging and it applies to all people" and that "it may take a modern method to effectively communicate the age-old gospel message."[7]

Growing the African American Church, edited by Carlyle F. Stewart II, provides wisdom from some of the most influential African American pastors of recent times on how to grow and sustain a vibrant congregation. The book is presented in five parts. Part 1 provides insight on evangelism. Part 2 offers suggestions on growing the African American church through worship and preaching. Part 3 imparts thoughts on community outreach and thoughts on community

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7. Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 84.

8. Mark Mittleberg, *Becoming a Contagious Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 162–163.

redemption. Part 4 furnishes thoughts on spiritual formation. Finally, part 5 addresses stewardship—the art of giving. In part 3 and chapter 6, James C. Perkins conveys that "the congregation must also be prepared to envision a ministry for the community" and that "to many congregations are so tied to their traditions and the practices they have carried on for years that they have isolated themselves from reality and insulated themselves from change" (and the community they are to serve).[8]

Alan J. Roxburgh, in *Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood,* informs the reader as to how missional churches are reentering their neighborhoods and communities to discover what the Spirit is doing there and to join in shaping their churches around the mission. Roxburgh moves from asking stimulating questions about how to go about reentering the neighborhoods and communities, getting people from coffee shops to the churches. He takes a look at Luke 10:1–2 (the Commissioning of the Seventy) and Acts 1 (the Commissioning of the One Hundred Twenty). He characterizes these as moves of the Spirit and concludes this work with some practical steps on ways a local church can join with the movement of the Spirit. Roxburgh's proposition appeals to the local church "to ask the questions of what God might be up to already in the neighborhood, discerning where they might join with the Spirit."[9]

The Church, A Community Force: A Story of the Development of the Community Relations, a century-old work by Worth M. Tippy, offers some discussion about what a community is and what community relations are. For Tippy, to some degree, the municipalities of communities and church have the same great objectives. Yet on the other hand, only a church

9. Carlye Fielding Stewart III, *Growing the African American Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 90.

10. Alan J. Roxburgh, *Missional Joining God in the Neighborhood* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 181.

can reach the greater interest and needs (redemption) of those of the municipality. Tippy suggests one church alone cannot handle the myriad of concerns of a city (or perhaps community). He recommended a federation of churches with a structure set up to address the concerns of the community. Tippy also makes the distinction between city and community—"the former are largely institution, the latter more intimate and personal."[10] Tippy addresses how his congregation went about developing their neighborhood work. He contributes their net gain of 147 persons in 1913 to a number of factors, including "the social spirit and work of the church."[11]

Thom S. Rainer, in *The Book of Church Growth,* extends multiple thoughts on how to get a church off dead center and again moving vigorously forward for the glory of God. This work initially outlines aspects of church growth in the early times of the Church Growth Movement (1955–1970). Next, he presents a theology of church growth. Third, the reader will find a treatise dealing with principles of church growth. Rainer's third division of principles has direct ties in this project. In the chapter on "Finding the People," he notes that churches with a community presence have found prospects in two ways. "First those who are served by the community ministries are often prospects for salvation and for the church. . . . Second, the church discovers prospects as people in the community get involved in these ministries."[12] The manner in which Rainer concludes the chapter on *"*Finding the People" is noteworthy. He states,

> Churches that obey the Great Commission are "going" churches,
> they seek to find prospects rather than waiting for the prospects to
> come to them. . . . Because our society is becoming a society of

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11. Worth M. Tippy, *The Church, A Community Force: A Story of the Development of Community Relations* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1914), 56.

12. Ibid., 76.

13. Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 240.

isolationists, the need for relationship evangelism increases daily.
Relationship building emanates from our Lord's command to "love
one another" (1 John 3:11). If an unloved world can sense true love
in our lives, they will be drawn to us. Like the Philippian jailer
who could not fathom the sacrificial joy and love of Paul and Silas,
they too may ask: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)[13]

Revolution in World Missions, by K. P. Yohannan, offers insight into world missions in specific and mission fields in general. Befitting this project, Yohannan starts by noting that the Great Commission, the primary task of the church, to go and make disciples is mentioned in all four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John by Christ. He surmises that "one of the biggest mistakes we make is to define mission fields in terms of nation states."[14] Yohannan prefers a definition that conforms to linguistic and tribal groups and infers this is more so a biblical definition of stating that "a mission field is defined as any cultural group that does not have an established group of disciples."[15] He goes on to state that "they will be reached only if someone from outside their culture is willing to forgo his or her own comfortable community to reach them with the Gospel of Christ."[16]

Jonathan Falwell edits a book titled *InnovateChurch* consisting of works from the likes of Elmer Towns, Dave Earley, Ed Hindson, Ergun Caner, David Wheeler, and others. Their efforts seek to spark a challenge to a more compassionate commitment and innovative approaches to reaching the local community. Chapters 8 and 9, written by David Wheeler, addresses outreach and getting back to the basics. With back to the basics, an evangelistic thrust is evident and is seen as permeating all other activities of the church. Wheeler notes that "the goal is not to

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14. Ibid., 246–247.

15. K. P. Yohannan, *Revolution in World Missions* (Carrollton: Gospel for Asia, 2004), 172.

16. Yohannan, 172.

17. Ibid.

encourage the total abandonment of all current activities, but to insert intentionality into every aspect of how the church is manifested and mobilized into the community."[17] Wheeler also addresses ways to *innovate outreach* and suggests going to a website for additional ideas on servanthood evangelism (www.innovatechurch.us).[18]

The book *God and Public Relations: Methods Make Church Renewal Growth and Outreach Happen* was written by Richard B. Hayward. This work speaks of using public relations methods to help improve a church's image, raise morale and hope, and reach the unchurched and perhaps the de-churched. Of particularly interest for this project is chapter 14. "This is an account of how one church reached the un-churched in their community in an inexpensive, minimum-effort, non-threating way."[19]

Growing Your Church through Evangelism and Outreach, edited by Marshall Shelley, is of interest to the project in that it provides suggestions for enlisting members and targeting prospects and what it takes to be a pastor to the community. As everything rises and falls on leadership, Shelley speaks to the commitment of leadership in sustaining long-term ministry and in enlisting the aid of church members. Newcomers, missing members, up-and-outers, and multiple generations are all considered target groups. In chapter 30, David Galloway speaks of the pastor needing to love the community. He said of himself, "I decided that serving the community was one of my core values."[20]

Michael Frost, in *The Road to Missional: Journey to the Center of the Church,* helps to evaluate all that we do in light of God's mission. Three chapters will add to the value of this

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18. Jonthan Falwell, ed., *InnovateChurch* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 133.

19. Ibid., 140.

20. Richard B. Hayward, *God & Public Relations* (Salt Lake City: Millennial Mind Publishing, 2009), 85.

21. Marshall Shelley, *Growing Your Church through Evangelism and Outreach* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), 292.

project: In chapter 5, "Breathing Shalom: Bring Reconciliation, Justice, and Beauty to a Broken World," he asked two profound questions: "If we really believed that the universal reign of God through Jesus has come and is coming in our neighborhood, where would we spend our time; what would we make our priorities?"[21] In chapter 6, "Moving into the Neighborhood: Living Out Incarnational Mission," he speaks of joining God in the neighborhood and living out a mission in close proximity to those to whom the church has been sent—its neighbors. In his conclusion, Frost speaks of two worlds colliding: one of despair, poverty, corruption, slums, etc., and one of generosity, love, compassion, beauty, and justice. In the midst of these broken worlds stands the Christ—"like ambassadors, delegates from one to the other, alerting people to the reign of God through Christ, representing the world as it is waiting to be reborn."[22]

The Unchurched Next Door, by Thom S. Rainer, helps those interested in engaging the community as he addresses stages of faith of the unchurched and some strategies on how to deal with each. Four chapters of Rainer's work add value to this project. In chapter 8, the formerly unchurched offer insight. In chapter 9, there are 10 reasons identified as to why the church has not reached the unchurched. Rainer writes, "One of the key reasons we do not reach the unchurched is that most Christians in America are members of churches that do not reach (out) to the unchurched."[23] In chapter 10, he offers suggestions for reaching the unchurched at their various faith stages.

Ronald E. Vallet, in *Stepping Stones of the Steward: A Faith Journey through Jesus' Parables,* offers insight into using resources to reach out to one's neighbors. He notes that the

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22. Michael Frost, *The Road to Missional: Journey to the Center of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 103.

23. Frost, 143.

24. Thom S. Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door: Understanding Faith Stages as Keys to Sharing Your Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 230.

Christian is called to participate in the purpose of God, using and risking the resources that God

provides to reach others. "Others" includes both those persons with whom you can easily

identify and especially those who are "different," even those whom you may not like, who do not

like you, or about whom you have trepidation. "Reaching out is to be based on actual need, not

on what you feel or think that the other person(s) may or may not deserve."[24] Vallet presents a

greater awareness of what stewardship means in loving and serving neighbors.

The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World, by Alan J.

Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, takes a look at how leaders may retool their congregations for

daring and robust witnessing within their communities. Roxburgh and Romanuk concentrate a

great deal on understanding the society in which the church operates and how the task falls

primarily on the shoulders of the leadership. This work takes the position that genuine

community engagement is necessary in order to reach the community. This is opposed to

churches that typically carry out programs designed for the church, who in turn invites the

community to their program. Pure outreach will involve engaging the community in view of their

context and culture and changing if necessary to meet their needs. According to Roxburgh and

Romanuk, "the challenge is in learning to communicate the biblical stories to connect with the

underlying cultural narratives that dominate the lives of us today (both in the community of

God's people and in the neighborhoods and communities in which we live)."[25]

Bill Hull, in *7 Steps to Transform Your Church* examines what it takes to transform a

church as times and change may often dictate. This work will help offer proposals for shifting

inwardly focused churches to outwardly focused churches or, at a minimum, for helping bring

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25. Ronald E. Vallet, *Stepping Stones of the Steward: A Faith Journey through Jesus' Parables* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 99.

26. Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 181.

about some measure of balance. First, to be effective in the community beyond the church walls, the community of believers must have things together themselves. Hull speaks to *being* the community of believers God designed and then *doing* what God instructed. Hull suggests that people will commit; however, "they have to be transformed from resident to workers."[26]

Church Growth Made Simple: Twenty Simple Changes Guaranteed to Transform Your Church, by George O. McCalep, is a book about change in the institution of the church. This brief yet moving treatise addresses change. All fourteen chapters have elements regarding change that lend themselves to transforming the traditionally isolated and self-focused church. Those churches that already have a great start in loving their neighbor might also *up their game* in studying this book on change. "The message should not and cannot change, but creative methods of presenting the message are needed and welcomed in today's culture and society."[27]

Jerry W. Robinson, Jr., and Gary Paul Green edit the *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice, and Service-Learning*. While not a *religious book*, this work helps define community and community development. Churches desiring to operate within the community will be best served by understanding how the secular world defines and looks at the church in having a mandate to share the Gospel. Each aspect of community development speaks of "planned intervention to stimulate social change for the expressed purpose of the betterment of people," and so development is ultimately a normative activity based on someone's "vision of what might be or ought to be."[28]

The book *11 Innovations in the Local Church: How Today's Leaders Can Learn, Discern*

27. Bill Hull, *Seven Steps to Transform Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 179.

28. George O. McCalep, *Church Growth Made Simple: Twenty Simple Changes Guaranteed to Transform Your Church* (Lithonia: Orman Press, 2005), 31.

29. Jerry W. Robinson, Jr., and Gary Paul Green, *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice, and Service-Learning* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2011), 13.

and Move into the Future, by Elmer Towns, Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird, addresses several types of churches. It is this author's belief that in some way each church should in some way resemble the churches outlined by the authors. Input from chapters on city-reaching churches, community transformation churches, decision-journey churches, and attractional churches will be examined. "While all churches are different, and perhaps they should not be alike, the ones mentioned in this work can teach you something that may sharpen your church's focus, or they may inspire you to add an additional outlet to your church's programs."[29]

Daniel Bernard, in *The Church at Its Best: God's People Empowered, Unified and Mobilized for Their Community,* speaks of taking the Gospel to the world and meeting the day-to-day needs of our local community. There are examples of how partnerships between a local business and the Christian community have come together to transform communities. Bernard believes that the true gift to cities and communities is not the new mayors with their ideas or the new businesses that come into the cities and communities. "God's greatest gift to our communities . . . is the Church, the Body of his Son. And it has been since its genesis on the Day of Pentecost."[30]

Journals

Robert Crosby writes "Rod & Reel, Or New? What It Means to Catch in Community. This article adds value to the project in that Crosby speaks of a team approach in *catching the community*. The article depicts fishing for men as a team sport and adds that fishing for men was never intended to be a solo endeavor. Crosby also addresses the idea of spreading the kingdom

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30. Elmer Towns, Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird, *11 Innovations in the Local Church: How Today's Leaders Can Learn, Discern and Move into the Future* (Ventura: Regal, 2007), 249.

31. Daniel Bernard, *The Church at Its Best: God's People Empowered, Unified and Mobilized for Their Community* (Mobile: Evergreen Press, 2007), 1–2.

via a focus on growing the church. Crosby projected that "when the kingdom is spread, souls are

reached for Christ and the world becomes a better place."[31]

"In Transforming Service: How Do Your Service Efforts Introduce People to Jesus,"

several authors addressed ideas on integrating social action and evangelism and how this was

essential in reaching the whole person, physically and spiritually. Rich Nathan talks about having

the right blend and how "the right blend brings real and lasting change which builds bridges to

the church and ultimately to the Lord."[32] He also notes that "we cannot separate the Great

Commission to make disciples from the Great Commandment to love our neighbors as

ourselves."[33] Lee Strobel addresses how the hard heart can be remedied through acts of service.

"We serve the hurting, the imprisoned, the homeless, the jobless, the addicted and others because

they are made in God's image."[34] Ralph Bukiewicz believes there are three elements that

evangelism through service should always have: (1) intentionality—opportunities must be made

for believers to serve others; (2) appropriateness —"if evangelism through service reflects the

grace, sacrifice and unconditional love of Christ, then our methods must be suitable to the setting

and the recipients' needs"[35]; and (3) relevance—a meeting of physical needs is accompanied by

the right words and compassionate actions to clearly communicate the Good News of Jesus

Christ. Mark DeYmaz sums this all up by indicating that "the integration of evangelism and

service (community engagement) is central" to the church identity, and this integration happens

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32. Robert Crosby, "Rod & Reel, or Net? What It Means to Catch in Community," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 31.

33. Rich Nathan, "The Right Blend," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 33.

34. Natan, 33.

35. Lee Strobel, "Hard Heart Remedy," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 33.

36. Ralph Bukiewicz, Intentional, "Transforming Services: Appropriate, Relevant," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 34.

on several fronts.[36]

    Matt Branaugh ("Know Your Neighbors? A Simple Tool in Helping Churches in Arvada, Colorado, Know and Love Their Neighbors") and Paul Pastor ("View from the Second Story: Partnerships between Churches and Community Organizations Spur Transformation in Unlikely Places) write articles that address the need for greater partnerships between churches and between churches and community organizations. Branaugh expressed how the mayor of Arvada garnered the attention of the churches by telling them that they could "help the city best by teaching their people to do what Jesus said matters most and love your neighbors."[37] Pastor encourages individuals and churches to partner with their neighbors to do two things: "(1) identify the positive aspects of the neighborhood (their assets), and (2) create partnerships in the community to capitalize on those assets."[38] At the end of Pastor's article, four steps are given for engaging the community: go outside, listen well, get training, and hang on to the Gospel.

    In "Banker's Hours" by Spencer Burke, there is an analogy drawn between what banking once looked like and what it looks like now and what the church once looked like and what it looks like now in many instances. While banking has changed for the convenience of the customer through technology, the church has remained primarily the same in that it is "oblivious to this trend toward flexible, on demand service in our culture. We still expect people to come to us, at our building to do transactions with God or make deposits in their spiritual account."[39] Spencer suggest that a fresh look should begin with a conversation about the mission of the church, not a particular tool or method, and then "let the function drive form and above all be

37. Mark DeYmaz, "Core-Deep Commitment," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 35.

38. Matt Branaugh, "Know Your Neighbors," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 46.

39. Paul Pastor, "View from the Second Story," *Leadership Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 50.

40. Spencer Burke, "Banker's Hours," *Leadership Journal* 27, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 38.

willing to follow Jesus even if it means re-tooling everything we do."[40]

James Meeks notes that "many people have built 'a healthy church' while the community around them is destitute which typically indicates that we are not really our brother's keepers but our own." [41] In an interview with Meeks titled *Redeeming a Needy Neighborhood*, he makes a case that the church in a community cannot really be a healthy church if it is not working to improve an unhealthy community. McCalep might add that "churches, like people, are healthiest when they help others rather than continuously thinking about themselves … therefore, the transforming church should put its members on a steady diet of missions that will eventually lead to a spiritually healthy way of life."[42]

Throughout Meeks's interview, he identified several components his Chicago-based church has used in engaging the South Side. Their primary "approach was not to be antagonistic and judgmental. We were there to give the love of Christ."[43] For Meeks, everything is connected someway to preaching and teaching. He ensures that engagement is *scheduled* and that church members *gather* and *scatter* at an appropriate time for engagement. He also supports *reporting* by those who have engaged and then *refuels* them for later engagement.

"Our Strange New Home," by David Goebel, draws from the lessons of foreign missionaries to embrace and engage ministries in our local communities. He states that foreign missionaries "understand the importance of immersing themselves in the culture as a way of

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41. Ibid.

42. James Meeks, interview by *Leadership Journal:* 42.

43. McCalep, 56.

44. James Meeks, interview by *Leadership Journal:* 43.

becoming more effective in their calling."[44] In the process of settling in, there is a need to pray which "can be one of the most effective tools we have for learning to sing the Lord's song in a foreign land."[45]

In *From Church-Shaped Mission to Mission-Shaped Church*, Christopher Duraisingh argues that most churches drive the mission instead of the mission driving the church. Much of Duraisingh's article lends credence to the idea that most churches are self-absorbed and tend to work toward maintaining members instead of building/expanding the kingdom of God. With this said, there is a tendency for churches to view mission as "something else to do." He notes that "it is not easy to break out of the 'culture of membership' which consumes much of the energy and attention of its ministerial and lay leadership in meeting the needs of its members."[46] The pressure to keep up with the inner needs takes up most of the church's energy and time. To bring about a movement for mission (outreach), there must be a radical shift from the "culture of membership to cultures of discipleship."[47]

"Missional is more than a trend as today's Christians recover an old calling."[48] Eric Reed addresses how the whole life of the believers and how churches should be jointly involved in sharing, giving, and going. He tells of how churches in his area are creating partnerships on local and regional levels to engage surrounding communities and demonstrating the love of Christ. The article speaks of churches taking ownership of the problems, issues, and struggles of the

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45. David Goebel, "Our Strange New Home," *Leadership Journal* 27, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 52.

46. Ibid., 53.

47. Christopher Duraisingh, "From Church-Shaped Mission to Mission-Shaped Church," *Anglican Theological Review* 92, no.1: 9.

48. Duraisingh, 9.

49. Eric Reed, "New Ownership," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 19.

community and not leaving them solely to the community. Reed resoundingly voices a position calling for "shared parishes"—"a desire to build the kingdom together with other congregations."[49]

In "We Aren't about Weekends" (an interview with Bob Roberts), Roberts addresses how to go about breaking out of a church's inward focus to a focus on touching the world outside. He notes, "For so many pastors, church is about what happened on Sunday. . . . Church is not supposed to be a Sunday event. It's supposed to be a salt and light in the family, in the community, and around the world."[50] Roberts supports living incarnationally, which means having real conversation with people that are similar in a postmodern, secular society.

