Liberty University School of Divinity

Cultural Kingdom Architects: Defining Success in Building God's Kingdom

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by

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Abstract

CULTURAL KINGDOM ARCHITECTS: DEFINING SUCCESS IN BUILDING GOD'S
KINGDOM

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Identifying success or failure in "Building God's Kingdom" can be challenging, considering the
various circumstances and contexts in which one may find himself. The American Church is
somewhat divided on what success looks like in this pursuit, and therefore people in ministry can
feel discouraged or unaffirmed when their measure of success does not hold up to others' views
of perceived ministry success. The purpose of this project is to shed light on the various
measures of success in building God's Kingdom and enable church leaders to feel justified and
affirmed in their approach. The research for this project will be conducted through electronic
surveys with leaders from churches throughout North America in varied circumstances. This
project will help ministry leaders have a better understanding of how their part of the building of
God's Kingdom is making an impact by redefining what success looks like in their particular
culture and setting.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The commission to all followers of Jesus Christ is found in Matthew 28:19-20 where Jesus commands, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[1] Jesus goes on to say in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."[2] The fact that the Commission represents a specific call upon all believers is a given if one reads the words of Christ as a command and not merely a suggestion. However, there has been much debate regarding the "how-to" of this commission.

While this project will not answer all the "how-tos" of building God's kingdom, it will speak to the need for shifting one's approach to the idea of success; from a definition of a worldly view of a kingdom, to a more biblical view of how God's kingdom was designed to work. In the modern church, it is easy to be distracted by the new fads, becoming obsessed with the latest innovations and losing sight of purpose. These trends come and go in society, and the church finds itself continually trying to get on board with the "next big thing," promising to grow the church and hopefully add people to the congregation being built. This is true even when in fact, that congregation is a smaller part of a larger organism that cannot be contained within one community.

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[1] Matt. 28:19-20 ESV
[2] Acts 1:8 ESV

While remaining relevant in a culture is not necessarily a bad thing, and can be a positive, and in some situations essential, it also can begin to distract the church from its Scripture-directed goal of furthering the work of Christ's Kingdom. In the Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:10; Jesus, in talking about His kingdom, prays to the Father asking, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."[3] In so doing, and by providing an example for us, He is calling His church and His people to usher in a kingdom that is not like this world, that is, a kingdom far different from one the world understands as successful. Ignoring that difference, particularly in a time when a pastor is needed as a shepherd to his flock, that pastor may find himself chasing after what the world defines as successful; a success which stands directly opposed to what Jesus has called him to do, and what is actual success in God's economy.

Whether one pastors a church that has been around for centuries or just a month, is large or small, is wealthy or poor, that pastor will no doubt struggle to know if what he is doing is effective in building God's Kingdom. That lack of perceived effectiveness is a discouraging factor indeed. According to a 2015 survey performed by expastors.com, "50% of pastors feel so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could but have no other way of making a living."[4]

Definition of Terms

Throughout the course of this project, the term "Building God's Kingdom" will be used as the basis for this project, but it can be misunderstood without a proper understanding of the

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[3] Matt 6:10 ESV
[4] Bo Lane, "Why Do So Many Pastors Leave the Ministry? The Facts Will Shock You," ExPastors.com, January 27, 2014, http://www.expastors.com/why-do-so-many-pastors-leave-the-ministry-the-facts-will-shock-you/ (accessed January 30, 2018).

definition. The term "Build God's Kingdom" or "Building God's Kingdom" is generally

understood as the call or mission of all believers to usher in the Kingdom of God. But in this

project, it will be focused primarily upon the pastoral leadership of churches and how they

understand their role as Kingdom Builders as the ones called to lead the Church. The methods

and strategies they employ in their pursuit of Kingdom Building look different in each church,

town, state, and country. Thus, the need to have the ability to quantify one's part is important as

it helps one understand a specific calling.