Chad Hall talks about steps to transform a consumer church into a missional church. In "Missional: Possible," Hall provides further insight into a missional church and talks about two main distractions that block a congregation's missional expression. He further talks about how there is a need "to shift our activity from getting people into the church to going out to the people of the world."[51] Hall contends that churches should be and are attractional in that they show Christ and His love to the community by serving the community.

In "Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?" Tim Conder's work identifies several commonalities of missional churches. None of these churches will be identical. They differ on fronts between main line and evangelical, between Catholic and Protestant, and even between Eastern and Western Christianity. However, the ultimate task remains the same: "to find and join

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50. Ibid., 22.

51. Bob Roberts (Interview), "We Aren't about weekends," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 33.

52. Chad Hall, "Missional: Possible," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 35.

God's gracious work" in the community.[52]

Kent R. Hunter suggests that many churches have a base of some sort from which to extend their outreach. He supports a view of affirming and building from where you are presently. Hunter recommends that churches review the things they do well and "create a culture of winning—a we-can-do-it/God-can-do-it atmosphere."[53] He believes accenting the positive is the way to go, and a great place to start this missional movement of outreach is to begin with the idea of engagement in the community.

Magazine

The *Outreach Magazine* (special issue 2012) was a valuable source of information to gain insight into what some of the largest and some of the fastest-growing churches in America were doing in the area of outreach in their various communities and around the globe. On this issue, several of the fastest-growing churches from the Southeastern region of the United States were contacted and asked to complete a survey regarding their practices and policies on outreach. The suggestions proposed in this project will identify some of the ideas and practices presented by churches in this magazine as to how they go about showing the love of Christ in their communities. In the cover article "Building the Kingdom beyond the Campus," Ed Stetzer notes, "There is progress to be made among churches of all sizes" in "mission (efforts) beyond the comforts and confines of the church campus."[54] In a nutshell, Stacey Spencer notes, "You're

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53. Tim Conder, "Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?" *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 48.

54. Kent R. Hunter, "Effective Outreach and the 5 Percent Factor," *The Clergy Journal* (May/June 2009): 4.

55. Ed Stetzer, "Building the Kingdom Beyond the Campus," *Outreach* (Special Issue 2012): 25.

really not doing (being the) church if you're not reaching out," and no church has cornered the market on reaching out to communities.[55]

Internet

Brandon Cox talks about "Why Your Church Needs to Hit the Streets." He addresses how one church cancelled its traditional weekend service to go and serve in various capacities in the community. Specifically, he talks about the reason they rolled out in this community service project. Then he addresses why taking a Sunday to serve outside the walls might be a good idea. He reports two key results: there was a visible impact on their community and it helped foster relationships with local agency leaders (http://www.churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/162933-why-your-church-needs-to-hit-the-streets).

In "Developing a Missional Mindset," Don Detrick aims toward helping pastors and churches seek new strategies that will encourage them to focus on their main objective and evaluate their ministry programs and budgets in light of missional outcomes. Included in this article is a missional church glossary of terms. Additionally, Detrick speaks about how a healthy church will view outreach to the community as its primary mission. Churches that are serious about mission will embrace the idea of God's kingdom being people, not a place (building or denomination). A key value found in this article is the notion of what it takes to create "a mind-set to address the tension and resulting church conflict between maintaining traditional systems and adapting emerging strategies for missional outreach."
(http://enrichjournal.org200802/200802-050.devmissmind.cfm).

"Neighborhood Connections," by Gary Roberts, offers thoughts to pastors and leaders on

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56. Stacy Spencer, interview by Ryan E.C. Hamm, *Outreach* (Special Issue 2012): 142.

developing a missional mind-set and redirecting ministry efforts toward a more transformational impact in and on their communities. Roberts takes what is referred to as an incarnational approach whereby believing communities can be radically transformed into an incarnational presence, loving their neighbors in practical contextual ways. He speaks of three outcomes: (1) learning to connect with the community, (2) mobilizing the congregation, and (3) establishing a connections plan working with the community to address community needs (http://linctwincities.org/blog/neighborhood-connections-qanda/).

Shawn McMullen submits "Community Outreach: A Philosophy and Approach." This article was of great value in that it advances several vital statements before considering outreach strategies, namely, statements about outreach philosophy. The church is to "consider that God has placed them in the community to transform their community for His glory." Discipleship is considered the most important element in community transformation, yet community outreach is important because many churches are not very intentional about engaging their communities. Both short-term and long-term goals for community outreach were outlined, and a calendar of notional outreach events was shown to illustrate McMullen's church's engagement in the community (http://www.smallchurchleaders.org/the-small-church-shepherd/community-outreach-a-philisophy-and-approach).

Scriptures

Much of the literature indicates that a primary factor in serving the community involves a relational component. From Genesis to Revelation, evidence continuously spring forward of God's relational character. Starting with Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," one can easily surmise God's relationship with all that He created to include both animate and inanimate objects. Colossians 1:16 states, "For by Him were all things created that

are in heaven, and that are in earth . . . all things were created by him, and for him." These scriptures give indication that God is concerned with that which he created—"the world and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). This project takes the position that God is involved in the lives and functioning of all that he created. That which God is concerned with and involved in should likewise garner the attention and involvement of those who profess to love him.

Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 22:39 are the backbone for this project. They both in part read, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Using the fourth rule of interpretation, "The Law of First Mention," one will find God giving instructions to mankind in their day-to-day living. The context does not lend itself to personal feelings or interpersonal generosity, but one of practical social ethics in the public and particularly in the legal process. These verses support the project in that God expects that mankind in general and Christians in specific should be concerned with helping their neighbor in every way possible in all aspects of life.

In Jonah 3:1, scripture supports how God was concerned for an entire city. The scripture reads, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." The moral corruption and the wickedness in the "great city" caused God to send Jonah to preach to all the environs of the Greater Nineveh area. These environs, communities if you will, were of such significance to God that He would spend Jonah to proclaim a message in order that they might repent, turn from their evil ways, turn from the violence in their hands, so that God might spare Nineveh.

Matthew 25:31–40 reads,

> [31] When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: [32] And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: [33] And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. [34]Then shall the King say unto them on His

right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: [35] For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: [36] Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. [37] Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? [38] When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? [39] Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? [40] And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

These scriptures help believers focus on what they should be doing while awaiting the return of Christ. The focus is to be one of service to mankind.

Matthew 28:18–20 is precise in that the body (the church) should be on the move. This passage read, "[18] And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen." Simply stated, the church is to take the Gospel message to the community—in fact, to all nations. With this said, there is a need to train and retrain believers in an effort to enhance their abilities to reach communities for the Lord.

Matthew 4:18–22 reads,

[18] And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. [19]And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. [20] And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. [21] And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. [22] And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. [23] And Jesus went about all Galilee,

teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the
kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of
disease among the people.

First and foremost, this passage deals with a call to discipleship. Discipleship involves

transformed lives, and believers with transformed lives will take what they have received to the

communities in which they live. Further, this call to discipleship has everything to do with

serving as Jesus served, namely, having compassion and meeting the needs of those around him.

Acts 1:8 was some of the last words Christ spoke before ascending to heaven. To the

believers he stated, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and

ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the

uttermost part of the earth." This means that once the spirit of God is within an individual, the

individual becomes a witness of Jesus Christ and the Gospel. The Gospel is to be spread all over

the world for everyone to hear, beginning with our closest locales.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17–20, Paul writes,

[17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he *is* a new creature: old
things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. [18] And
all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus
Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; [19] To
wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not
imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us
the word of reconciliation. [20] Now then we are ambassadors for
Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in
Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

This lends support to the idea that Christ made the believers agents of change. He made the

believers agents of change by giving them the ministry of reconciliation whereby men enter into

a loving relationship with God. One might say that this text gives the believer the authority to

represent Jesus to his community and, ultimately, the world.

Matthew 5:14–16 reads, "[14] Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill

cannot be hid. [15] Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. [16] Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The body of Christ is to be full of good works, demonstrating the goodness of the Lord. The light spoken of here is supposed to have an impact and influence on the world (community) for the kingdom. Any believer or body of believers for that matter failing to function as the light is going against the nature of the new creature God designed. This passage encourages the believers and the body of believers to be what God intended for them to be.

Speaking of being what God intended, Ephesians 2:10 tells the believer this: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This lends credence to what the believer should be doing after they have been saved. God's masterpieces were created to be items of display and to accomplish good works for the sake of kingdom expansion. William McDonald says this: "And the object of this new creation is found in the phrase, *for good works*. While it is true that we are not saved by the good works, it is equally true that we are saved for good works. Good works are not the root but the fruit. We do not work in order to be saved, but because we are saved."[56]

Second Corinthians 5:14–15 states, "[14] For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: [15] And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." This passage is supportive in that the believer is to live for Christ. As the apostle Paul announced, it was the love of Christ that made him want to live for Christ. To live for Christ is to live like Christ in that he served others and he left a commandment to serve through witnessing of Him in Jerusalem, in nearby communities and to the uttermost part of the planet.

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57. William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 735.

The Gospel writer John declares (15: 1–8),

> [1] I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. [2] Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. [3] Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. [4] Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. [5] I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. [6] If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. [7] If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. [8] Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

It seems impossible to become more like Christ and not bear fruit. All believers share this responsibility; some consider the bearing of fruit as a test of kingdom citizenry. The believer's efforts in the community are to glorify God and to move people in the community to at least acknowledge the greatness of God. Those who are disciples are willing to take it to the community for this grand purpose—that God and his salvific work be known.

Matthew 9:36–38 gives clear indication of Jesus's concern for the helpless and harassed. Matthew records, "[36] But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. [37] Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few; [38] Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." For a number of reasons, this passage is supportive of loving your neighbor and taking the Gospel to the community. For one, there is the kindness of Jesus shown. Second, there is a need because of the condition of the people. Third, there are several in need of hearing God's message of hope. Fourth, this passage is supportive in that prayer is paramount as God will send laborers to the great harvest.

Luke 4:18–19 records Jesus announcing, "[18] The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, [19] To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Again, the great need is sounded out. Churches are in communities with all these needs: poor (financially/spiritually), sorrowful (sad), in bondage (to sin), sufferings, and oppression of multiple types. Christ is presented as the answer/remedy. In becoming like Christ, believers are encouraged to share the answer/remedy with the world.

When Paul states, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5), he was holding up before the Philippians the example of the Savior, Jesus the Christ. Specifically, such a view helps the believer understand what the attitude of Jesus was like and how His behavior toward others was depicted. Two things can, for certain, be said about the mind of Christ. He had a sacrificial mind and He had a serving mind. His total agenda involved taking care of others. The believers and the body of Christ should portray the mind of Christ in a similar manner as they seek to minister through serving the community in a sacrificial manner to the glory of God.

Acts 2:47 speaks of the mind-set of the early church toward God and others. Luke writes, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Having favor with all people is more than the church being "liked" by the community and those in neighboring environs. It does not seem to be a stretch that the early church had a favorable disposition toward everyone in the community. Realizing they had been brought out of the darkness, endowed with the Holy Spirit and now in the marvelous light, they were not very fast in judging those still in spiritual darkness.

John 14:12–14 states, "[12] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. [13] And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. [14] If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." Jesus anticipated the apostles and all disciples would continue what he had started. The perpetuation of the Gospel by the apostles and disciples throughout all ages after the ascension of Christ would yield continuing larger numbers of saved souls and would greatly glorify the Father in heaven. The works to be carried on would be accomplished individually and corporately. Each individual and each body of believers would be expected to seek the mind and will of Christ in glorifying God and blessing mankind, ultimately for their own spiritual good.

Summary

Clearly, Christ intended for the individual believer and the church to reach out to their communities. There is a need to show the love of Christ to communities in all settings: cities, suburbs, or rural sectors. The effort to do so must be intentional, deliberate, and ongoing. Staying others-focused for Christ is the unfinished work of the church, finished at the return of Christ. Being others-focused and loving its neighbors will help the church, individual and believer, to allow the mission Christ left to shape their lives for the glory of God.

CHAPTER 2

MODELS AND APPROACHES IN ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Methods are many, principles are few; method may change, but principles never do.
—Anonymous, *Elmer Towns Lecture (Evangelism 851)*

There are various Christian denominations (to include the nondenominational ones) and

associated churches using various models and approaches in engaging the community and

sharing the love of Christ and the Gospel message. This chapter will briefly examine four of the

models discussed in the literature and will then addresses various aspects of engagement.

Church Models: Missional/Incarnational/Emergent-Emerging/Attractional

"Missional communities try to align themselves holistically with God's theme of

redemption."[1] Alan Hirsch adds to this description of the missional church by noting that a

proper understanding of missional begins with recovering a missionary understanding of God.

"By his very nature God is a 'sent one' who takes the initiative to redeem his creation. This

doctrine, known as *missio Dei*—the sending of God—is causing many churches to redefine their

understanding of the church."[2] The missional mind-set views the church as "sent" people of God,

thus the instrument of God's mission in the world—local and global. To this end, Martin Lee

identifies five marks of missions stemming from the *mission Dei*. These marks are (1)

proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom; (2) teaching, baptizing, and nurturing new

believers; (3) responding to human need by loving service; (4) seeking to transform unjust

structures of society; and (5) striving to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew

the life of the earth. While these marks provide a good working definition of missions, they are

by no means inclusive of all that may be involved in missions in today's world, yet together they

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1. Tim Conder, 47.

2. Alan Hirsch, "Defining Missional," *Leadership Journal* 29, no. 4 *(*Fall 2008): 21.

do seem to provide a wider understanding to a holistic approach to missions.

In "Developing a Mission's Minded Church," Lonetti identifies three components of a mission's minded church. A mission's minded church is first *committed to the glory of God*. A second facet speaking of a mission's minded church is its *commitment to the Word of God*. The third components calls for a *leadership committed to the work of evangelism for the glory of God*. The work of redemption will run through each component of the mission's minded church.

Drawing from Robert Linthicum's work *Empowering the Poor*, Helen Lee shares three approaches churches can take in regard to their relationship to the community. One, the church can become *the church in the city*, which occurs when the bricks and mortar of the church resides in the city, but there is no particular attachment or identification otherwise with the community, or (2) *the church to the city*, where a local congregation determines that it will service certain needs within the community such as creating a youth program for local children. There is a third approach that brings the incarnational church into view. "The third approach is for a *church to be with the community* "incarnating itself" in that community. The church becomes partners with the community in addressing community needs writes Linthicum."[1]

With an incarnational church, the church allows the people of the community to instruct it as it identifies with the people. The church then joins the community in dealing with the issues. In essence, an importance is placed on the church "disassembling" itself for the primary work of evangelism in the nooks and crannies of everyday life."[2] With the incarnational approach, the church takes time to listen and get to know the community first and comes alongside the community to support the local efforts already in place. The idea of the incarnational church involves first a recognition that Jesus is already there and that the church is not coming as some

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3. Helen Lee, "Outside In," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 38.

4. Will Mancini, *Church Unique* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 35.

knight in shining armor to save the day. The primary thought is to come as servants as opposed to assuming the church has a great understanding of what needs to be done more so than the people in the local community.

Don Detrick defines emergent/emerging churches as "those who are taking a fresh look at church structures with a bend toward creatively engaging culture for Jesus Christ, much as any missionary would do when entering a new field."[3] Bill Tenny-Brittan indicates that the emerging church and the emergent church once were considered one and the same. He notes that the division between the two seems to have come as a result of Brian McLaren's *A Generous Orthodoxy* and similar books. "In the emergent church everything is up for grabs and open to reinterpretation, even including basic orthodoxies of theology."[4] Tenney-Brittan notes that the goal of the emergent church is not unlike the emerging church in that they are seeking to discover effective methods to reach those in their community. "The difference is that theological orthodoxy (in the emergent church) is open to complete reinterpretation and often embraces syncretism and pluralism."[5]

According to Towns, Stetzer, and Bird, "the attractional church uses every possible means (that are not unbiblical) to attract every possible person to take advantage of their ministry (both for salvation and Christian growth) so that they may adequately evangelize their community for Christ."[6] These churches are typically built around the concept of "come and see" and generally were the fastest growing during the survey conducted by Towns, Stetzer, and Bird.

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5. Don Detrick, "Developing a Missional Mindset," *Enrichment Journal*, http://enrichmentjournal.org2008012/200802-050.devmissionmind.cfm (accessed September 26, 2012).

6. Bill Tenny-Brittan, "Developing a Missional Mindset," *21st Century Strategies*, http://effectivechurch.com/articles/view-articles/?tx-ttnews%5Btt-news%5D=240&cHash (accessed September 26, 2012).

7. Ibid.

8. Towns, Stetzer, and Bird, 248.

While they may be the fastest growing and are doing some great work, when it comes to outreach, there are some matters of concern. For one, inviting friends, family, and acquaintances to see the show will soon wane. There is a great need here to get people of these churches on mission. A second concern is the idea of "dueling attractions." It becomes a matter of who has the best show in some case, and this brings about a third concern—trivializing the Gospel. Outreach efforts must be led by the Gospel message as the church's primary mission is to make Jesus known. Attractions, sometimes filled with gimmicks, may tend to move the Gospel to the backburner. A fourth concern identified by Towns, Stetzer, and Bird is the idea that attractional churches can segregate God's people by preference. "There is the danger that such churches can promote division in the Body ('We have better [fill in the blank] than you do!')."[7]

There are a variety of congregational models across which "outreach" ministries may be carried out. Other models of church mentioned by Towns, Stetzer, and Bird are organic house, recovery, multisite, ancient-future, city-reaching, community transformation, cyber-enhanced, Nickelodeon-style children-focused, intentionally multicultural, and decision-journey churches. All these church styles go about implementing outreach and engaging their communities in different ways. The remainder of chapter 2 will address some ins and outs of engagement.

Engagement: The Need and Purpose (Redemption)

McGavran writes that every true church observes among its members redemption due to Christ's saving activity accepted into the human heart. Once Christ enters, the individual becomes a new creature and shares the mind of Christ. "If we really share the mind of Christ, we

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9. Towns, Stetzer, and Bird, 230–233.

will be tremendously in earnest about persuading others to become disciples" by receiving His redemptive grace.[8]

The primary aim of every church is to make Jesus known to the world. Mankind has a need for redemption; this is to stay men need to ensure they are in a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This aim and purpose is often difficult to achieve because of the inward focus of the church. Scot Ridout seems to think that "the more time Christians spend in the church, it seems the farther they move away from God's original intention—to reach the lost. Momentum is easily lost when it comes to evangelistic fervor, and we have had to constantly champion an outward-focused lifestyle among our people."[9]

Tony Nolan starts his book *Hurt Healer: Reaching Out to a Broken World* with an interesting outlook in engaging and reaching those in the community. Nolan states, "We all live in a bad neighborhood. It's called earth, and it's under a curse" in need of redemption.[10] There is a great deal of hurting people in this community of earth. Some of the hurting is young, middle-aged, and some are senior citizens. They have tattoos, toddlers, and toupees and are for the most part put out with church. Those who are hurting need to see God, know God, and come to a personal relationship with God. Jesus has called the church out to share His redeeming message. Nolan sees the church as a body of hurt healers, and hurt healers should be willing to make a difference in someone else's life. Hurt healers understand compassion—love in action. Seeing needs, the hurt healer puts all things on pause in order to engage the need. Nolan makes the case that Jesus put everything on pause, and He literally left heaven to come to the community of

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10. Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 216.

11. Scott Marshall, "What I Wish Someone Had Told Me," *Outreach* (Special Issue 2012): 110.

12. Tony Nolan, *HurtHealer: Reaching Out to a Broken World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 2010), 28.

earth, dwell among mankind to make possible redemption for mankind. Jesus came and met not only temporal needs—he came because mankind had a greater need—a need to be prepared for eternity. The church should show Jesus in meeting physical needs in general and eternal needs in specific. The bottom line is about "connecting people with God so their lives can be abundant with purpose and eternally sustained in his coming kingdom."[11]

Paul Nixon's views are worth considering for the purpose of this study. Nixon notes that "thriving churches choose to pour themselves out in service to the communities of people that live beyond their walls and membership list."[12] When community beyond the walls is considered a must for the church as Christ established, then the leader must spend a great deal of their time connecting with the community at large, particularly that portion that the leader intends for the church to serve. In leading the church onto God's agenda and in serving as God intends the church to serve, the church must think community and embrace the community in all that it does.

Engagement: Mandate/Evangelism (Reconciliation)

The church is often involved in social services (meeting needs typical of a hierarchical consortium) and social actions (calling for radical change in systems and structures). There are many other organizations (e.g., government and parachurch institutions) that meet these needs and often do a great job in doing so. However, there is "one acute human need that churches and only churches can meet and this is the desire to relate to the ultimate, to know God personally"— to experience reconciliation with God.[13] No other social institution or conglomerate of institutions can match this claim.

In the New Testament, the church went to where the people were. Free Chapel's pastor

13. Nolan, 209.

14. Paul Nixon, *I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2006), 40.

15. C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1981), 174.

Jentezen Franklin of Gainesville, Georgia, indicates "everything we do, all our outreach initiatives, are about winning souls for the kingdom, and we've never put anything before that."[14] Free Chapel's executive pastor Tracy Page adds, "All our events—everything we've ever done from illustrated sermons to our various outreach initiatives—are always about reaching souls and advancing the kingdom in that way."[15]

Jeff Miller does a fantastic job outlaying aspects of reconciliation as it relates to outreach. He draws from 2 Corinthians 5:17–20, where Paul writes,

> Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

All who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior are reconciled people that God has given the ministry of reconciliation or the "service" of reconciliation. Miller indicates, as ambassadors for Christ, it is as though God was making His plea through us to the community, to the world. "We are ambassadors for Christ—when we wake up, when we go to sleep, when we walk into church, when we eat at a restaurant, when we work out at the gym."[16] Every place we go—our Jerusalem's, Judea's, Samaria's, or the uttermost part—we serve as ambassadors of reconciliation for Christ, messengers of outreach.

Clearly, the church has a mandate found in the Great Commandment and the Great

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16. Troy Anderson, "Fasting Forward," *Outreach* (Special Issue 2012): 84.

17. Ibid.

18. Jeff Miller, "Outreach: Growing the Body of Christ," Bible.org, http://bible.org/seriespage/outreach-growing-body-christ (accessed September 28, 2012).

Commission. Stacy Spencer, lead pastor of New Direction in Memphis, Tennessee, was asked, "What would you say to any pastor who is trying to make community outreach part of their DNA like you've done at New Direction?" To this Spencer implies that Christ extended or perhaps clarified the Great Commission with the Acts' statement of being witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the world. Jerusalem was identified as the back door. Judea is a nearby place very similar to what is outside the back door, just a little farther away. Samaria is still yet farther and has an altogether different culture, and then there is the uttermost part—Haiti, China, Africa, Europe, etc.

Starting in one's backyard is all too important. What would it look like if every church would adopt its street? Just imagine how much better various communities across the nation would be if all churches got out, made sure that trash was picked up, graffiti was painted over the walls, kids were tutored and had home assistance, and we had neighborhood crime watches. Jesus said we are the light and the salt of the world. If the church is being what Jesus said it was, then it already has in it to do what Christ commanded it to do. At the same time, it would serve to meet physical needs; the church, individual and body, would be serving in its ambassador's role of reconciling community to God.

Engagement: Leadership and Vision Casting

If "everything rises and falls on leadership" as John Maxwell indicates, then the pastor has to lead the charge in at least three areas to become effective at outreach. David Galloway submits that the first and most important principle in pastoring for the community is to love it. "The most important element in changing a community … is to love it."[17] Loving and serving the community has to be one of the pastor's core values. As the leader, the pastor must have an understanding of the history of the community he is led to serve. Studying the history provides

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19. Shelley, 294.

avenues for beginning to diagnose and treat the needs of the community. The third charge the

pastor must lead is in refocusing the church. Once there is a love for and an understanding of the

community, it is vital to assist the church in looking forward and outward. The question to ask is,

"How can your church open itself to the community?"[18]

Another key task of leadership seems to be that of leading the people to integrate faith

and work. Some have termed this "joining God where He is already working in the community."

It is a matter of the leader moving people onto God's agenda for the community. "The challenge

is to deepen the faith and theology of our congregation as well as enable them to engage the city

with the love and truth of the gospel" on a day-in and day-out basis.[19] Leadership has the

responsibility of helping members of the congregation live out the Gospel in all spheres of

culture and community in a way that seeks "the peace and prosperity" (Jeremiah 29:7) of the

community in which God has placed "the church." Leadership has to live and demonstrate the

belief that the Gospel is capable of changing everything—our hearts, our communities, and even

the world. It is a matter of integrating faith into the lives lived in community and in the world.

Leadership must be instrumental in broadening the understanding of the Gospel to apply it to the

communities in which congregants live and work.

In an article regarding "*Community Transformation*," Vaughn McLaughlin, pastor of the

Potter's House Christian Fellowship, leads a revitalization effort on the Westside of Jacksonville,

Florida. When asked, "Is vision the key to your church's impact on the community?"

McLaughlin replied with a rather interesting answer. He stated, "The key to any successful

ministry is obedience. Jesus was obedient unto death, even death on the cross. He's our example.

20. Shelley, 295.

21. Timothy Keller and Katherine A. Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Dutton, 2012), 242.

Obey. No matter what it looks like, you obey. Obedience is better than sacrifice, and God has honored our obedience."[20]

In regard to leadership, Luke Barnett, lead pastor at Phoenix First Assembly of God, calls to mind that mobilizing leadership and volunteers does not happen automatically. "Over time you learn that you have to be intentional in mobilizing and recruiting volunteers, and you have to develop leaders that have bought into the vision and feel appreciated."[21]

Deterick believes there are three types or characteristics of leadership needed to meet the needs of the twenty-first-century mission field of North America. He talks about *strategic*, *courageous*, and *sacrificial* leadership. With the strategic characteristic, the leader begins to think like "America is a mission field in reaching the community."[22] Strategic leaders will also reject the idea that a church is only for Christians and will move the congregation in an effort to break out from the walls and compel the lost to come in. To do this requires identifiable strategies and methods aligned with doctrinal statements and biblical core values.

The Greek word for "strategy," *strategia*, refers to the plan of a general who has set up camp on a hill overlooking a battlefield.[23] Such a general is accompanied by an army in developing the strategy to wage war. The church that Jesus established is engaged in a spiritual warfare for the souls of humankind.

The courageous characteristic is typically seen among the emergent church culture. These are generally new church plants with young (and some not so young) leaders who are willing to attempt innovative approaches. "This group typically does not recognize even 'the box' as the

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22. Leadership Interview, "Wizard of Odds," *Leadership Journal* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 26.

23. Marshall, 92.

24. Detrick.

25. McCalep, 105.

phrase 'thinking out of the box' goes."[24] Courageous leadership seeks to engage the community for Christ in culturally relevant ways. The courageous characteristic involves an element of risk for the leader. He is willing to lead in light of the need for organizational change where present structure and traditions have crippled efforts of the past and left further engagement lame.

The sacrificial component of leadership is straightforward and to the point. At this point, the leader cares more for the kingdom of God than for their own. This is best reflected in kingdom living, not kingdom building. Sacrificial leadership is being like Christ, who cared not only for the twelve or the three (Peter, James, and John), but for every person to ever live. Christ did not come to be ministered unto; rather, he came to minister. His own personal comfort did not matter. Christ was willingly inconvenienced for mankind. To him, each person counted, and he is counting on each believer to sacrifice in finishing those things Jesus "began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). Sacrificially, "the church must reach beyond its own comfort zone in joining Christ on mission in communities and around the world."[25] C. T. Studd said, "Some people want to live within the sounds of chapel bells. I want to run a mission yards from the gates of hell." "These words capture the call of God for the church to move out of its isolated cocoons and to go to the difficult places of the world where they will find God most powerfully and prolifically at work."[26]

Christopher Duraisingh might add the concept of *concursus Dei* as foremost in the mind of the leader serious about impacting the community where the church is located. *Concursus Dei* stands for the sacramental accompaniment of God in all creation and in the history of all

26. McCaleb, 105.

27. Detrick.

28. Arloa Sutter, *The Invisible* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2010), 31.

people."[27] For Duraisingh, the chief characteristic of a leader in a mission-shaped congregation is an intense sense of the divine accompaniment in creation and among humans and in one's life. To this end, the leader of a church set on meeting community needs should seek to join God in what God is already actively doing in the community. He leads a group of people to the point of them not only living in the community; rather, they come to the aid of others who are living there as well.

Engagement: What's This about Contextualization?

Charles Sheldon, the writer of *In His Steps*, would likely define contextualization as being "close enough to touch the issue."[28] As a pastor, Sheldon was said to have an "obsession to secure material, social, and spiritual relief for suffering people. As a pastor, he made it his business to find out the needs of every class of people—especially those disadvantaged by the prejudices of others: blacks, women, the poor, and the unemployed."[29]

Tenney-Brittan indicates that the step after honing a church's mission is a step toward learning the culture of the community the church is attempting to service. He believes that many times the church does not really know their local unchurched culture well enough to even hazard a guess about what might or might not be effective, let alone contextualizing the message. The only way to get to know the culture in order to be able to contextualize the message (that is to say, putting the message where the community can get it) is for the church to immerse itself in the culture.

Saint Patrick was able to become influential in tribal Ireland because he became one of

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29. Duraisingh, 25.

30. Chris Armstrong, "How Jesus Pastor? The Unpredictable Charles Sheldon Gave It a Try," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 43.

31. Ibid.

those he was attempting to reach. It is difficult to contextualize unless the church becomes one of

them. Paul said,

> For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant
> unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as
> a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as
> under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To
> them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law
> to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are
> without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the
> weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means
> save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be
> partaker thereof with you. (1 Corinthians 9:19–23)

The apostle Paul, Tenney-Brittan, and many others seem to be saying that in order to develop a

mind-set of reaching the community, the church must explore and take on protocols that lead to

an intimate understanding of the culture of the community to be reached. The essence of what is

needed is authentic relationship with those who are actually outside of the faith. Learning the

culture of the community so that contextualization may happen requires openness and

willingness to learn, think, and respond like those the church is trying to reach.

John Beukema provided a view of contextualization that is seldom talked about. He

stated that it took years for him to get rid of the idea that outreach was something aimed at

strangers he visited, or at crowds gathered at some event hosted by the church. He declares, "I

wish someone had told me that time spent helping my neighbor with his yard, or playing tennis,

or going fishing would eventually prove more influential in their openness to the Gospel. I wish

someone had shared with me more stories of how others were drawn to Christ simply by

interaction in daily life."[30]

"It is only when we can change the style while maintaining the substance of the biblical

mandate that the church is able to contextualize and communicate the gospel in a culturally

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32. Chris Armstrong, 92.

relevant way."[31] This is a core value of the strategic leadership characteristics mentioned above. Stetzer and Putman comment, "It is vital to note that though we understand an appropriate truth as conditioned by culture, the truth itself should never be compromised."[32]

Engagement: Deliberate Planning and Strategizing

Rick McKinely, a pastor in Portland, Orgeon, in an interview with *Leadership* states, "Our goal is not to create a community of volunteers … The goal is to glorify the King by doing what He's called us to do."[33] Our efforts are to be deliberate as were those of Jesus. The story of Jesus might be considered deliberate planning before the foundations of the world as He came to put the world back together through the Gospel. McKinley indicates that he could not just go screaming, "You need to love Portland." He notes there is a need "to create pathways, some stepping stones for people to get to that homeless person, that single mom, that school."[34] Leaders should be instrumental in helping people get from here to there.

A suggested place to start is in using the strategy Jesus articulated in the Great Commission as continued in the Book of Acts. First, there is the requirement to identify needs in "Jerusalem" —in this case, your own congregation and back door; then "Judea; Samaria; and, the uttermost most part of the earth." David Gibbons, pastor NewSong, recommends a simple strategy of "asking God to show you who are the most marginalized in your community" and start there. The second step of Gibbons's simple strategy would be next to ask, "How can we serve you?" Third, as the Nike slogan implies, "Just do it." People of the community must know that the church is in it for the long haul. Consistency in lovingly going and doing in the

33. Detrick.

34. Stetzer and Putman, 93.

35. Rick McKinley, "Dei Laborers," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 27.

36. Ibid, 29.

community will demonstrate the consistency of Christ. A phrase showing up in many sermons around the 1880s comes to mind: "Plan you work and then work you plan" (author unknown).

Literary research indicated for consideration five (5) elements of kingdom ministry planning and strategizing. The first is incarnational. "We must have not only the same message as Jesus but the same method. You really reach people when you enter into their world, their hurt and pain."[35] Second, proclamation of the Good News is essential. Proclaiming the truth in love rather than forcing it down people's throat is desired. Third, there must be a caring/compassionate environment. The poor in the neighborhoods are more than statistics. They are actually people—better yet, our neighbors whom we are told by Christ to love. Hilliard notes,

> Our love for God and for one another in the church should naturally extend to those outside the church. A lost world knows nothing about genuine love, despite all of its love songs, love poems, and love "experts." The world needs to see true love in action in the lives of God's people. Love is the mission of the church and the very lifeblood of a growing church.[36]

Everything must be done in love, namely, the love of Christ. Once the love of Christ is demonstrated in the community, attention is usually gained, and then the ultimate need can be addressed and the ultimate story told—redemption.

The fourth element ensures efforts are to be directed at restoration/development. When the same needs continue to emerge in the community, this is likely an opportunity for the church to show the love of Christ to its neighbors and seek to be a part of restoration and development of the community. Fifth, there may be a need for confrontation in the communities, particularly

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37. Noel Castellanos, "5 elements of Kingdom Ministry," *Leadership Journal* 31, no. 3 (Summer 2010), 41.

38. Donald Hilliard, Jr, *Church Growth from an African American Perspective* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2006), 140.

in the case where the church comes across systems that are keeping people in depressed and oppressed situations.

Tippy went about determining what to undertake for the good of the neighborhood in the following manner. First, their church studied the needs of the people around them. Their plan was not to do anything that was already being done well by another organization, particularly when that organization was meeting the community's need. The Tippy congregation set out to be brotherly, especially where there is inevitable competition due to the presence of two or more churches ministering to the same territory."[37] Such a concept today would be extremely important given the saturation of churches in many cities and areas.

Lewis provides additional insight on developing a community strategy. He recommends that churches learn their community's story because "the particular context of the community's story must be thoroughly understood and considered by any church wanting to make an impact on its community in a meaningful way."[38] Relying on instincts and guess works generally does not turn out to be very effective. Lewis's congregation agreed on a three-phrase survey design in developing a strategy for engaging their community. Phase 1 involved community research— examining and analyzing needs assessments already completed in the community. Phase 2 involved focus-group feedback. These groups would be responsible for interacting with areas of need and prioritizing those needs. Phase 3 consisted of surveying churches. Surveys to churches were sent to gather a feel for how well churches were connected or disconnected to the need of the community. A professional research company was used in conducting their survey. In the end, their survey "demonstrated that the community was actually looking to churches for more

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39. Tippy, 61.

40. Lewis, 190.

involvement and wondering why they weren't there."[39]

From a strategic standpoint, Lewis's survey identified five ministry suggestion for better connecting the church with the community: (1) reassess ministry programs, giving consideration to the high-priority needs detected by the survey in the community; (2) focus on existing ministries in the community that are already working successfully before starting new ones; (3) look for ways to unite with other churches in an effort that communicates a positive and refreshing message to the general public; (4) look for other organizations to partner with; and (5) actively pursue authentic racial reconciliation.[40]

Planning the effort is one thing, implementing yet still another. However, the church should look at sustaining its efforts in building relationships and reaching out to the community. Robinson and Green introduce ideas for community development sustainability that could very well line up with efforts of the church. The Natural Step (TNS) provides an emblematic example of a sustainability framework that is being applied in communities around the world … to help communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals take meaningful steps toward sustainability.[41] This sustainability approach consists of five hierarchically different yet interrelated steps, and the levels are identified below:

1. *System* – There must be an understanding of the functioning of the system.

2. *Success* – Factors must be identified to determine when success is accomplished.

3. *Strategic* – The overall process has to be systematic (step-by-step) toward the desired outcome (order, naturally with flexibility).

4. *Actions* – There has to be concrete movements and procedures toward the end.

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41. Lewis, 197.

42. Lewis, 198–199.

43. Robinson, Jr., 268–269.

5. *Tools* – These are needed to monitor movement to ensure they are strategic so that the organization will have success in the system.

The TNS approach uses "backcasting" as a way of planning. With backcasting principles, "a successful outcome is imagined in the future and used to help decide which actions need to be taken today to reach that outcome,"[42] whereas forecasting is a planning method that projects current trends (and problems) into the future, which may limit the range of options and inhibit creativity. Four phases are continuously reviewed in association with backcasting:

Phase I – *Awareness*: The sustainability framework is shared to create a common understanding among the participating community members.

Phase II – *Baseline Analysis*: This involves determining through deliberate assessment where the community is today to help determine the actions for tomorrow.

Phase III – *Compelling Vision*: This is the brainstorming portion where desirable community characteristics are agreed upon—steps are identified which could create the conditions for future possibilities.

Phase IV – *Down to Action*: This phase moves the team toward prioritizing the solutions generated in phase III. Ideas are scrutinized and prioritized through three questions: (1) Does this action or solution proceed in the right direction with respect to all four principles of sustainability? (2) Does this action or solution provide a stepping-stone or flexible platform for future actions? (3) Will this action or solution provide sufficient return on investment and add impetus to the process?

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44. Robinson and Green, 271.

In a 1989 study and analysis of this Swedish-developed approach to sustainability, seven steps were viewed as paramount in the journey toward sustainability.[43]

(1) *Finding the fire souls* – fire souls being community citizens who have a burning interest in sustainable development and community change

(2) *Education and raising awareness* – attaining an understanding of what sustainability means and how it can provide a model for community building

(3) *Official endorsement* – gaining support of leadership in recognizing and continuing the idea that change is needed and recurrent

(4) *Involving implementers* – gaining support of those who will be doing the bulk of the hands on work

(5) *Applying the sustainability framework* – using a shared sustainability language and the associated steps of the planning process

(6) Whole plan endorsement – achieving total buy-in and adoption of the plan (total may be a bit idealistic)

(7) *Keep it going* – continued use of the agreed-upon framework (with adjustments where necessary) and the agreed-upon indicators and measurements of progress

While developed with a secular use in mind, this approach (TNS) has utility within the church as the church deliberately carries out its mandate to love its neighbors on a sustained basis.