Statement of Limitations

Perhaps the greatest limitation in this particular study is the ability of the studied subjects

to be transparent and to be self-reflective. While those ideals are clearly set forth in Scripture in

multiple ways, there is a cultural tendency toward maintaining veiled personal beliefs to preserve

denominational party lines, an inability to self-reflect in a meaningful way, and self-

congratulatory behavior among the populace that was studied: vocational ministers. While these

behaviors are understandable given the cultural climate in which they are growing, it was

ultimately difficult to ignore them, and those behaviors, of course, presented this author with the

challenge of self-reflection and repeated assessments. When seeking to derive information from

colleagues as to what defined success in a ministerial context, it became clear that this project

would not be about success stories nor cautionary tales. It has broadened itself to be something

very different and thus, for the purposes of this project there will be no singular, encompassing

definition of success or failure of "cultural kingdom architects."[5]

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[5] This phrase was coined during a lunch in which I was sharing the topic of my project with a pastor friend.
I enjoy the process of designing, remodeling, and building and the idea of an architect came to our mind as we
talked about the blue prints God has placed in Scripture for each church to function from Acts 2.

The boundaries within Scripture that indicate a Kingdom is coming within the culture of Christ are simultaneously vague and direct, especially within their contexts. So, while this author can't prove that any one area of demographic research or derived outcomes point the reader toward a definitive guide to be a "cultural kingdom architect," a framework has emerged. To take the metaphor a step further; and to use language borrowed from a house builder, while the carpentry framers have completed their task of erecting a skeleton for the house, we have not a clue as to when the drywall shall appear, and the fixtures may be a last-minute installation.

There will be no timeline presented for the "your kingdom come," and there will be no mention of what the Kingdom will ultimately look like, as those were not within the scope of research and this author struggles to believe they are even relevant to the task of being a cultural kingdom architect. This project is simply a study of the perceptions of success from a very specific group of subjects, and how that might affect the actualization of God's coming Kingdom.

Ministry Context

As a pastor, raised in a church where his father was pastor within a small insular denominational background, the author of this project surely approaches the concept with a deep investment in its outcome. With that deep investment has come numerous bouts of self-reflection as the project has progressed. Having served in some capacity on the staff of a church for nearly twenty years, the writer has witnessed a season of rapid and great change in the American Church. With that change, and as this writer approached his first lead pastor role, he embarked on the research for this project.

It was always curious in his former church that the lead pastor, under which the writer was the executive pastor, always seemed to be striving toward a goal that appeared to be

simultaneously unmet and yet fully realized. Among topics of discussion with the staff on a regular basis were, "the next big thing," or how to fully assimilate a new believer, whether or not the wardrobe of those on stage should be mandated by a staff member, and perhaps above all, whether the building itself was conducive to delivering a Gospel message that would stick. This season of the author's life was marked by inner turmoil, which originally was focused around whether or not there was room for a "second chair" when it came to the pastorate. Indeed, the first topic of exploration for this project began as a project to explore the organizational models for churches considering adding an Executive Pastor to the structure of the church.

As the role of the writer transitioned, so did the focus of this project. Perhaps one must start from scratch when all they knew to be true about ministry, to that point, turns out to be the guesswork of an employer who was strongly influenced by a denominational lineage that appears to be dying. So, the concept of Cultural Kingdom Architecture was birthed; from the death of a system of ideals the author had witnessed and the renewal that began when the freedom to explore another way was granted in the form of a cross-country move to a church that had been deconstructed by the previous pastor.

The deconstruction of Discovery Church, this researcher's current congregational home, and its eventual reconstruction weighed heavily into the initial questions that this researcher asked the participants of the survey. As the researcher delved into the past of Discovery Church, which on the surface appears like a new church plant, the history under its former name of Whitehall Baptist Church held information that might be of benefit to other ministers and ministries going forward.

Whitehall Baptist Church was founded in 1953 in a middle-class suburb of Columbus, Ohio. In the most recent decades, church leadership determined that changes must be made in

order to survive, and while many of those changes were implemented, the church ultimately left its community in search of a new one in 2010. The suburb of Whitehall was in an economic downturn by this point, and the church exchanged suburbs and moved to a solidly growing Gahanna six miles away, by selling off the entirety of their property and purchasing a suite in a business park. While this exodus was ultimately successful in keeping the church alive, it was accompanied by a loss of identity.