Engagement: Training First the Community of Church

It is important to "equip our congregations to be Christ-like to neighbors, co-workers, and family members, rather than trying to coax people into signing up for every church program

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45. Robinson and Green, 273–274.

possible and burning families out with church involvement."[44] This equipping will call for continuous training.

The community of church (congregations) has a need to be taught about ministering to their neighbors. Lesa Engelthaler refers to a book by Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*, which challenges readers to ask God 31 radical questions about their personal giving habits. One of these questions is "Where in my community—or in the whole world—do You want me to go, to see, and participate in meeting physical and spiritual needs?"[45]

A Whole New Attitude (Robert Lewis) focuses on the notion that in order to change a city or community, we first have to change our churches, in many instances. "It is a slow and painful transition, from being a church focused inward to a church aiming to change the community."[46] In the case of Fellowship Bible Church, "it took five years to see the first fruits of their transition and 10 years to see its full effect."[47] Lewis felt training was first necessary to equip the members for life and then to equip them for service. A second phase of the training Lewis offered was for members to discover their gifts so they might know beyond the church where God was leading them to serve. Members of Lewis's congregation were being equipped primarily for service beyond self.

Burgen, lead pastor at Flatirons Community Church, believes that the best way to recruit and mobilize congregants is when current volunteers discover their God-given spiritual gift being

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46. Wage Hodges and Greg Taylor, "We Can't Do Mega-Church Anymore: What Happens When an "Attractional Church" Is Compelled to Go in a Different Direction?" *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 51.

47. Lesa Engelthaler, "From Good Intentions to Actions," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 49.

48. Robert Lewis, "A Whole New Attitude," *Leadership Journal* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 51.

49. Ibid.

utilized and leveraged in ways that can only be explained by "Jesus living in me." Burgen

believes it is important to carve out time (their congregation carves out six weeks) to work

through what he considers the six primary values that derive everything they do, why they do it,

how they do it, and why they don't do other things. The six areas the Flatirons family focuses on

are "biblical authority, relational intimacy, authentic community, gifted service, excellent

environments, and relational evangelism."[48]

In speaking of joining God in what God is already doing in the community (*concursus*

Dei), Duraisingh would likely add that all education, training, and teaching should have a

mission focus and that such theological training is far from being an end in itself. Ultimately,

such training should be about serving the mission of God in the community (world). Duraisingh

resigns that unless joining God on mission becomes the overarching vision and the organizing

principle of all formative processes, the church comes woefully short in being a mission-shaped

church, reaching toward the community saturated with need. Duraisingh's conclusion is this:

> When theologies and theological formative processes critically
> accompany the *concursus Dei*, God's people in local congregations
> will be transformed into mission-shaped co-workers with God, and
> the eschatological movement of God's drawing all things into
> God's embrace in a renewed creation and a reconciled new
> humanity will march on. The *concursus Dei* will indeed be the
> *gloria Dei*.[49]

Engagement: The Need for a Healthy Church

Most of the literature encountered indicates that a church must be "healthy itself" before

the church can effectively engage the community it has been told to reach. Leith Anderson

contends that health is relative and the indicators from church to church will vary as physical

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50. Marshall, 92.

51. Duraisingh, 28.

health will vary from patient to patient given such variables as age, weight, blood pressure, and the likes. Anderson does identify some overall categories of church health signs. First, the healthy church will strive to give God glory. One of the ways of doing this is by striving to "improve God's reputation in its community, among believers and unbelievers, and to the broader world."[50] Jesus was about making the Father (God) look good. A second sign of a healthy church is one seeking to produce disciples. This is a *qualitative* instead of a *quantitative* focus (although both are desired). Healthy churches also reproduce. Moreover, a healthy church loves as Christ loves and obeys the commands of Christ. Anderson believes the exercise of spiritual gifts is one of the clearest New Testament characteristics of church health, indicating that a healthy church goes about utilizing the gifts in the body for the body and to the glory of God. In addition, healthy churches will relate positively to their environment and do not typically operate in isolation. This symptom points to a church that is involved in and moving throughout the community. Further, a healthy church does well incorporating newcomers into the fellowship of believers. Incorporating newcomers in one measure leads to the last sign listed by Anderson. This sign is an openness to change. The constants within a healthy church are the Bible and the mission of the church. All else is flexible.

Thom and Sam Rainer contend that the most outwardly focused churches are many times the healthiest on the inside. In order to be a healthy church, the members must make a conscious effort to stop looking inwardly and begin to reach outwardly. "An inwardly focused church

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52. Leith Anderson, *A Church for the 21st Century: Bring Change to Your Church to Meet the Challenges of a Changing Society* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1992), 129–140.

community is a dying community because they are letting go of the bond that holds them together (Christ)."[51]

Detrick purports that "a healthy church will view outreach to the community as its primary mission."[52] Spader and Mayes outline an approach to grow a healthy church or to examine the measure of a church's health—the desired product being disciple making. With Christ as the example, Spader and Mayes set out to help by identifying the following components of the Lordship of Jesus Christ: (1) building, (2) equipping, (3) winning, and (4) multiplying. Each component has a corresponding phase with a challenge, a suggested time for implementation, and a focus.

With the first component, building relationships, we find Jesus challenging individuals to follow Him and to become fishers of men. Jesus called twelve to Him, spent time with them, and taught them. As one considers the manner in which Jesus ministered and taught as a whole, "in every circumstance Jesus' habit was to go where the people were … His emphasis on going to people, as opposed to waiting for people to come to Him, is a crucial aspect of His strategy."[53] Within the first component, it is essential that the church understand how Christ went about reaching out to anyone and everyone He happened to come in contact. Christ's efforts were directed at building relationships, seeking those who were responsive. In following the example of Jesus, the healthy church must go about being relational, which is considered the foundation. Based on the example of Jesus, six foundational aspects of ministry are considered crucial as it relates to a healthy growing church: (1) creating an atmosphere of love, (2) building a relational

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53. Thom Rainer and Sam Rainer III, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishing Group, 2008), 50.

54. Detrick.

55. Dan Spader and Gary Mayes, *Growing a Healthy Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1991), 37.

ministry, (3) communicating Christ clearly, (4) building a healthy ministry image, (5) mobilizing

a prayer base, and (6) dividing, rightly, the Word of God.[54]

In the second component, there is the vital element of equipping the team. Those who

travelled with Jesus willingly received special training. Much of this training was on-the-job

training as much happened while they were travelling. Viewing the manner in which Jesus

taught, the healthy church must conclude that most of His lessons were object lessons where

Jesus demonstrated how to love all people, even the sinner and the publican. He demonstrated

forgiveness and how to be a servant. Jesus set out to train the willing in order to produce workers

and multipliers. "The equipping of a few in order to multiply the ministry was one of Christ's

overriding concerns."[55]

The third component of the Master's strategy in growing a healthy church focuses on

reaching the masses through mobilizing teams (evangelism). Continuing to demonstrate, Jesus

lead the mobilized masses in an effort to take care of both the physical and the spiritual needs of

those he came in contact with. His outreach approach is said to have had a twofold purpose.

"First and foremost, he was working to reach the masses. Jesus was passionately burdened for

the lost and sought to reach out to people everywhere he went. His second purpose was to model

the process and involve his ministry team in outreach ... sharing His passion … duplicating his

ministry … all resulting in deep joy as well as a lifelong conviction and commitment to Great

Commission living."[56]

Spader and Mayes suggest that the methodology of Jesus calls for an appointment of

leaders to continue the multiplication process. Jesus put the twelve in place that ended up as the

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56. Spader and Mayes, 48–50.

57. Ibid, 38.

58. Ibid, 40.

seventy, that ended up as the one hundred twenty who awaited the Holy Ghost to come. Christ would train and invest his life in the team. Julia Duin believes people are quitting church because, in essence, the process of multiplication Jesus put in place is by and large not happening. Individuals are becoming de-churched, and the unchurched who are typically looking for community will be hard-pressed to come where they feel there is no sense of community.[57]

In *Ministry Substance*, Anne Jackson speaks about the church acting innovatively. She quotes Oswald Chambers: "The church ceases to be spiritual when it becomes self-seeking, only interested in the development of its own organization."[58] This would be clear indication of an unhealthy church. On the other hand, when the church becomes others-focused and interested in developing others and the community beyond itself, the church may be said to be on its way to being healthy, if not already so.

One aspect of a healthy church is what Scazzero refers to as the emotional health. According to Scazzero, people in emotionally healthy churches intentionally follow the model of Jesus (incarnational). Such churches will focus on "loving well, recognizing that indispensable mark of spiritual maturity is not about recognition, numbers, spiritual gifts, or bible knowledge. The essence of a genuine (healthy) church life is to love—God, ourselves and other people."[59] The healthy church, loving and living as Jesus intended, will pursue three dynamics evident in the life of Christ. First, this type of church seeks to enter another's world for the purpose of helping others and at the same time growing spiritually. Second, this type of church, individual and body, does not lose sight of who they are, being what God designed them to be and do.

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59. Julia Duin, *Quitting Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 52.

60. Anne Jackson, "Ministry Subject: It's Just a Service Style," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 46.

61. Peter Scarzzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship That Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 180.

Christ entered our world and certainly did not lose sight of who he was or what he came to do. Third, a healthy church will hang between two worlds. On the one hand, this person has presence with those he or she is trying to reach/disciple, and on the other hand, in heaven with the Father. Jesus came to earth as a human (one world), yet he maintained contact with heaven.

Jesus maintained contact with heaven because of what Larry Crabb describes as the community of God—Father, Son, Holy Spirit. The church must come to an understanding that "God exists as a community of connected persons."[60] Such implications must be taught and grasped by the congregation before it fully realizes God's desire for the church to connect with those outside of the church. Crabb states we were fashioned by a God whose deepest joy is connection with Himself, a God who created us to enjoy the pleasure he enjoys by connecting supremely with Him but also with each other in community. Albeit some may consider this innate, it is primarily a matter that has to be taught and lived out in community as the church collectively journeys toward Christ.

Engagement: Tradition versus Innovation

Meeting 21st-century needs with traditions of the 20th and sometimes the 19th century can pose a huge problem. This generally boils down to whether a church will be set on tradition and miss out on engagement for the Lord, or will the church be willing to innovate for the sake of meeting needs for the glory of God. Often, when confronted with change, some churches will cling to traditional methods that have been a part of their fabric and history since its very beginning.

Jesus said, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?" (Matthew 15:3). Bill Hull drives home the view that tradition can be dangerously against moving

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62. Larry Crabb, *Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 55.

the church out into the community. He writes, "Many churches are immersed in corporate sin because they refuse to change the administrative structures blocking obedience to the Great Commission. Tradition becomes sin when it gets in the way of obedience to Christ. Heritage is great until it creates practical heresy."[61] Churches must be willing to sacrifice comfort and convenience for the sake of demonstrating love to its neighbors.

The answer to objections generally lies in teaching the difference in style and substance. "People link tradition to personal preference and style, rather than substance."[62] There must be some guard in allowing the personal preference of one person or group to become a style, to become a tradition, and to become institutionalized and, even at some points, enshrined as a holy icon. C. Peter Wagner addresses tradition versus innovation when he stated, "As long as there are unsaved people in its community, a church cannot be content with the status quo. Healthy large churches and healthy small churches are evangelistically effective churches."[63]

Engagement: What Does the Unchurched have to say?

Rainer provides some significant insight garnered from the formerly unchurched. Insight from the formerly unchurched can get the church serious about community engagement valuable views of what the currently unchurched might say and perhaps how to respond to them. Rainer's research debunked nine myths that might be theorized about what the unchurched are saying.[64] First, the unchurched may be saying, "We are not the same, and a cookie-cutter approach toward community involvement will not be effective in reaching us." Second, "the name of your church and your denominational affiliation is not a factor is us joining your church." Third, "you should

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63. Hull, 101.

64. Detrick.

65. Wagner, 97.

66. Rainer, 37–51.

know that church is really neither strange nor frightening to us as we have generally gone to church services at various points in our lives." Fourth, "many of us who will join your churches (over half) are okay with your members sharing the gospel with us and telling, better yet showing, us how to become Christians." Fifth, we are not concerned that you are not Rick Warren, T. D. Jakes, Bill Hybel, or the likes." Sixth, "we do not expect you to water down the message because we are in the audience. We want sound Bible teaching and doctrinal messages presented when we do come." Seventh, "we are excited about Sunday school and will be some of your most faithful attendees, and we have no problem with the name 'Sunday school.'" Eighth, "while we generally have no aversion to your church's marketplace evangelism, we would likely be better served in you teaching your members to engage its family members as they tend to be most influential in our conversions." And finally, "we are generally just as concerned for others as you are, particularly our children. Many times our coming is altruistic, and we have motives beyond having our personal needs met."

The formerly unchurched offer the above views and again perhaps give insight into what the unchurched might be saying. With his research and insights gained, Rainer asked, "Is it possible we have been asking the wrong people the wrong questions?" It seems the formerly unchurched have some definite opinions about the practices of the church that should be considered as the church goes about loving its neighbors.

Rainer identifies faith stages that might be beneficial to those who go about or wish to go about engaging the community. There are five stages identified for the unchurched and two for the individuals who have experienced conversion.

Table 2.1. Characteristics of Unchurched and Disciples[65]

U5 Antagonistic	U4 The Resistant	U3 The Leaners and the Apathetics	U2 The Seekers	U1 Waiting on You
Highly resistant to the Gospel, antagonistic attitude	Resistant to the Gospel, but not an antagonistic	No apparent receptivity, neutral, perhaps open to discussion	Receptive to the Gospel and to the church	Highly receptive to the Gospel, "the Philippian jailer"

U = Unchurched; D = Disciple

D1		D2
A "baby" in Christ		Signs of early maturity in Christ

Rainer presents the estimated percentages of unchurched people. The table below depicts this information. A key to note in this table is that the percentage of resistant and antagonistic is not a large number relating to the unchurched.

Table 2.2. Percentage by Category of Unchurched[66]

U5	Resistant and Antagonistic	5%
U4	Resistant	21%
U3	Neutral	36%
U2	Receptive	27%
U1	Highly Receptive	11%

Several strategies are offered for dealing with the unchurched in Rainer's book *The*

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67. Rainer, 61.

68. Ibid., 223.

Unchurched Next Door. The 10 reasons we have not reached the unchurched are worth considering as a church thinks through outreach.[67] The first is spiritual lethargy, where a lack of spiritual growth typically results in a diminished desire to share the Gospel of Christ with others. Second, *growth inclusivism* hampers the need to share the Gospel. In brief, inclusivism states Jesus is the way; however, he can be found in other "good" religions, which is counter to the Christian doctrine. Third, there is a larger percentage of people not believing in the reality of hell. Fourth, many Christians claim they are too busy to share the Gospel. Fifth, many are afraid of rejection. Sixth, there is a tendency for the Christian to be tolerant, whereas the message of the Gospel, in some senses, is intolerant. Seventh, the discipline associated with witnessing has waned. Eighth, accountability is not prevalent. Witnessing is more of an individual sport. Ninth, Rainer reports that only a few Christians will invite the unchurched to attend their churches. Tenth, many churches have well-intended members serving within the body; however, many of these churches do not challenge their members to reach out to the lost.

For the church serious about an outward focus, many lessons can be learned from the study of the unchurched and the formerly unchurched in structuring ministry to love for its neighbors.

Engagement: Partnerships—Churches/Business/Government

Eric Reed, in "New Ownership," relays stories of how churches have come together to share resources in "shared parishes" in order to build the kingdom together."[68] He further sites the interworkings of a group of 90 churches, called United! working in the Atlanta area. Four years after a core of 8 churches came together, Unite! surfaced consisting of churches from black, white, and Hispanic cultures that cross a range of theological backgrounds. This group

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69. Rainer, 216–231.

70. Reed, 19.

leads prayer initiatives, adopts schools, and supports a clinic for indigent people. In the aftermath

of Hurricane Katrina, they took in 1,000 families that fled to Atlanta. The group operates under

the premise that the problems, issues, and struggles of the community are their problems, issues,

and struggles because they are a part of the community and not separate from it.

In a 2008 survey conducted by *Leadership,* 700 evangelical pastors were asked how their

perceptions of the Gospel and mission currently compare with their understanding a decade

prior. Among others elucidations, "more pastors believed partnering with other local churches is

essential to accomplish their mission."[69] This survey also indicated how several churches are also

partnering with secular entities to carry out outreach/mission activities.

When asked whether the church McKinley pastors partnered with other churches and

programs, he answered as follows:

> Yes, there's no way one church can do all that needs to be done. It's ridiculous to even think that way. When you're serious about community renewal and social justice, man, you have to get everybody onboard. We've partnered with secular organizations on AIDS and tried to win a voice for Christians in that community. There's so much already being done that creating a Christian version really isn't necessary. Why reinvent the wheel? We definitely believe in "no logo, no ego."
> LEADERSHIP: No logo, no ego?
> MCKINLEY: Everything doesn't have to be an Imago Dei Ministry (this is to say it does not have to belong to his church for them to become involved).[70]

The pastor of justice, advocacy, and compassion at NewSong mentioned earlier notes that

they always try to partner with existing churches and ministries. "We want to work with

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71. Helen Lee, "Missional Shift or Drift," *Leadership Journal* 29, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 24.

72. McKinley, 30.

someone indigenous to the area who is also an expert at what they're doing."[71] Pastor proposes

that the church, individual and body, partner with their neighbors to do two things: (1) identify

the positive aspects of their neighborhood (their assets) and (2) create partnerships in the

community to capitalize on those assets.[72]

Engagement: What's the Hindrance?

Oftentimes, the church becomes its own worst enemy in carrying out its mandate of

loving its neighbors. Chad Hill refers to hindrances as distractions and mentions two of them.

Self-preservation is one hindrance. This is a church's tendency toward "focusing on self instead

of rediscovering and refocusing on God's activity in the world."[73] The second is church growth

for the sake of building something bigger. "When the emphasis is on bringing the world to the

church, the church's mission of going to the world can get lost."[74]

Paul Nixon addresses several hindrances when he speaks of "choosing frontier over

fortress."[75] He talks about how the fortified appearances of many churches are difficult to avoid.

For instance, the church building itself, oftentimes closed a great deal of the week, seems to be

closed to outsiders. Nixon also addresses those churches that have become primarily museums.

These bask in the glory of the past and are typically given attention for their good works of years

gone by. In fortified churches, the "back in the day" mentality is prevalent. Another hindrance

may be found in the lack of the church being a healthy community in and of itself. In many

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73. Lee, 38.

74. Paul Pastor, "View from the Second Story," *Leadership Journal* 31, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 50.

75. Hall, 35.

76. Ibid.

77. Nixon, 81–94.

instances, the church is not a place where one may safely expose their hurts and struggles and find loving arms of a *koinonia* community to support. What is found is a lack of support or perhaps even a cold shoulder. These and other such mentalities hinder churches from exploring those frontiers (communities) God intended for them to journey into and reach for His glory.

K. P. Yohannan furthers this notion of hindrances to engagement by suggesting that many churches have forgotten their primary task—the reason God established the body of believers in the first place. The work of the Great Commission is seldom seen as the redemptive and transforming work of God. Yohannan also suggests that the definition of a *missionary* is limited—often seen as Westerners going off to Asia, Africa, and the likes of India to share the Gospel—when in fact, a missionary is any who leaves their comfort and culture to address the discomfort and disease of another culture. This leads to what Yohannan might consider a third hindrance, and that is a view of what the *mission field* entails. He defines a mission field "as any cultural group that does not have an established group of disciples."[76] Such a definition could very well include the neighbors of churches.

Larry Mills seems to second the notion about *mission*, *missionary*, and *mission field* in his work *The Recovery of God's Purpose for the 21st Century Church*. He basically states many churches are "majoring in the minors." We work in the secondary nature of missions instead of the primary nature of missions. Mills believes many have confused missionary callings and, as a result, have lost their first love. "The secondary nature of mission is the passing out of Thanksgiving baskets, special gifts for Christmas, etc., when we should be functioning in the primary nature of service and salvation."[77]

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78. Yohannan, 172.

79. Larry G. Mills, *The Recovery of God's Purpose for the 21st Century Church* (Lithonia: Orman Press, 2000), 47.

An additional hindrance can be surmised from David Wheeler's chapter titled "Outreach: Back to the Basics in Strategic Planning" in *InnovateChurch*. Wheeler rightly supposes that many today have a perspective that the church is the brick and mortar that believers make their way too generally a couple of times each week to meet God when, in essence, the New Testament ecclesiology presents the concept and truth that God abides in the heart of each believer. Herein stands another hindrance to outreach. Wheeler writes, "If we view church as existing in a separate location from which we live then it becomes easy to ignore ethical mandates and especially Great Commission responsibilities relating to outreach."[78] Believers must come to an understanding they are in fact the church in flesh, and when they do so, their neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces become mission fields in which they share Christ in word, behavior, and deed.

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80. Falwell, ed., 119.

CHAPTER 3

A VIEW OF CHURCHES SURVEYED: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The church is only the church when it exists for others.
—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*

There were twelve churches asked to participate in this research. Nine of those who initially indicated that they could participate did in fact submit a response. The intent of the survey was to gain insight into practices, procedures, and principles associated with each church's outreach ministry. Of the nine responding, there were two that indicated that they did not desire for any practice, procedure, or principle identified in their survey to be disclosed and specifically identified with their church. While appendix A will list all the churches that responded, this section will identify each church by a pseudonym (from the Twelve Tribes) known only to the investigator.

Target Groups of Outreach

The first two questions considered input as to whether churches focused on a target group in their outreach and the importance of focusing on a target group. Four of the churches indicated they had a target group as the focus of their outreach. There were also four churches that indicated they did not have a target group. One church indicated there were times when they might have a target group and other times they did not. One of the four indicating they did not have a target group stated that their focus was geographical and not demographical. As to the importance of a having a target group, those responding they used target groups indicated it was "important" to "extremely important" to have such a group. The one church indicating they sometimes had target groups also indicated having target groups was somewhat important. Three of the four indicating "no" target group indicated having a target group as "not important." One

indicating they did not use target groups did not respond to the question regarding the importance of focus on a target group.

Scriptures (Principles) Associated with Outreach

Churches were asked to identify 2 biblical principles (scriptures) upon which they focused their outreach efforts.

Asher: Matthew 28:18–20 was listed as the biblical principles upon which their community outreach was derived. The scripture states, "[18] And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Benjamin: The two principles listed were Isaiah 61:1–4 and James 1:27. Later used by Jesus in Luke (4:18–20), Isaiah recorded,

> [1] The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; [2] To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; [3] To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified. [4] And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

The second principle used by this congregation seems to be geared toward keeping them on the lookout for others and walking correctly before the world. James (1:27) writes, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father in this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Dan: This congregation shared three principles, one of which has already been identified above (Matthew 28:18–20). The remaining two are Matthew 10:8 and 2 Corinthians 1:3. They lean on the words of Jesus saying, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). The remaining scripture for this church was "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." All indications are this church desires to come alongside others (Christian and non-Christian) to comfort in a manner that God Himself would comfort.

Gad: James 1:27 was again identified as a principle focused upon. (See Benjamin above.)

Issachar: In addition to Matthew 28:18–20, this church identified Acts 1:8 as a key biblical principle in their outreach. Acts 1:8 announces the words of Jesus: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Joseph: With no scripture attached (presumably Matthew 28:18–20), this church simply stated that their focus principle is to "make disciples of all nations."

Judah: In addition to Acts 1:8 cited above, Psalm 68:5–6 is listed as a place from which this church launches its outreach. This passage reads, "[5] A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. [6] God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

Levi: Matthew 28:19–20 and Luke 19:10 were named by this church. The former is previously identified, and the latter reads, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Naphtali: Matthew 28:19–20 and Romans 15:20 were referred in their response. Romans 15:20 speaks, "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should

build upon another man's foundation."

Budget Allocations for Outreach

Churches were asked about the percentage of their annual budget that was allocated to outreach. Four of those surveyed indicated allocations ranging from 1% to 14%. Four churches indicated allocations ranging from 15% to 24%. One church indicated a budget allocation of 50% or greater. Taking a median average of the stated allocation ranges, the churches included in this survey would allocate on average roughly 17.5% of their budget for outreach.

Fund-Raising and Methods

An attempt was made to determine how fund-raising played in each church's outreach. Each was asked if they were involved in fund-raising beyond tithes and offerings, and if so, what had they found to be effective.

Asher: Outreach is supported by fund-raising. The approach seems to be one of "sacrificial offerings" contributed by the congregation. This church's SimpleServing events provide one-time giving opportunities to meet the outreach need. SimpleServing answers the question "How can I give and to whom?" The church found this approach to be an effective way to get people to take the "first step" toward being culturally engaged.

Benjamin: There were no fund-raising efforts involved in this church's outreach ministry.

Dan: There were no fund-raising efforts involved in this church's outreach ministry.

Gad: There were no fund-raising efforts involved in this church's outreach ministry.

Issachar: This church indicated that fund-raising was not typically utilized in resourcing their outreach ministry. This year (2013) they will be assisting local crisis pregnancy centers by having a Baby Bottle Campaign for the 40TH anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Proceeds will be given to the local pregnancy centers. The last time this church had a Baby Bottle

Campaign, they generated over $250,000 (two hundred fifty thousand dollars) in support of the local crisis pregnancy centers.

Joseph: There were no fund-raising efforts involved in this church's outreach ministry.

Judah: This church has an overall "missions" strategy approach. They have an annual Faith Commitment Offering for their mission's strategy. Throughout the year, they may also host several small fund-raisers to send teams out into the fields. These fund-raisers include rummage sales, restaurant partnerships, selling items, spaghetti suppers, and the likes.

Levi: There were no fund-raising efforts involved in this church's outreach ministry.

Naphtali: With this congregation, fund-raising is tied to a specific project or vision. The pastor sharing the vision for a particular project and how it is to help the community and the people seems to work best. "The pastor sharing the vision is the best fund-raiser."

Identifying Service Projects and Outreach Initiatives

Realizing congregations serve in various areas and seek to meet the needs of a much-diversified group of customers and potential customers, this research intended to examine avenues congregation used to identify needs as well as set goals for outreach ministry.

Asher: Relationships were seen as the key for this church. "We believe that relationship is the key to sustainable change in our community. Our service projects are born out of relationships that we have established in the community." Goals for outreach were typically established by the pastor and the church's culturally engaged staff.

Benjamin: Efforts are made to connect with the community through forums and asking the target group about their needs. There is a procedure for screening what is the most beneficial approach in meeting the need. Goals are generally established by the pastor.

Dan: This church seems to make their way out into the community through what is referred to as

"domestic missions." Such involvement allows them to see or become introduced to needs that can be met. For example, through their "domestic missions" effort, they have established a presence in a nearby trailer park. Through the active participation of church volunteers, they have held children's ministry events, cookouts, and other outreach events to build relationships with the residents. These efforts are for the sole purpose of establishing caring relationships with the residents so that, eventually, salvation may be offered through Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is their focus, and it was stated, "We believe in our calling." The goals are established by the elders, the Directional Leadership Team, and the individual pastors.

Gad: Community assessment projects are undertaken to establish areas of service projects. The goals for their outreach effort were established by the pastor.

Issachar: Community service projects are no longer undertaken by this church. Their effort is more "missions" focus. As it relates to their mission's outreach, a committee and a local United States and International Missions staff are responsible for establishing goals.

Joseph: Education was seen as a "greater" need in this church's community. They chose the twelve lowest income schools and addressed those needs through the school board. The pastor is the individual responsible for establishing goals of the outreach effort.

Judah: It seems as though individuals from the outside contacted this church regarding the needs of the community (and the global setting as well). They indicated, "We were made aware of the needs in the community and around the globe." Many of these needs have been consistently met over several decades. Goals are established through pastor/deacon/committee collaborations.

Levi: Typically, needs surface in one of two ways. The church has community contacts that interface with various agencies. In addition, the church utilizes small groups, and often, needs arise from these groups. There is an executive staff in place to establish goals.

Naphtali: Several ways of identifying needs were characterized. One was simply the pastor speaking to a friend and getting an idea about things the church might do in the community. Meeting needs also has identified other needs to be met in the community. Another way was in meeting with the commonwealth attorney. Being deliberate about establishing relationships with the community brings opportunity to serve to the surface. Their focus is to keep the main need the main need—the Gospel—and in doing so, this church practices seeking first to share the Gospel in any venue God opens up for them to be a conduit. Goals for these efforts are established by the pastor.

Priority of Outreach among Other Ministries

Churches were asked where outreach ministry ranked: top 10%, 20%, 30%, or other. Five of the churches indicated that outreach ministry ranks in the top 10% of their ministries. Two churches ranked outreach ministry in the top 30%. One church ranked outreach as other—i.e., in the top 40%. One church indicated they did not understand the question. The intent of the question was to gather some idea of priority for outreach ministry in relation to other ministries. Given the figures provided, on average outreach ministry will fall within the top 18.75% among other ministries of the congregations. While no questions were asked about what priorities were above outreach, one may surmise outreach ministries have a relatively high ranking among other ministries.

Use of Media in Announcing Outreach Efforts

An attempt was made to identify the types of media that best served in announcing outreach efforts among each congregation's membership and in announcing outreach efforts within the community.

Asher: In announcing among members, the most common methods were Facebook, Twitter,

websites, and monthly newsletters. For the membership, this congregation also found that up-front announcements mixed into the sermon to be effective. Their response to use of media in announcing outreach efforts in the community was not clear to the investigator.

Benjamin: Facebook, Twitter, stage announcements, bulletin announcements, and the church websites worked best in announcing outreach efforts among the members. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, radio and ideas of empowering members to reach their sphere of influence were also utilized in announcing community outreach efforts to those of the neighborhood.

Dan: "We have an e-newsletter that has proven to be very effective. We run ministry outreach efforts and other serving opportunities throughout all our facilities by using TVs that are mounted in high-traffic areas. These TVs are used to run an advertising "loop" that is continuously being displayed. We also have a church Facebook page that has proven to be very effective." Local outreach community efforts are announced through a local Christian radio station, newspapers, newspaper inserts, and community billboards.

Gad: Social media and small-group relationships have proven to be effective in announcing among members. The response regarding advertisement to the community was unclear to the investigator.

Issachar: Pulpit announcements were the primary method of identifying to the congregation. As for announcing in the community, this church partners with local community agencies and supports their efforts in the community. "Our church is 'invisible' to the community."

Joseph: The Sunday school was instrumental in getting the word out in both the church and the community. Bulletins and the Internet were also used in announcing to members.

Judah: Among church members, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, the church's website,

and mass e-mailing and postal mailers were used to get the word out. These methods were also used in announcing outreach efforts to the community.

Levi: Announcements in church service were effective. TV ads and Facebook were effective for announcements in the community.

Naphtali: This congregation ranked the effectiveness of their current use of media as follows: video announcements in the worship service, Facebook and Twitter, and blogs. Television is used in announcements to the community as well as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs.

Recruitment Efforts for Outreach Ministry

This investigation sought to gain insight into methods of generating "manpower" to support outreach efforts. Churches were asked to briefly describe their recruiting efforts.

Asher: Up-front announcements, Facebook, newsletters, website, and personal contacts were cited as methods to recruit those willing to participate in the church's outreach ministry.

Benjamin: There is a leadership team that serves under the pastor of connections that assists with the recruiting. Word of mouth and marketing campaigns have been effective.

Dan: Needs are advertised church-wide through various media previously identified. Specific opportunities are made available for interested individuals to sign up. "The most effective recruitment technique is a one-on-one relationship that allows for personal recruitment."

Gad: This congregation has a small group directory, and this directory is used as a recruitment vehicle. A focus on building relationships is key. In addition, there are mission weekends with a focus on outreach happening throughout the year.

Issachar: "When we still did service projects, we 'advertised' online and in our church paper. Sometimes there were pulpit announcements. Since we stopped doing service projects, we support our partners by having local short-term "mission trips." These are no different from

traditional "away" trips except that they are all in town. People take a bus to the supported

agency and stay several days."

<u>Joseph</u>: Recruitment efforts happen primarily in Sunday school.

<u>Judah</u>: Simply presenting the need to the church, raising awareness, and asking for individuals to

join in prayers have been effective in recruiting.

<u>Levi</u>: Recruitment is primarily accomplished through personal/individual contact and through

small groups.

<u>Naphtali</u>: The tools associated with this church's recruitment are one-on-one contact, social

media, pastor announcements, and videos.

Use of Outreach Coordinators

Churches were asked to identify if they had or did not have an "outreach coordinator" or

someone responsible for the overall administration of their outreach ministry. Six of nine

responding indicated they utilized the services of a coordinator (67%). Three stated they did not

use a coordinator. Napthali stated "no" with qualification and clarification to the use of

coordinators. This church has a mission's pastor and their missions are aimed at more than

outreach. Their philosophy is that all ministries are outreach. There are different events designed

to reach the community. This church sees the responsibility for all ministries to do outreach and

outreach events. "Outreach is built into the fiber of every ministry." Coordinators seem to have

value among this group of churches.

Frequency of Emphasizing Community Outreach

At this point, the inquiry pursued some idea of how often and by what means churches

kept the idea of community outreach (in general) before the congregation.

<u>Asher</u>: Cultural engagement is a core value of this church. Community outreach and its

importance are talked about in their "foundations" class for incoming members. In addition, most teachings have incorporated applications for community outreach. Other times there are up-front announcements for specific opportunities to serve the community. "Our goal is to have community outreach a part of who we are as a church and not just something we do." The feel was a sense of "community service" permeating all ministries.

Benjamin: Sharing stories during the offering portion of the worship service has been beneficial. Facebook and Twitter have been helpful, as well as stories incorporated in sermons.

Dan: This church speaks of a constant sharing about community outreach through various media mentioned above. In addition, pastors who oversee the specific outreach events/ministries will often take a few minutes to expound upon events.

Gad: A mission's recap weekend held in December at the church is a highlight in emphasizing community outreach. This church builds upon and carries out "seasonal" outreach events to continually keep community before the church. Also, seminars to aid individuals in determining their "gifting" are considered an outreach effort. Lastly, there is a continual emphasis through their small group directory.

Issachar: Key ways of emphasizing outreach are through weekend bible studies, pastoral support in certain sermons, and the church's website.

Joseph: Sunday school is a place of main emphasis of outreach. Testimonies are given during this time. In addition, videos in worship service have been valuable.

Judah: Outreach is an agenda item for small groups that meet weekly. Additionally, social media is advantageous for keeping outreach before the minds of the congregation.

Levi: Considered as vision casting (and in the investigator's opinion rightly so), community outreach is emphasized during worship services and small group meetings.

Naphtali: The main emphasis comes from the pulpit each Sunday and "penetrates all the way down the staff to the congregation." They use media to tell of success. There are also one-on-one contacts emphasizing community service and the need for assistance.

Outreach as a Mission/Vision/Core Values Statement

The research examined the relative importance of outreach as a part of a church's overall strategic planning. Responses were as follows: extremely important, important, somewhat important, not important, and not listed. They were asked as to whether outreach was identified in their mission, vision, and/or core value statements. Eight of the nine responding indicated it was "extremely important" (the highest category of importance). One church indicated that this was important. In every case, churches had established outreach ministry into their mission, vision, or core values statements.

Types and Frequency of Training

The research entreated churches to identify the type(s) of training they deemed most beneficial for those who may wish to participate in community outreach ministry. Their choices were evangelism, discipleship, stewardship, all the above, or other. Churches were also asked how often such training was provided to those involved.

Six of the churches queried indicated that evangelism, discipleship, and stewardship trainings were all beneficial. Of these six, one church identified "spiritual gifts assessment" training as beneficial. One church identified only evangelism and discipleship trainings as beneficial. This church included "empowerment" training in the "other training" category. Their philosophy is individual "empowerment over fostering dependence." One church stated only evangelism training as being beneficial. One church sited "other" training as being most beneficial. The training perceived by this church to be the most beneficial is "overseas mission

training." Their philosophy is that international missionaries are trained how to identify and penetrate the new culture around them. They are geared to try new things and are not usually bound up in traditional Western ideas of church for reaching the indigenous people. Learning how to penetrate cultures and subcultures is said to be a needed skill set for local missions in like manner as foreign missions. According to this thinking, a great deal of what has been learned overseas has become proven ideas and methods to assist back at home (America). One such training was developed in China and is called Training for Trainers (T4T). This is a training for those serious about reaching the culture they are ministering to and those interested in church planting. A second type of training used is Creation to Christ (C2C)—a summary of the Bible's most basic message. Another training used by this church is Church Planting Movement (CPM) training, which is a help for people to see new ways to reach their own cultures. These types of trainings are geared to deal with transforming the mind-set of the congregants in their day-to-day living as opposed to carrying out a programmatic approach to outreach on a periodic basis.

When it came to frequency of training, there were various times. One church actually had no formal training for outreach or training associated specifically with outreach. They contend that this is taught during weekly teachings, during community group times, and in their introductory classes to the church. Three churches focused on outreached on a weekly basis. One aimed to train on a monthly basis, three on a quarterly basis, and one three times a year.

The Role of Federal, State, or Other Nonprofits

In the wake of the many governmental faith-based initiatives, the research endeavored to determine the interplay of any outside organization (other than another church) in each church's outreach efforts. The possible responses were "Extremely Important," "Important," "Somewhat Important," "Not Important," and "We operate without the participation of other institutions."

Table 3.1. Interplay of Outside Organizations in Outreach

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Other Participation
Asher		X			
Benjamin		X			
Dan			X		
Gad			X		
Issachar	X				
Joseph					X
Judah			X		
Levi				X	
Napthali			X		

Seven of the nine indicated some level of importance as it relates to the interplay of federal, state, and other nonprofit organizations in their outreach ministry. The types of involvement were not outlined. Only one church noted they operated without the participation of other outside institutions.

Opportunities for Service

Churches were requested to identify a level of frequency for opportunities where its members could serve in community projects. Two churches stated there were daily opportunities to serve. Six churches indicated they strive for weekly activities. Issachar, the church which no longer does service project specified year-round local and international mission trips totaling 60 or so.

Fasting in Relation to Outreach

Churches were asked to what degree of importance was fasting related to their individual outreach ministry. The results are as follows:

Table 3.2. Importance of Fasting in Relation to Outreach

_____

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Asher (No Response)				
Benjamin		X		
Dan		X		
Gad		X		
Issachar		X		
Joseph			X	
Judah			X	
Levi				X
Napthali			X	

By and large, these churches seem to think fasting is beneficial as it relates to administering their outreach ministry. There was no explanation for the one church that provided no response and the one church that expressed fasting was not important in the scheme of their outreach ministries.