As Whitehall Baptist Church, the congregation had routinely planted churches, invested in the community, ran a food pantry, and had a good reputation in its community. The community struggled for numerous reasons, mostly economic and educational; fueled by the transitions of the digital revolution and the upswing in opioid addictions. In response, the remaining congregants, led by a pastor who was attempting to transition the ministry to something more relevant, transplanted in the next suburb over and changed the name to Discovery Church. In the retrospective assessment of this author, some aspects of that transition were unnecessary. What was necessary was a transplant of the concepts presented in this project.

While the transplant is what led this author to become the lead pastor of Discovery Church, it is the intent of this project to aid other ministers and ministries in avoiding the extreme measure of transplanting from a community when it is at its most needy point. In order to fully realize that goal, one must walk away from external measurements of success and failure and do the hard work of self-evaluation in light of what the Scriptures teach about the organism that is the church. There must be a full awareness of what actually produces a cultural kingdom architect: or in common language: a minister of the gospel ushering in the good news of Christ's kingdom wherever they minister. Some of the basic discouragements all vocational ministers face is at the root of many choices a church might make. If a minister is able to reframe the

scenario in which they find themselves, based on Scripture, while feeling the liberty to minister uniquely to the community in which they find themselves, this author believes the global church might benefit.

As this researcher progressed in the current project, a few items of discourse posed problems and conundrums. For one thing, he found it can be difficult to identify authentic truth among self-reporting pastors in an anonymous survey. For a few reasons, in this author's observation, pastors may find it easy to insulate themselves from criticism, or perhaps they tend to lack self-reflective tools. This coping mechanism, in this researcher's opinion, may be born of the necessity to maintain an external source of encouragement, even if it is entirely fabricated. For this reason, the questions asked in the survey were asked in duplicate or from another angle as a self-check.

For example, consider this pair of questions;

"On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's Kingdom is of LITTLE value?"[6]

"On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's Kingdom is of GREAT value?"[7]

These are essentially the same question, and yet by asking it twice with converse language, one can derive data from the variance in the respondent's answer to that question. That question, coupled with the self-reported demographic information gave this researcher a window into the inner workings of the ministry, and some insight into how the pastor viewed the current

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[6] Table A.3
[7] Table A.4

situation. This project will help us see what portions of the self-reporting are reflective of actual circumstances, and where one goes from here.

Theoretical Basis

Even with the author's relatively brief pastoral experience, one can easily see practical pastoral ministry in the United States in 2019 is much changed from that of just 15 or 20 years ago. While there have always been variations among churches and how they interact with their communities, it has gotten increasingly difficult to reach the unchurched, de-churched, and de-religious as time has gone by and society has become increasingly more secular. That being said, it does not negate the universal commission that each believer and each church leader has to "Go into all the world."[8] Some are saying the days of "build it and they will come"[9] are over, and some would even suggest that this environment never existed. Pastors and church leaders must now figure out how to build God's kingdom in their own current environment and culture.

With the advent of social media, online programming, and televised events, it is easier now more than ever before to be able to see what other church leaders and pastors are doing to reach their communities. When one sees thousands of people involved in a worship gathering with all the accoutrements assumed to be *needed* to host a worship service, how easily may one conclude that this church or ministry is successful in building God's Kingdom and bringing people that are far from God to a place closer to God? Additionally, when you drive around the country and see houses of worship that may cover several city blocks, with real estate full of ball

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[8] Mark 16:15 ESV

[9] *Field of Dreams*, directed by Phil Alden Robinson, featuring Kevin Costner, James Earl Jones, and Ray Liotta (Gordon Company, 1989), DVD (Universal Pictures 1989).

fields, camp grounds, student ministry buildings, children's ministry facilities that rival Disney, and worship centers that can hold thousands of people, it is once again easy for observers to conclude that this church is successful in building God's Kingdom.