Outreach Online Initiatives

This question explored whether churches used online resources in any manner as outreach measures. Six of the churches indicated they did not use online resources in community outreach. One of the six briefly noted how they used their website to identify their local partnering relationships. Three churches indicated that they did use online resources. Two of the three provided a caveat noting that they used electronic media to connect individuals who are interested in the church. It does not seem as though there was a great deal of current use of online resources by these churches to aid in community outreach.

Collaboration with Other Churches

Many hands make lighter work or at least should. The investigator desired to gain some insight about the collaboration of these churches with other churches in their outreach ministry

efforts. There were four responses: (1) Extremely Important, (2) Important, (3) Somewhat

Important, and (4) Not Important. Responses are as follows:

Table 3.3. Importance of Collaboration with Other Churches

_____

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
	_____	_____	_____	_____
Asher		X		
Benjamin			X	
Dan			X	
Gad	X			
Issachar	X			
Joseph				X
Judah			X	
Levi				X
Napthali			X	

By and large, there was a level of collaboration with other churches. Follow-up questions asking

to provide examples of the types of collaboration would have been beneficial. Albeit the data is

somewhat limited, there should be some consideration given toward collaborating with other

churches in community outreach efforts.

Recommendations/Suggestions for Developing and Sustaining Outreach

While the initial questions looked at the operational aspects of each church's outreach

ministry, the next two questions were primarily geared toward lessons learned in developing and

sustaining community outreach. The investigator asked, "What two recommendations or

suggestions would you provide to a church interested in developing and sustaining community

outreach?" The responses are as follows:

Asher: The first out of the chute for this church was to "build relationships." They noted that

"this process will be slower than most would like, but without relationships that leads to gospel

conversations, we are just good social workers." Second, "be willing to say no." Determine

which area(s) you are going to focus on and then do them well. There are many churches and organizations doing great things, but they cannot all be done well. "Find organizations that are doing something well and work with them as you strive to meet unmet needs in your community."

Benjamin: "Do what will help empower those you are attempting to reach." Do not attempt outreach just to make yourselves feel good. It is all about the kingdom of God. The second recommendation was to "make research a priority."

Dan: Number one would be to "determine the resources/programs/events that are currently available in the area. You don't want to reinvent the wheel." Ascertain the areas of greatest need that are unaddressed and develop a plan to meet those needs.

Gad: The two expression of advice offered were (1) consistency and (2) continual leadership development. Times may become difficult and perhaps frustrating in implementing an outreach ministry. Stay consistent in working through difficult times. In addition, there is a need to ensure leadership is being perpetuated. Be intentional in developing leaders.

Issachar: As churches look for agencies to support, they should establish policies regarding the criteria of whom they will support. Second, it is recommended that a committee that will oversee and direct the release of funds (rather than having all decisions made by an individual) be developed.

Joseph: Both recommendations involved training. Evangelism Explosion training is utilized and recommended by this church. The second suggestion would be to implement the first through Sunday school.

Judah: The first recommendation is to pray: focusing on learning the needs of the community, assessing the needs of the community, and connecting with local organizations. Second, there

has to be a prayerful and deliberate approach in presenting the needs to the congregation and teaching them the scripture that instructs them to move beyond the walls.

Levi: Ensure that programs are out. Recommend a focus on building relationships and helping people experience the life-changing Gospel message.

Napthali: "Get training in the same things that foreign missionaries get trained in. They get trained in things that help penetrate culture. Things like orality (language expressions) and storying (breaking matters down to their essential elements) that are effective ways to reach people." Second, look to the long haul. People typically respond better if you are engaging with them for the long haul instead of simply trying to get them to your event.

Improvement Recommendations

Churches were asked to examine their existing outreach ministries and identify any improvements they would make to their own outreach efforts.

Asher: "I would like to improve our communication to members, specifically celebrating the 'wins' and making sure the members know that they are appreciated and that they are making a difference as a corporate body."

Benjamin: We would look for "more opportunities to serve" and "easier on-ramps."

Dan: "Ascertain effectiveness and alter/redesign specific ministry to meet the need. Provide consistent visionary leadership. Greater level of effectiveness in recruiting. Maintain consistent training when applicable."

Gad: There would be a greater effort to "partner more with state and federal agencies."

Issachar: "We are constantly searching for better ways to impress upon members that making disciples is not optional for a follower of Jesus. Discipleship is more than a project that we 'check off' once a quarter or once a month or even once a week. Discipleship is rooted in

relationships, and relationships take invested, intentional time."

Joseph: This church would seek to "train more leaders to teach the evangelism class."

Judah: There would be an attempt to increase the number of and have closer relationships with local organizations.

Levi: The improvement to be made in these churches' outreach efforts would be to find "a better vehicle/strategy to be more intentional about (their) efforts."

Naphtali: There would be greater efforts at establishing "more of it." Vision casting would be improved toward making outreach more a mind-set with the people versus outreach being simply an event they participate in.

Summary

The investigation sparks a multitude of thoughts as it relates to starting, enhancing, and sustaining a community outreach ministry. The next chapter will consider the literature review of chapter 1, the thoughts on engagement in chapter 2, and the information in chapter 3 gathered from churches surveyed to elaborate upon factors discovered as well as additional factors believed to be necessary in providing components of a proposition geared toward developing and sustaining community service projects.

CHAPTER 4

INGREDIENTS AND COMPONENTS NECESSARY IN DEVELOPING AND

SUSTAINING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

> You can impress people at a distance; you can only impact them up close. The general principle is this, the closer the personal relationship, the greater the potential for impact.
> —Howard Hendricks, *What Churches Must Do Well*

Whether in a community of upscale condominiums or in a community of low-income complexes, there is a need to reach out, reconciling and reclaiming individuals to God. While God seems to have a great interest for the economically destitute, it could also be demonstrated that He has an interest in those who are spiritually destitute as God's desire is that none should perish. With this in mind, outreach locally or globally should span all economic strata and seek to bring mankind into a redemptive relationship with God through Jesus Christ by way of the Holy Spirit who convicts all.

The research indicates many approaches and actions toward this redemptive end. There is no one precise formula; however, there are some necessary ingredients and requirements. Many of these requirements and ingredients will parallel one another in the development of a local (or global) outreach mission, and most will carry over into sustaining community service and outreach.

Relationship Building

"People are looking! Looking for God, looking for supportive relationships with others who love and care for them."[1] The entire Bible is about God's desire for man to build a relationship with Him and man's need to build a relationship with Him. As we look at the early church and its spread of the Gospel, we find that the Gospel has traveled and always will travel

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1. Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin, *Finding Them, Keeping Them: Effective Strategies for Evangelism and Assimilation in the Local Church* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 1.

best above relational lines. The early church went about building these relationships in three ways. First, the early church made its presence known "in the normal network of society."[1] The early disciples went about their daily family lives and professions as living witnesses of Christ's power. Their presence was felt and left in their daily efforts of life. Second, the early disciples were present in ministry to meet the physical needs of those of their communities. When they saw a need in the community, they endeavored to meet the need. They realized that meeting such needs would have an impact on the reception of the Gospel. McIntosh and Martin refer to this as *presence evangelism*. Third, "the early Christians were present in the spiritual battle for people's souls."[2] They sent men beyond the walls of their church homes and the city's protection. They did not wait for the community to come to the church in order to establish a relationship with them. "God's call has always been to meet the people where they are, to be present with them."[3] Meeting the people where they are requires efforts in building relations.

Many churches are small islands that rarely get involved with their neighbors. It's not "let's go transform these poor folks," but "let's see how they and we will be transformed."[4] Paul Pastor tells readers that the strategy is not to "fix" people first, but to get them engaged because real relationships change everybody. He identifies four steps to involve the community in relations.[5] The first is to "go outside." Churches should get to know their neighbors. All have something to offer—to the church and the larger community. Pastor suggests simply finding ways to be present in the community with the neighbors. Second, churches should listen well.

2. McIntosh and Martin, 23.

3. Ibid., 25.

4. Ibid., 30.

5. Saul Cruz, "Dumping Ground," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 55–57

6. Pastor, 51.

Jesus spoke; however, He often listened. The church should listen to understand and understand to love. The third step is for the church to get training. Churches should consider joining with like-minded churches in gaining specific knowledge and in helping acquire a sensitive touch. The fourth step is to hang on the Gospel. Churches should hold the Gospel message close to their hearts, "carefully preserving both the message of Jesus, and the potential outworking of His love and transformative power."[6]

David Kinnan, lead pastor of Fountain Springs Community Church, once thought that "excellence" retained people. "Excellence is important, but relationships always trump everything."[7] Kinnan believes in giving weekly, monthly, and yearly serving opportunities for everyone—children through adults. Serving together tends to help people stay together and builds relationships for outreach. Kent Hunter would simply say, "The growth of the church is all about relationships."[8]

What Is This about "Reconnecting" to the Community?

Perhaps a concern here is of the idea that many churches have lost the view that they are in fact a part of the community—a community within the community, to be precise. In some instances, there is a need for a return to the neighborhood as if the church has left it. Roxburgh suggests moving back into the neighborhood is about learning to see our community with a fresh set of eyes. "An important part of joining with God in mission-shaped life is learning to see again with fresh eyes, to wake up to the fresh and not-so-obvious ways God is present."[9] In learning to reconnect with the neighbor, Roxburgh suggest that an emphasis be placed on the Word of God

7. Pastor, 51.

8. Scott Marshall, 108.

9. Kent R. Hunter, 4.

10. Roxburgh, 183.

as it relates to going out (e.g., Luke 10:1–12). In addition, he suggests getting involved by simply walking through the neighborhood and asking questions about what is happening there.

Church as the Community

The church is the *ecclesia*—the community of those who have been called out, called together, called upward to a higher order of being in order to become the living sign of the Realm of God.[10] As a community called out by God, the church is therefore to be a community faithfully responding to the will, ways, and works of God. The church as a community has as its lead the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit, and it is called out to be the community of communities living out a connectedness between Jesus and the Realm of God and between the world and the Realm of God.[11]

Before a church can effectively serve its community, the church must first realize that it is a community. Within the community known as the church, there must be a deeper, more authentic experience of community among the fellowship of believers. Paul Nixon, in *I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church*, believes that this type of community living for the church must closely resemble the type of life sharing described in Acts 2:42–46:

> And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and
> fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear
> came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done
> by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all
> things common; And sold their possessions and good, and
> parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they,
> continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking
> bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and
> singleness of heart.

Nixon notes that many thriving churches have instituted community within their walls and have

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11. Korthright Davis, *Serving with Power: Reviving the Spirit of Christian Ministry* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 19.

12. Ibid., 103.

done so in a healthy manner through small groups. He also notes that while it is difficult work

building solid connectedness with the community beyond the walls, in the mainline churches, it

is often easier than raising the level of authentic community within the church itself. While small

groups may be one way of connecting the community of church, those in position of leadership

and also members should be open to innovative ways to connect as many people as possible in

the Christian community.

George Hunsberger believes "the first task of pastoral leadership is community-

formation. The church as a community should be formed and oriented around mission as its

identity and vocation, not mission as a project or extension of cultural habits of activism."[12]

The church must see itself as "formed by God as a sent community that bears the marks

of the full biblical story of a cross, as well as a resurrection."[13] The church itself is a community

within the community at large. Corneilus J. P. Niemandt reminds us that the church exists

foremost on the level of a community. He notes, "The church living its life in the Trinity and

after the likeness of the Trinity, cannot be something other than a social, self-giving loving

community in reconciled union."[14]

Loving the Community at Large

After all this discussion, it would certainly be good to have a working definition of

community. Tippy provided a succinct definition. "A community is a group of people living

together. It may be thousands congregated in a city or hundreds living pleasantly in a village, or

the scattered families of a countryside which find their common social life in the same school-

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13. George Hunsberger, "Birthing Missional Faithfulness: Accents in a North American Movement," *International Review of Mission* (April 2003): 150.

14. Ibid., 147.

15. Corenilus J. P. Niemandt, "Trends in Missional Ecclesiology," *AOSIS OpenJournals*, http://www.hts.org.zadoi:10"4102/hts.v68i1.1198, 7 (accessed September 2012).

house or the same church, or whose young people meet together socially in one another's homes."[15]

Paul's words "the love of Christ constrains (controls) us" would appear to be adequate in loving the community at large. Controlled by the love of Christ, the believer knows that Christ first loved them and that God gave His only begotten Son because of His love for the world (community at large). Compelled by just a love, the believers should want to convince those in their community about the truth of the Gospel.

An episode in the life of Saint Francis of Assisi details compassion like that of Christ in loving the community, particularly those who have been marginalized. Brad Jersak tells of how it is said that Saint Francis of Assisi found the sight and smell of lepers repulsive. He would make sure he gave himself a wide berth when he spotted them from afar. Yet on one occasion, Francis happened upon a leper by the roadside, and something totally different occurred. It is said that compassion rose from within; and he felt an urge to dismount his horse, offer the leper alms, and embrace the wretched soul—sores, smells, and all—even to the point of giving him a holy kiss. After climbing back upon his horse, Francis turned back to bid the leper farewell, only to realize he was alone in an empty field. In that moment, he was awakened to the conviction that he had encountered the living Christ himself in leprous concealment. His heart and ministry were forever altered. Francis then became a channel of God's love to the poor and the diseased, for in and among them, he had seen the kingdom and the face of God.[16] We often see ourselves as meeting the needs of the destitute when in fact ministering as Francis had done meets our need of serving as a guide in helping us understand the love of God. Jersak contends that we meet Jesus

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16. Tippy, 4.

17. Brad Jersak, "Guides to the Kingdom," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 31.

in the community when we go out to spread His love through service and sharing the Gospel.

NewSong (Irvine, California), Cambridge Community Fellowship Church (Cambridge, Massachusetts), and Evergreen (Los Angeles, California) are three churches the *Leadership Journal* identifies as reaching out to community and in specific ways ministering to the marginalized (addictions, abuse, socioeconomics, race, etc.). Dave Gibbons of NewSong states, "We are trying to revisit what it means to love God and love your neighbor. Those two commands are inseparable."[17] Churches can demonstrate God's love through mercy and justice ministries in their local communities and through creating recovery ministries to bring healing and support for those who need it. Jesus has called the Christian to have "a mindset and a will to love, learn, and serve in any culture, even in the midst of discomfort."[18]

Tony Evans brings the idea of a loving community to an apex in speaking of the mark of discipleship. Jesus brought about a permanent relationship between being His disciple and love. He spoke these words: "A new commandment I give unto you, that Ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34–35). Jesus commanded a love beyond feelings and beyond convenience.[19] The love Jesus commanded involves the call to serve others even at one's own expense and to do the will of God for others, whether or not they deserve it or whether or not the individual serving likes it or not. A commanded love compels the Christian, the church to go to the hedges and highways of community.

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18. Lee, 36.

19. Ibid., 37.

20. Tony Evan, *What Matters Most* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 45.

Praying and Rational Planning

Many Christians are assured that God has a plan for their individual lives; however, there is seldom a great deal of serious consideration and prayer toward the plans God has for the church as a body. The author and pastor of Bethel Metropolitan Baptist Church, in conjunction with the leadership, has established as one of its core values "diagnostic prayer." This means asking God what he has planned for the church and how the church should go about carrying out the plan God has for the church.

God does have a vision for each church, and those "churches effectively reaching out have a clear understanding of his plans for their church and the community."[20] These plans give the church hope and a future. Prayer brings about the notion that the vision and the planning is not that of the pastor or some strategic planning group. Prayer helps the congregation understand that it is God's vision for the church. The church can only come to a significant understanding of what God has planned for them through prayer and study. Unless the church is driven by what it believed to be God's vision and plan, it is bound to fail.

Mark Mittelberg calls out 10 principles for high-impact outreach ministries. He identifies principles such as defining purpose and goals, deciding on a target, communicating the purpose, innovating with fresh approaches, doing what you do well, promoting the events with precision and power, measuring and evaluating results for improvement, and praying. Prayer, he states, should "permeate the entire process … it could be listed as a parallel point to every other idea."[21] Prayer should be a part of the idea-generation phase, of the planning and promotion phase, of the actual event, and of the evaluation—in particular thanking God for the chance to serve on His

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21. George Barna, *User Friendly Churches* (Ventura: Regal, 1991), 88.

22. Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming a Contagious Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 150–151.

behalf. "The potential in outreach events is huge—but only if we are led by God and empowered through submissive, persistent prayer."[22] A prayerful, sincere desire to serve the people of God will reveal "a vision that will guide His people into accomplishing the mission of community redemption."[23]

Preaching: A Lifestyle and the Risk

In many cases, "a sermon or preaching may not be the best form of message at a given situation."[24] Sometimes a personal story is best. Those involved in outreach should be taught how to respond to this question: "What has God done (or what is God doing) in my life?" It is not always a good idea to focus on the church in the early stages of outreach engagement because many individuals have hang-ups with the institution. Telling personal stories generally catch the attention of mostly everyone.

Recognize that it takes time for the congregation to own the vision in the same way as the pastoral staff and lay leaders. Much of what is being preached and taught regarding outreach is sacrificial and risky. Do not expect everyone to sacrifice and do not run away from the situation because it has risks and calls for sacrifice. Connecting with gang-banging, gun-wielding youth of a city can be risky.

Intentionality

Angie Ward writes in regard to how churches are using their buildings to make an impact way beyond the weekend. She cited Door Creek Church in Madison, Wisconsin, and how their policy intentionally spoke to outreach. The policy reads, "It is our desire that the Door Creek

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23. Mittelberg, 152.

24. Stewart, ed., 96.

25. Kent R. Hunter, "Effective Outreach and the 5 Percent Factor Don't Work Harder—Work Smarter," *The Clergy Journal* (May/June 2009): 5.

Church facility be used to the greatest extent possible by the ministries of the church, its members, regular attendees, and surrounding community/neighborhood groups in order to achieve our four purposes: Worship, Reach, Grow, and Serve."[25] Door Creek Church appears to be intentional in its efforts to establish proper relationships and in doing so found success. To be intentional in developing relationships, McCalep adds that "the dynamic, transforming church is intentional in its efforts to build godly loving relationships between God, members, leaders and communities."[26]

Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Bukiewicz, division commander, the Salvation Army, Metropolitan Division, Chicago, Illinois, speaks further of intentionality, appropriateness, and relevancy. He starts by asking a rather profound question: "What is the use of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad, desperate struggle to keep themselves alive?"[27] Any engagement should be intentional. As the church becomes more socially conscious, there must be an intentional and deliberate effort to create opportunities for members to serve others. "We cannot simply assume any 'random act of kindness' will result in meaningful ministry. But when we approach every effort with a spirit of expectation, believing that we are partnering with God to both change circumstances and transform lives, amazing things happen."[28]

Miroslav Volf indicates Christians should be intentional in their relations to the broader culture. He notes that Christ came into the world with the intention to do good for all people, who are all God's creatures and who are all loved by God. A Christian faith should be intentional

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26. Angie Ward, "Full Service Facilities," *Leadership Journal* 29, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 49.

27. McCalep, 91.

28. Ralph Bukiewicz, 33.

29. Bukiewicz, 34.

in engaging the world to do good as Christ did. In addition, Volf notes that Christ came to redeem the world, and the efforts of Christians should be redemptive toward their communities in particular and the world in general. Christ intentionally engaged the world as a "bringer of grace," and the Christians serve the common good of their communities by emulating Christ in intentionally being "bringers of grace."[29] A third part of what Volf would refer to as intentionality deals with how Christ was intentional in caring for others and worked toward their flourishing in life. The Christian should be like-minded and intentional in caring for others in the church community and community at large with the intent of helping all of mankind flourish. Volf would also interject that the attitude associated with intentionality toward the larger culture "cannot be that of unmitigated opposition or whole-scale transformation," particularly since Christ was opposed and his efforts did not result in whole-scale transformation.[30] Christ came unto his own they received him not. Moreover, according to Volf, intentionality should involve being a witness for Christ, who came to bring life, and live more abundantly rather than imposing on the community their vision of human flourishing.

With Bukiewicz, intentionality starts with simple prayers for God to reveal opportunities where the church can go deeper by investing more of themselves in the lives of those who were once nameless, faceless strangers. In being appropriate, a congregation serious about meeting needs will at some point likely be driven to a new level of creative thinking where outdated outreach techniques are changed into more effective models of engagement. With relevancy, the church is not asked to compromise the message or values. Relevancy means the church will find ways to clearly communicate the Gospel through applicable words, compassionate actions,

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30. Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2011), xv.

31. Ibid., xvi.

Christlike attitude, and persistent creativity. "It also requires us to get our hands dirty and have our hearts broken. We need to be open to having our schedules divinely interrupted."[31]

Training and Retooling

Most members of a congregation will feel the need for some outreach training and will generally be reluctant to reach out without it. George Hunter proposes this training consist of at least four components.[32] First, there must be scripture verses and principles of theology that inform of outreach and a great consideration of the content of the message involved. Second, models for purpose of illustrations will help strengthen and reinforce the training. Third, a selection should be made as to the method among the "smorgasbord" of methods available today. Fourth, the training periods (initial and ongoing) should be characterized by practice. Practice should include role-playing in a classroom-type environment as well as on-the-job training.

As for tools, Bob Roberts and Shawn McMullen offer two similar statements regarding the most important of all tools. Roberts states, "The greatest tool for making disciples is getting people to engage the world."[33] McMullen chimes in to note the most effective evangelistic toll any church possesses is the transformed lives of its members.[34] Both statements have the members of the congregation as the key and essential tool in reaching out. However, in many churches, there may be a need for retooling the minds of those to whom Christ charged to reach out.

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32. Bukiewicz, 34.

33. Hunter, 132.

34. Bob Roberts (interview), 33.

35. Shawn McMullen, "Community Outreach: A Philosophy and Approach," *Small Church Leadership Network*, http:www.smallchurchleaders.org/the-small-church-shepherd/community-outreach-a-philosoph-and-approach (accessed September 24, 2012).

In retooling of the mind, Galli's seven habits of highly effective glocal churches should be considered. These are as follows:

1. Learn some rocket science—learn the basic principles of cross-cultural and effective development work, which is easier said than done

2. Think apostolic—do not get wrapped up in a church polity.

3. Prepare for the long haul.

4. Beware of cultural insensitivity—work within the structure of those you attempt to reach.

5. Leave the bleeding heart home—hold people accountable.

6. Do not be too creative—working with something that has been proven is okay.

7. Partner with experts—find opportunities to work with nonprofits.[35]

There are a number of organizations that assist churches in retooling to meet community needs and the mandate of sharing the Good News. One such organization is Neighborhood Connections. It is an organization that helps transform congregations into an incarnational presence, loving their neighbors in practical, contextual ways. Neighborhood Connections specifies three outcomes from its process: First, the church will learn to connect with its community—listening to the community and forging relationships that will become partnerships as the church works with the community for sustainable change. Second, Neighborhood Connects seeks to mobilize the congregation—involving every believer. "This honors the biblical call for believers to live in community and to serve in the mission to which God has called your church."[36] Once information is gathered, connections are made with community

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36. Mark Galli, "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Glocal Churches," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 32.

leaders, and community services are researched, Neighborhood Connections assists the church in constructing a two-year Neighborhood Connections Plan. "This plan will be a road map for your congregation to step up and take its place in the community, working together with your neighbors to address community needs by focusing on its strengths."[37]

Public Relations

"A definition of public relations for non-profit organizations is to create a favorable acceptance of ideas, programs, and products of an organization to meet the needs of individuals, families, and the community."[38] Hayward believes the initiatives and motivation of public relations campaigns come from the pastor and is sold to the "board" and the members of the congregation. Such a campaign might include programs and events that meet the needs of a church-renewal process that involves raising the membership's morale, providing attractive welcoming facilities, and creating interesting and meaningful services with Bible study classes and programs that meet the needs of the members and neighbors of the church.

Michael Washington, a pastor at New Community Covenant Church in Chicago, Illinois, recommends keeping your community informed. He suggests this be done by attending an open house for Christian counseling centers, connecting with other pastors, political leaders, and business owners about the church and its goals. "Keep a brochure that explains what you all are doing or planning to do."[39] Congregations that set out to serve the physical and spiritual needs of their communities are seen as good neighbors, and serving the community helps develop a positive reputation for the church in the community.

37. Gary Roberts, "Neighborhood Connections," http://linctwincities.org/blog/neighborhood-connections-qanda (accessed September 26, 2012).

38. Roberts.

39. Hayward, 21.

40. Michael Washington, "A Warmer Welcome," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 40.

It is a matter of working extensively in cultivating a reputation that glorifies God. John Beukema writes on being a "good neighbor." For Beukema, there are at least six keys to improve a church's reputation within the community. First, a church should be careful about what it shows its community. Posted signs and padlocks typically indicate the community may not be wanted. Second, a church must ensure it is communicating with the surrounding neighbors by inviting them in for reasons other than formal worship. Casual talks about events and issues are in order. Third, the church should indicate that it cares for more than its own interest by participating in events of the community (e.g., the annual Martin Luther King, Jr., parade). Fourth, the church should find ways to show acts of kindness as well as to allow those in the community to know that the church is concerned about their redemption. Fifth, a church can build its reputation in the community by showing that it cares for its own property. Neighbors will generally be quick to see defects, design flaws, and dandelions. Sixth, a church must get along with its neighbors. Any disagreements must be satisfactorily settled. Solomon said in Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold." Beukema concludes, "To have a positive impact in the community, a church must mind its reputation."[40]

Recruitment

Most indicators seem to support vision casting as the primary recruitment mechanism. Stan Toler and Alan Nelson believe there is "no such thing as unmotivated people."[41] People are motivated, and it is up to leadership to find ways to help people find motivation for ministry by assisting them in discovering their interest and passions. Sharing the vision effectively is critical

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41. John Beukema, "Like a Good Neighbor," *Leadership Journal* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 55–57.

42. Stan Toler and Alan Nelson, *The Five Star Church: Serving God and His People with Excellence* (Ventura: Regal, 1999), 118.

in obtaining volunteers (or paid individuals for that matter). Effective vision casting is essential to ensure the right people are in the right position to carry out the mission. To the contrary, having the right people in the wrong positions could prove detrimental to the mission. Many aspects of media have been explored in enlisting volunteers. Some mentioned earlier are ministry fairs, newsletter, websites, Facebook, and the like. However, there seems to be nothing better than a personal invitation to consider a ministry opportunity.

Partnerships: The Need for Federation

There is benefit to the kingdom when one church or churches join in where others are already at work making great strides. There is a need for churches in community and across cities and counties to form federations. These churches will be able to pool resources to have a greater impact on their various communities. In addition, these churches will be able to learn from one another's success and failures. This kind of mutual support has characteristics of the church the Apostle Paul collected money from to help the struggling Christians in Jerusalem.

While a secular work, *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice, and Service-Learning* (Robinson and Green) offers several hints as to the need for collaboration. Suffice it to say, these needs and issues are diversified and complex (health care, hunger, workforce development, loss of jobs, gang activity, and so on). It makes sense for the agencies, institutions, and churches to come together, recognize, then organize their assets, and undertake a collaborative problem-solving process in order for the community to change and sustain itself. Where there is an active involvement of citizens, civic organizations, government, and churches, many benefits may accrue. Robinson and Green list the following:[42]

- New leadership to address current and future community issues
- Enhanced leadership capacity through new knowledge and skills gained as people and

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43. Robinson, Jr., 159.

institutions work together

- Knowledge gained from different perspectives as people discuss issues and inform one another

- An enhanced sense of belonging and commitment to the community

- Enhanced communication and relationships among key players, both internal and external to the community

- A more rapid response to issues as multiple groups or individuals address issues or subsets of an issue simultaneously

- New linkages with outside financial, political, and technical resources

- Synergistic thinking and action that can lead to solutions that address current issues

Bernard indicates that while Christian businesses (and civic and social organizations) have a great impact on cities, it is the church that determines whether or not cities experience Christ's embrace.[43] While civic and social organizations may be able to assist the physical needs and the church would be wise in many instances to join in on these endeavors, it is only the church that determines the spiritual climate of the community as it goes about loving its neighbors.

Because a church can have such an impact and before it can interact effectively with a federation of businesses or institutions looking to improve the community, the church must be rooted in close connectional, organic sinews as the apostle Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12:14, 18–20, 25–27.[44] Members must have a collaborative concern for one another before the church

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44. Bernard, 12.

45. Randolph C. Ferebee, *Cultivating the Missional Church: New Soil for Growing Vestries and Leaders* (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2012), 27.

can be effective in the community. Continued dissension and friction will hamper the church's

federation with other churches and institutions in improving the community.

Team-Based Approach: Rod or Net?

Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs. It would seem from the methods of Jesus that fishing

for souls in the "seas of various communities" would be more than an individual sport. When

Jesus said, "I will make your fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19), one might ask what type of fishing

He was referring to. Did Jesus have in mind a solitary figure with a rod and tackle box, patiently

selecting a lure, casting it out, and reeling it in? Or a commercial tuna boat with nets spread

wide? From reviewing how Jesus instructed the disciples, one may easily conclude that Jesus

meant for fishing for souls to be a team sport. Crosby provides further insight into what it means

to catch in community.

In no way does Crosby dismiss the idea of "a single/personal angler" catching fish in the

seas of various communities. "The individualized terms *personal salvation, personal evangelism,*

and *personal discipleship* are actually relative new within Christendom. Even the phrase

personal Savior is a 20th-century expression attributable at least in part to Charles E. Fuller, the

popular host of The Old-Fashioned Revival Hour radio program (1937–1968)."[45] Many a 'fish'

has been caught by rod and reel."

Omir Elisha in *Moral Ambition* talks about how Christianity, on the one hand, requires an

individual/personal effort; yet on the other hand, those who are a part of the Christian family

should work in cooperative relationships to mobilize and reach out to the community because of

their individual personal relationships with Jesus Christ. Omri supports raising a higher level of

awareness promoting organized benevolence to bring about a higher level of team engagement

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46. Crosby, 30.

for community outreach.

Crosby asserts that the type of fishing Jesus meant in the New Testament was never meant to be a single/personal endeavor with a cane pole; rather, Jesus seems to be referring to net fishing. The picture Jesus paints does not appear to be an image of hooking the big one; more exactly, it is a picture of a community of fishermen casting broad and weighted net and drawing it in together. "The idea is 'throwing nets into the sea' cast by a capable and caring community (Matthew 4:18–22)."[46] So what does casting the net into the seas of our communities look like?

With fishing mind-sets, Crosby offers the following to assist churches in helping people get caught into a community net.

Table 4.1. Fishing Mind-Set: Pole versus Net[47]

Pole Fishing …	Net Fishing …
is a solo effort.	is a team effort.
involves throwing them a line on your own.	involves showing them Christ within a community.
helps people hear about the Gospel.	helps people see the Gospel lived out.
is about "coming to a decision."	is about "coming into community."
is convincing them of the truth of Christ (information).	is showing them the love of Christ (transformation).
tends to view evangelism as a periodic project.	sees outreach as necessary and ongoing.

"It's not about how big we can grow the church. It's really more about how well we can cast the net. While church facilities may be something people build, the Kingdom is something we spread. And, when the kingdom is spread, souls are reached for Christ and the world becomes a better place."[48]

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46. Crosby, 30.

47. Crosby, 30.

48. Ibid., 31.

49. Crosby, 31.

There will be and probably should be many times when our sharing is one-on-one. However, we should not forget that Jesus said, "They will know you are my disciples by the love you have one for another" (John 13:34). "The gospel is primarily good news (a culture) of grace and truth that we boldly and broadly cast … together."[49]

Evaluating/Improving/Accentuating—Celebrating

> The true measures of a church are not "how many" but "how loving," not "how relevant" but "how real."
>
> —Robert Lewis, *A Whole New Attitude*

God has a book in the Bible called Numbers. Some might say quantity is not important; however, the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to record the number of individuals saved in the early church. It is a good idea to set goals, keep records, and then evaluate what was accomplished. Always aim higher. Always seek to improve. Always strive to do more for the glory of the Lord. In *Secret Services* written by *Leadership* editor Marshall Shelley, the idea is brought forward supporting "the view of the Supreme Court regarding church congregations as a beneficial and stabilizing influence in community life" is brought forward.[50] Shelley references a study that identifies congregations' offerings in social and community services amounting to an average of $15,307 monthly or $184,000 yearly. When considering these types of numbers invested, evaluating, improving, accentuating, or celebrating to the glory of God any associated process seems to be in order.

Kent Hunter addresses enhancing outreach efforts in a given church by highlighting the positive. He suggests thinking about what is done well and celebrating those things instead of

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50. Ibid.

51. Marshall Shelley, "Secret Services," *Leadership Journal* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 43.

focusing on what is wrong, weak, or missing in church. The work of outreach is difficult, yet it is being done by many churches. The areas of success for Hunter represent platforms upon which to build further any missionary/outreach efforts. "The celebration of victory creates a culture of winning—a we-can-do-it/God-can-do-it atmosphere."[51] In Hunter's view, victories tend to breed more victories and seem to encourage a willingness to try something new and improve areas of ministry. A positive climate inspires much better than a focus on the negative. Parade the potential, not the problem."[52]

Summary

Having considered an overall literature review (chapter 1), thoughts on engagement (chapter 2), input from churches surveyed (chapter 3), and additional factors thought to be necessary (chapter 4), the final chapter will hopefully interlock many of the aforementioned thoughts, ideas, and input into somewhat of a set of working guidelines geared toward developing and sustaining community service projects as the church, individual and body, goes about loving its neighbors in a Christlike manner.

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52. Hunter, 3.

53. Spader and Mayes, 91.

CHAPTER 5

GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES AND CLOSING REMARKS

Let us use every weapon we can to turn sinners from the road of destruction so that they may, through grace, experience a living, experiential relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

—R. C. Sproul, *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*

Methodologies will never work outside of the guiding biblical principles. True churches are called communities of faith to make disciples of all people no matter their economic or social status. True churches are to engage in a redemptive, reconciliatory context with those of their community, led by the Spirit of God as they join Him where He is already at work in communities.

Bisagno states the following:

> The church more than any other institution in the world does not exist solely for the sake of its membership. It exists to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and the redeeming factor in a dying society. To stand still is to go backward. Outreach is the name of the game. Every planning meeting, every teachers meeting, every committee meeting must be conducted in an atmosphere saturated with a constant preoccupation with reaching others…. The organization that is standing still is losing ground.[1]

Losing ground is not an option for an advancing army. Armies engage in *missions* to fight and win their nations' wars. Several principles, practices, and procedures are identified to help ensure success in warfare. These principles, practices, and procedures are typically outlined in what are called OPLANs (operational plans) and OPORDs (operational orders). The United States military forces (sometimes in conjunction with the allied forces of other nations) have carried out OPLANs and OPORDs in execution of military campaigns, such Operation Rolling Thunder (Vietnam, 1967–1968, strategic bombing campaigns), Operation Allied Force (NATO,

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1. John R. Bisagno, *How to Build an Evangelistic Church* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), 29.

1999, Kosovo War), and Operation Geronimo (Osama bin Laden, 2011, War on Terrorism).
There are many other U.S. operations and allied operations where countries bring their planning
and assets to bear in execution of military campaigns in protection of their interest and the
interest of their contiguous and global neighbors.

Indeed, the army of the Lord comprises the body of baptized believers. This study has,
above all, brought forth the idea of "mission" and principles, practices, and procedures
associated with mission planning. The following attempts to draw upon lessons learned from the
research as the army of the Lord (the church) goes about planning and executing its mission in
the neighborhood (community) as well as around the world. The study gives rise to
OPERATON SOULS HARVEST. The guiding components of O.P.E.R.A.T.I.O.N. S.O.U.L.S.
H.A.R.V.E.S.T. are hereafter outlined.

Obedience – The church, individually and collectively, is called to follow Christ, the captain of
the Lord's army, into battle for the souls of mankind. Wars are won and battles are successfully
engaged when soldiers trust and obey the orders of those above them. Christ gave the command
"to go" and "to witness." The soldier on mission for the Lord recognizes the power they have
been endowed to do battle with the enemy and will do so in "Jerusalem (community), and in all
Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Their mobilization is far above
the strict sense of humanitarian assistance. Their mobilization is of eternal significance.

Prayer and **P**lanning – A focus on outreach without upreach (prayer) is imbalanced. "We must
connect with God before we connect with the people we are trying to reach."[1] Through prayer,
God directs the vision to the heart of the leaders, and prayer also directs the vision to the heart of

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2. Marshall, 100.

those who will carry out the operation. Prayer gives directions to the planning efforts (buildup/deployment/sustainment/redeployment) and should permeate every aspect of the operation. Prayer and planning directs the church to where God is at work so that believers may join him in his work in the community.

Eternity – People were designed to live for eternity (forever). They will be eternally separated from God (hell) or eternally with God (heaven). The Christian lives continually with a view of eternity and realizes man's greatest need is to be in the right relationship with God through Christ. The notion of "loving your neighbor" and "developing and sustaining community service projects" both have the view of spending eternity with God. In this light, the church, believer or body, does not exist for itself. The church exists for the interest and external welfare of others. The operations being waged in communities are operations with eternal significance.

Redemptive – Those who set out to love their neighbors will have incorporated into their mission/vision/core value statements some measure of a "redemptive" declaration. After all, "the redeemed of the Lord should say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Psalm 107:2). The church, individual or body, *says so* by living among and loving their neighbors as Christ lived and loved them. The church, individual or body, *says so* by reaching out on a continual basis and by giving priorities in budgets and finance to their redemptive story and efforts. Christ made redemption his top priority. He left all to give mankind a redemptive story. Just as is with prayer, redemption should run the gamut of all operations geared toward loving your neighbor as community service projects are being developed and sustained.

Associative – The research, both surveys and literature, support churches joining with other

churches and churches joining with community agencies and institutions to bring about

community change. Oftentimes in warfare, countries ally with one another for the greater good

and causes bigger than themselves. The community of believers must first be assimilated and

associated in healthy ways before it can form healthy alliances with other institutions. Such a

healthy community will consist of teams and small groups working jointly. There must be a

team-based approach within the confines of the church community before an association can be

made beyond the church. Christ called a team unto Himself. He sent the disciples out in pairs. He

had 120 disciples ready for the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Being of one accord, those Jesus

called were able to move out into the mission field as He had described and prescribed.

Moreover, an associative outlook brings about the potential for churches (and organizations)

with their accompanying strengths to do greater work in meeting community needs where God is

already at work.

Transformative – A derivate of the word *transform*, loving your neighbor is ultimately about

changing the conditions under which many individuals in the community are living. A statement

like this typically is directed at the poor, underprivileged, widows, orphans—the last, the least,

and the left out. Such statements typically speak to social justice issues. Scripture details God's

special attention to individuals who fall in these categories. Many organizations seek to meet

these needs; however, the church, individual and body, must always keep at the forefront its

character as the only institution that holds what mankind needs to effect the greatest change

needed in lives—the right relationship with God.