But, what about the small country church in rural America with an attendance of fewer than one-hundred on a given Sunday, one with a small building with shared classroom space for the youth and children's ministry? What about a church that does not have all the audio and visual technologies that many feel is *needed* to reach this generation? What about a church that might see one new guest a month? What about a church that might baptize only a couple times a year? If "success" is built around the idea of size, wealth, facilities, or possibly charisma, the latter would be considered by society as an utter failure unless you look at the overall makeup of churches in the US. According to a Barna study done in 2016 and countering what people might think about church and church size, half of all churches in America run fewer than one-hundred. The study says:

> Despite the enormous cultural impact of megachurches and megachurch pastors like Joel Osteen and his 40,000+ Lakewood Church, the largest group of American churchgoers attends services in a more intimate context. Almost half (46%) attend a church of 100 or fewer members. More than one-third (37%) attend a midsize church of over 100, but not larger than 499. One in 11 (9%) attends a church with between 500 and 999 attenders, and slightly fewer (8%) attend a very large church of 1,000 or more attendees.[10]

The question one might ask is, what does size, wealth, facilities, or charisma have to do with being successful in the building of God's Kingdom? The answer is both simple and complex. They may not have anything to do with the successful nature of a church or a pastor, but they are important to understand what is really happening in their church. Neil Cole in his

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[10] "The State of the Church 2016," Barna, September 15, 2016, https://www.barna.com/research/state-church-2016/ (accessed January 30, 2018).

book *Church 3.0* suggests that "The power of the kingdom of God is in Christ present within us. It is that simple and yet so profound. We mess things up by making it all complex."[11]

Is it possible that society, and church leaders, have placed metrics upon the church based upon business principles they have seen in the corporate world? While there are aspects of a church that can, and should, run like a business (accounting and legal issues, for instance), the church must not forget its primary mission. In a piece written as a rebuttal to Andy Stanley's approach to church business practices, an article in *Christianity Today* reminds the reader that "After all, the church isn't commissioned to sell a product. We are commissioned to change lives that bear spiritual fruit."[12] Neil Cole, in understanding what the role of a pastor is, says, "We would do much better as leaders in the Church to learn at the feet of the farmer rather than study with the CEO of a corporation."[13]

The reality of what is meant by building God's Kingdom within the culture where the church or ministry exists means that the church one leads may look different from a church down the street. The specific style of ministry employed will be distinct according to an individual and the gifts God has given them, and therefore success in ministry for one will look different than someone else. In Galatians 6:4-5, the Apostle Paul instructs, "But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load."[14] In essence what Paul is indicating here is that Christians are to look at

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[11] Neil Cole, *Church 3.0: Upgrades for the Future of the Church*, Leadership Network (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 67.

[12] "Is Ministry Leadership Different? a response to Andy Stanley," Christianity Today, May 2006, http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2006/may-online-only/is-ministry-leadership-different-2-response-to-andy-stanley.html (accessed January 30, 2018).

[13] Neil Cole, *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 35.

[14] Gal. 6:4-5 ESV

themselves and the ministry to which God has called them and to test it against itself, not against someone else or their ministry.

Since popular views of success can be defined by numbers, it is no coincidence that churches have employed various growth tactics introduced and suggested by the Church Growth Movement, marketing strategies, formulas for growth, and, in some cases, even a reinvention of what church is supposed to look like. While none of the above tactics or strategies are wrong or sinful in and of themselves, they can and do take the church's focus away from its Christ-given models. Ed Stetzer in his blog series on "What's the Deal with the Church Growth Movement?" suggests,

> The danger is when we misappropriate ideas and the successful practices of others to become driven primarily by formulas. Often our desire to be successful can overshadow the mission of God in our community. Our obsession... our scorecard must always be shaped by a desire to see lives transformed by the power of Christ, not just to run certain mathematical formulas to grow… As I see it, the focus of many in the Church Growth Movement was more on formulas than on faithfulness. [15]

Measuring success in ministry is a daunting task and involves more than just adding up a few numbers and praying that they are higher than the previous month or year. Many times, as a leader, one may never know how much of an impact he has had on God's Kingdom. There are no specific metrics or measurements currently in popular use to see how they have impacted the Kingdom over time. The one thing that God appears to ask for frequently in Scripture is faithfulness. The Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 4:2 says "Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."[16] If one is faithful to a calling and finishes the race that God has set out before them, how can anyone say they were unsuccessful?