Innovative – There must be openness to novel approaches and methods in the types of needs to

be met and the methods of meeting the needs. Innovation is needed in getting the vision out to

the congregation and out to the community and seeking partnership with agencies that may already be or are willing to begin loving a community. The churches surveyed indicated they have and still do use electronic media to get the word out concerning their outreach initiatives. Innovation may also be needed in the structure of the church. Team-based approaches are typically found to be more favorable. The innovation being called for is more so that of a tailored approach for a church and its community and not some cookie-cutter approach based on the successes of a church in another city or region (or on a church's past successes, for that matter).

Observation – All good OPLANs call for some measure of surveillance and reconnaissance in developing, updating, or carrying out orders. Watching the movement of the community, gathering facts about the community, and analyzing the data are paramount before engagement. Jesus was always out among the people, and when He saw their need, He was "moved with compassion" (Matthew 10:36). It is a matter of seeing through the eyes of Jesus. Observation provides greater insight into the needs and gives a congregation focus as resources are limited. Christlike observation will cause individuals and congregations to go where the injured are instead of passing on the other side (Luke 10:25–37, the Good Samaritan). Good and loving neighbors see the need and move to the need.

Need – Determining the needs goes hand in hand with observation. Determining needs can be as simple as the pastor and church leaders walking through the community and talking to neighbors, or it could be as formal as hiring a marketing company who makes its living conducting surveys and analyzing data. Whether informal or informal, the church must conduct a "needs assessment" for the purpose of directing its prayer and concentrating its efforts. Before the foundation of the earth, Christ saw the need to lay down his sinless life for the sinful life of man.

Christ left the comforts of heaven to ensure mankind's needs were met. First, John 3:16 reads: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but indeed and in truth." The church, individual or body, can only carry out the mission of ministry (meeting needs) in Christlike love and servitude.

Servanthood – Christ came to seek (serve) and save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). Christ came and took upon himself the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7). A servant mind-set postures the church, individual or body, to learn. Still greater is the idea of a humble servant. It is a matter of coming to the community with the impression that we are a part of you, not above or beyond you. A saintly expert on the problem mentality becomes a surefire way for the church to further isolate itself. The mentality of the servant presents "We have earnestly come to help where we can help." The church that ceases to serve others and exists for its own welfare ceases to be the church called by God to have an impact upon the community in which God placed the church.

Outward-Focused – Christ was always looking out among the people to meet needs in order to glorify his Father. It has been said that the church that ceases to look outward or is solely inwardly focused ceases to be the church that God commissioned to join him in redeeming mankind. This is also, in all likelihood, a dying church. On more than one occasion, Jesus taught in parable and lived a life that compelled men and women, as well as children, to come to the Father. An outward-focused church tends to be healthier, and an outward-focused church aligns with the calling of Jesus to "go … teach all nations" and "to witness in Jerusalem, Judea,

Samaria and the utter most part of the world." The primary aim of the church, individual or body, is to get the Word of God *out*.

Unified – In the book of Acts, it can be seem where the church multiplied, in part, because they were unified or they were on one accord. A disjointed church can be no more effective in its spiritual battle as a disjointed army can be effective in fighting and winning its nation's wars. A polarized church is ripe for enemy infiltration and is thus crippled by such division. However, when unified, the church is ready to meet needs and take on the forces desiring to silence the name of Jesus. Unified, the church has a great part of the battle won in moving out into the community to show the love of Christ and spread His Word. A unified church will seek to bring the community together for the greater good of all and to the ultimate glory of God. Acts 2:46–47 pictures this unified church as follows: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Having favor with all the people could very well imply they had matters so well together on the inside of the church that business partners joined in their efforts to engineer a better environment in the community for all. Naturally, not all agreed with what these early disciples were doing in Jesus's name; however, a unified position strengthened their position to boldly declare "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Love – Truth be told, we all live in an evil (bad) community called the world, no matter which side of the tracks one may live. We live in a community corrupted by and filled with sin. However, God so loved this corrupt community called the world that He sent His only begotten Son, and whosoever would believe in Him would not die eternally. Those who trust in God's

sent Son would have eternal life in the community called the church that Christ would one day come for and would take on a journey to another community called heaven, where there is no corruption. Christians must love the world as God loves the world. Christians must love the world as Christ loves the world. There can be no true participation in Christ unless there is participation in his mission to the people of the world he so loves.

Sacrificial – There are no parallels to the sacrifices Jesus made for the community His Father so loved. Churches, individuals and bodies, must be willing to forgo some of their own conveniences and comfort to reach their neighbors. From biblical accounts of what one might be able to image as heaven's greatest comfort and beauty, Christ willingly left every ease of heaven to come and sacrifice for mankind in a place of disease. Jesus was *sent* from heaven to earth, and He *spent* himself entirely for the eternal benefit of mankind. Romans 12:1 expresses to the believer to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." With this understood, it is no stretch to pursue the example of Jesus in spending ourselves, individual and church, in a *deliberate* manner to represent and demonstrate the love of God in a church's community in general and the community of the world in particular.

Healing – Every community has hurts of some magnitude or another. In order to join God in the healing of communities, the ease of suffering and sadness, and, many cases, the return of hope, the church, individual and body, must have a heaviness in its heart about the hurts in the neighborhood. Prior to joining God in the healing of a community, the church must first be a healthy community in and of itself. Loving the disciples and making disciples are symptoms of a healthy church. These and other symptoms of health help bring about a good reputation for the

church (public relations) and will go a long way as the church seeks to do God's work in the community. Working to heal the community will only come about when the church lives out these and other characteristics of health. The apostle Paul (Romans 9:2) expresses his "great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart" for his people, particularly the Jewish community. His heaviness drove him to work toward providing a redemptive healing relationship for those who had previously refused the Gospel. Finally, Paul tells the Romans and us to imitate Christ (Romans 15:1–3): "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

Assimilation – This term (to integrate) has at least two elements. The first element considers a well-integrated body of believers. A well-integrated body understands that it consists of "not one member" (or a few), but many members. Each has to have some knowledge of its gift (function) in order for the body as a whole to perform well. The body of believers is more able to join God in community when the body realizes that it was "God who set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (1 Corinthians 12:18). There has to be an understanding that all members, founding members to the newest convert, has something to offer and that their gifts must be welcomed and integrated into the hold in order for the body to be as effective as God intends. The second element of assimilation involves participating with those outside agencies that may already be at work in the community. The church should consider integrating its resources with organizations, such as civic and social, to the extent that there is no doctrinal conflict or compromise of the Gospel message. There are many organizations already at work

that the church could walk along beside, even embrace, to spread the love of Christ in community.

Relational – From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible speaks of relationships. The primary relationship is that of God and mankind. God is indeed a relational God. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. An aspect of man being created in God's image is relational. In fact, mankind was created for relationship—first with God and second with mankind. Jesus said in Matthew 22:37–40, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy *neighbor* as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." It has been previously stated: "the Gospel travels best along lines of relationships." In recent times, the phrase "personal relationship with Christ" has generated what amounts to a "privatized faith." This was never meant to be the case. If the church, body and individual, truly loves the Lord, its relationship with Him will extend into the community with Him where He remains at work.

Vision – In casting a vision of community outreach and loving thy neighbor, perhaps it is easier (better) done than said as it relates to moving toward the desired results. It is fairly well understood that vision casting is the task of leadership. Vision casting and actions toward the same can be difficult, particularly if the body does not believe the vision is from God. Prayer is essential in casting vision. Prayer helps generate buy in and congregational participation in vision casting. As an avenue for the church to reflect upon its commitment to outreach, it appears useful to identify outreach as part of the church's overall strategy. This is routinely accomplished by incorporating strategic views of outreach in the church's mission, vision, and core value statements. It is one thing to have a well-thought-out and well-documented vision. It is another

thing to work toward the vision. Paul sharing before King Agrippa sums it up in relation to the vision he received from Christ regarding his conversion and calling. Paul stated in Acts 26:19, "Whereupon O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." The church that obediently endeavors to carry out the "heavenly vision" for the community will be successful in developing and sustaining community service projects to the glory of God and the good of mankind.

Evangelistic **E**ngagement – Churches desiring to reap souls for the harvest must *live* the good news and not just be bearers of the good news. It is not enough to carry the good news to the community; the church must bring the good news to life with a faith integrated into all of its activities. Everything the church, individual or body, undertakes should move along the lines of evangelism—sharing that God so loved the world in both word and in deed. The church demonstrates its love for God and God's love for the world by embracing the community through service. An evangelistic pursuit implies there is something other than good news which the believers have been called and commissioned to help others avoid. Herein sets the stage for the battle of souls. Evangelistic engagement involves battles and duties which the church can ill afford to neglect because the eternal interest and welfare of souls are at stake.

Scripture – The Word of God trumps every method and every approach to community outreach. Jesus said in John 10:35, "And the scripture cannot be broken…." In essence, Jesus is taking the audience back to the Old Testament. Loving one's neighbor is an Old Testament principle (Leviticus 19:18) and is brought forth into the New Testament (Matthew 22:39) by the way Jesus lived and the manner in which He taught His disciples. The scripture cannot be broken. In a nation's military affairs, there is generally what is called *military doctrine*. Military doctrine

offers a nation what is perceived to be the best way of engaging warfare, typically based on past experiences. Military doctrine can and does change when assumptions made are no longer relevant. On the other hand, *Christian doctrine* gives the church what God has identified as the best way of engaging neighbors and communities for the battles of souls. While military doctrine is subject to man's interpretation and manipulations, Christian doctrine is not. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:20, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." The manner Christ set out to win the battle of souls was strictly based on a doctrine of *love*. Strategies associated with the doctrine of love may and likely should vary from generation to generation or from community to community; however, there cannot be any departure from the doctrine of love found in scripture except when the church becomes deviant of what God intended.

Training – When Christ called the initial disciples, He told them "to come follow me and I will make you fishers of men." These men had learned the trade of *being* commercial fishermen. Now Jesus would personally train them on how to cast the "Gospel nets" in order to catch the souls of mankind. Churches surveyed and various authors cited several types and components of training. Evangelism, discipleship, stewardship, and spiritual gift training were among those routinely mentioned. A perhaps infrequent type of training addressing the local community was overseas mission training. Overseas mission training helps those doing outreach in foreign lands to engage various cultures and shows them how to try different approaches in reaching communities in foreign lands. Typically, churches that seek to address and reach those of their local community are generally dealing with different cultures as well. This training teaches members of the local body how to address different cultures in the local community. Regardless of the type of training, all training should have a mission focus, and training should be ongoing.

As a final note on training, training helps the "soldier" to prepare for life in general. Training helps the "soldier" meet and respond to threats they have not met so they will be able to adapt to the environment and complete the mission (spreading the Gospel).

The guidelines and principles described above are just that—guidelines and principles. The Holy Spirit is in charge, directing efforts of this campaign for mankind's soul. When the church, individual and body, loves God and recognizes its own salvation in the Lord, it will love its neighbor and continually join God in OPERATION SOULS HARVEST.

CLOSING REMARKS

The intent of this research and study has not been about how to grow a larger church. The intent has not been about establishing greatness, rather goodness. In communities and regions, Jesus went about doing those things which were *good* (Acts 10:38). In this sense, goodness would, in essence, be greatness. Jesus went about doing *good* in at four least ways: ministries of mercy (efforts to make someone else's life better), ministries of empowerment (giving others a sense of independence or a dependence upon God), ministries of evangelism (announcing the good news), and ministries of replication (investing in others).[2] All ways and manners Jesus went about doing *good* should be reproduced in some manner as part of the church's outreach.

Ultimately, outreach (really, missions) should be approached from a standpoint of efforts to bring glorify to God the Father. McMullen listed some short- and long-term accomplishments of outreach in glorifying the Father. The following two short-term accomplishments are mentioned: (1) building a contact base with new families and (2) making the church's presence known in the community. As for long-term accomplishments, the following three were pinpointed: (1) building rapport with the community, (2) positioning the church as a friend of the

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3. Eric Swanson, "Great to God Churches," *Leadership Journal* 28, no. 4 (Spring 2003): 37–40.

community, and (3) and having your church as one of the first to be considered when parents in the community conclude it is time to get their kinds into Sunday school or to begin worshiping as a family.[3] For certain, these might be worthy accomplishments as the church seeks to imitate Christ in community.

As stated at the onset, this research did not anticipate a panacea for outreach. However, the research did bring to light several key ingredients a church might or even should incorporate into its operation to win souls in ultimately bringing glory to God. This research could be expanded toward almost any number of given target groups (i.e., elder, middle-aged, youth, middle income, upper income). A further expansion would be to increase the number of churches surveyed in the Southeast region as well as an expansion to survey other regions of the United States (e.g., Northeast, Southwest, and West) and regions in other countries. In addition, there are several areas briefly mentioned (such as online outreach and use of outreach coordinators and finances) that could be further explored to gain additional insight to developing and sustaining community outreach as churches go about loving their neighbors. Overall, the thoughts presented should prove to be beneficial for churches seeking to start or improve their outreach ministry (local mission) in their neighbors, resulting in stronger churches and better communities—all to the glory of God and the redemption of mankind.

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4. Shawn McMullen.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

List of Churches Completing Survey

Central Baptist
Pastor Archie Mason
3707 Harrisburg Road
Jonesboro, AR 72404

Next Level Church
Pastor Matt Keller
Daniels Metro Center
6300 Techster Blvd #2
Fort Meyers, FL 33966

Bayside Community Church
Pastor Randy Bezet
15800 Florida SR 64E
Bradenton, FL 34212

Grace Family Church
Pastor Craig Altman
5101 Van Dyke Road
Lutz, FL 33558

Savannah Christian Church
Pastor Cam Huxford
55 Al Henderson Blvd
Savannah, GA 31419

Southeast Christian Church
Pastor Dave Stone
920 Blankenbaker Parkway
Louisville, KY 40243

First Hattiesburg Baptist
Pastor Jeff Clark
4142 Lincoln Road
Hattiesburg, MS 39402

Biltmore Baptist
Pastor Bruce Frank
35 Clayton Road
Arden, NC 28704

Liberty Baptist
Pastor Grant Ethridge
1021 Big Bethel Road
Hampton, VA 2366

Appendix B

Church Community Outreach Service Projects Survey

Please answer the following questions:

1.   Does your community outreach focus on a target group**?**

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

2.   How important is it to focus on a target group**?**

[ ] Extremely Important
[ ] Important
[ ] Somewhat Important
[ ] Not Important

3.   What **2** biblical principles (scriptures) do you focus on in your outreach efforts**?**
_____
_____

4.   What percentage of your church**'**s budget is allocated to outreach**?**

[ ] **50% or more**
[ ] **25% - 49%**
[ ] **15% - 24%**
[ ] **1% - 14%**

5.   Does your church do fund-raising (other than tithe and offerings) to support outreach**?**

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

6.   If so**,** which fund-raising efforts have you found to be effective**?**
_____
_____

7.   How did your church go about establishing the service project or projects you have undertaken or are currently undertaking? (How were the needs identified?)

_____

_____

8.   How are goals established? Who establishes goals for your outreach effort?

[ ] Pastor
[ ] Deacons
[ ] Committee
[ ] Other: _____

9.   What priority do you give outreach among other ministries?

[ ] Top 10%
[ ] Top 20%
[ ] Top 30%
[ ] Other: _____

10.   What media have you found best serves the cause of announcing your outreach efforts *among the members*?

_____

_____

11.   What media have you found best serves the cause of announcing your outreach efforts *in the community*?

_____

_____

12.   Briefly describe your recruitment efforts for those who participate in your church's outreach efforts.

_____

_____

13.   Do you have an outreach coordinator or someone responsible for the overall administration of your church's outreach ministry?

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

14. How does your church go about emphasizing community outreach on a day-to-day, week-to-week, and month-to-month basis among your members?

_____

_____

15. How important is it for outreach ministry to be identified in your mission/vision/core values statement(s)?

[ ] Extremely Important
[ ] Important
[ ] Somewhat Important
[ ] Not Important
[ ] They are not listed in these statements

16. Our church currently has outreach ministry identified in our mission, vision, or core values statement(s)?

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

17. What type of training would you say is most beneficial for those desiring to participate in an outreach ministry?

[ ] Evangelism
[ ] Discipleship
[ ] Stewardship
[ ] All of the above
[ ] Other: _____

18. How often do you provide training for those involved in outreach?

[ ] Yearly
[ ] Quarterly
[ ] Monthly
[ ] Weekly

19. How do other organizations such as federal, state, other nonprofits play in your outreach ministry?

[ ] Extremely Important
[ ] Important

[ ] Somewhat Important
[ ] Not Important
[ ] We operate without the participation of others institutions.

20. How often do you provide opportunities for people to serve?

[ ] Yearly
[ ] Quarterly
[ ] Monthly
[ ] Weekly
[ ] Other: _____

21. To what degree of importance does fasting relate to your outreach program? Your church advocates fasting in relation to outreach as

[ ] Extremely Important
[ ] Important
[ ] Somewhat Important
[ ] Not Important

22. Does your church have any outreach ministries that are currently online?

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

If so, please briefly describe:
_____
_____

23. How important has collaborating with other churches been in your outreach ministry?

[ ] Extremely Important
[ ] Important
[ ] Somewhat Important
[ ] Not Important

24. What 2 recommendations/suggestions would you provide for a church interested in developing and sustaining community outreach?
_____
_____

25. What improvements would you make to your own community outreach efforts**?**

_____
_____

26. Are you willing to have your church identified among the list of churches that participated in this survey**?**

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

27. Are you willing to have your church specifically identified as it relates to a particular practice, policy, or procedure you use in your outreach ministry**?**

[ ] Yes   or   [ ] No

VITA

Rickey L. Houston

PERSONAL
>Born: September 20, 1959.
>Married: Helen Denise Forward, December 2, 1959.
>Children:　　Nicole BaNae Houston-Sithole, born April 4, 1986.
>　　　　　　Nikkita Benise Houston, born September 3, 1987.
>　　　　　　Naomi Bernette Houston-Fields, born June 10, 1992.
>　　　　　　Natalie Beranna Houston, born April 8, 1994.

EDUCATIONAL
>AA, Community College of the Air Force, 1981.
>BS, University of Tampa, 1982.
>BTh, Conroe Normal and Industrial College, 1994 (Non-SACS Accredited).
>MBA, Troy State University, 1988.
>MA, Air University, 1999.
>MS, Amridge University (formerly Southern Christian University), 2001.
>MA, Liberty University, 2010.
>MDIV (Equivalent), Liberty University, 2011.
>DMIN, Bethany Divinity College and Seminary, 2004 (Non-SACS Accredited).

MINISTERIAL
>License: November 8, 1987, Zion #1 Missionary Baptist, Barton, Alabama.
>Ordained: January 15, 1989, Mount Gillard Missionary Baptist, Montgomery, Alabama.

PROFESSIONAL
>Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), United States Air Force, 1979–2004.
>Senior Pastor, Bethel Metropolitan Baptist, 2004–Present.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES
>Member, American Association of Christian Counselors, 1998–present.
>Alpha Phil Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, 2006–present.

IRB APPROVAL/WAIVER PAGE

November 19, 2012

Rickey L. Houston
IRB Exemption 1445.111912: Loving Your Neighbor: A Guide to Developing and Sustaining Community Service Projects

Dear Rickey,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

> (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling
(434) 592-4054

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