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[15] Ed Stetzer, "What's the Deal with the Church Growth Movement? Part 3: Don't Forget the Good," Christianity Today, October 15, 2012, http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2012/october/whats-deal-with-church-growth-movement--part-3-dont.html (accessed January 30, 2018).
[16] 1 Cor. 4:2 ESV

Statement of Methodology

The topic of this project is near and dear to the author's heart as he was raised in a ministry home, has been a pastor for nearly 20 years, and feels the effects of ministry with regard to being successful or potentially failing. With that understanding, the methods of research for this project will be three-fold.

The first method utilized was a survey of pastors, both current and retired, to help better understand how success is measured in their contexts. The survey included questions regarding ministry style, ministry size, tenure in their current position, tenure in ministry overall, as well as questions regarding their current emotional health, that is, with where they found themselves in ministry at that point in time.

The second method employed in the research of the topic was to utilize books and articles on church ministry that speak to methods, strategies, and Kingdom building. While there are many books about church growth, many foci solely on numbers, whether those numbers represent square feet of buildings, numbers of people in membership, or the financial reports of a church. While these numbers tell part of the story of a church, they are surely not the only area indicating a church's success or failure in building God's kingdom.

A third and final method applied to this project was to research into the workings of the representative modern-day American church. There is movement being observed and reported in the church world as congregations and leaders abandon some methods and fads employed by leaders to grow churches. Some, in the view of the observers, have been more detrimental than helpful to the cause of Christ.

Chapter two will be called "Diagnostics for the American Church." In this chapter the author will work through some of the issues facing the American church with regard to numbers

and how they can have both positive and negative impacts on the self-perception of a church. Both large and small church models will be studied to derive an understanding of the unique issues that each face. As most people have found it convenient to measure impact with the use of numbers and statistics, this chapter will try to show how one can get away from an emphasis on the numbers game of church, alongside an awareness of statistics and the value they can provide for an organization.

The title of chapter three is "Defining Success in Building God's Kingdom: Cultural and Biblical Success." Across the country one can see new churches, old churches, and everything in between. There are churches closing their doors every day, and there are pastors who are walking away from the ministry never to re-enter. In this chapter, the project will address the idea of pastors and church-goers walking away from church because of lack of progress, defeat, and fatigue. While church participation is mandated and prescribed in Scripture, many times church people put mandates on the pastor and the church to succeed at all cost in areas where success is not easily measured. This in turn leads to the "done" phenomenon in churchgoers and church leaders.

In Chapter four of this project one will see the results of addressing the issue in a chapter called, "Why Does it Matter?" In this chapter, this writer will reveal expectations of the research employed for the data in this project. Additionally, while the expectations are important to understand where the project goes, one will also see the results of the research and how the respondents to the survey met or failed the expectations of the project, as well as how the information and methods from leaders in the field of church ministry aided in the direction of this project.

Review of Literature

Books

The review of literature will discuss both books and journal articles that focus on the design of the church and how it should function in the culture in which it exists. In this review, one will find books and articles that share the thoughts of this writer in understanding what success in building God's Kingdom looks like. Additionally, while there are ample books and scholarly articles on this subject, there are many that focus solely on the tangible metrics that one would utilize to define success. While this direction is contrary to the purpose of this project, they will be utilized to help establish the framework for how one should define biblical success in building God's Kingdom.

Thom Rainer, a student of the American Church, in his book *Simple Church* looks at the church from an organizational standpoint. He introduces the reader to the idea of growing the church by becoming simple in every aspect of ministry. While many pastors and leaders would want to simplify their lives, simplifying their ministry would fly in the face of the pastor who measures success in numbers of activities, the number of new ministries started, and how large and elaborate their facility might be. *Simple Church* will be used as a resource for understanding how success can be found in removing things that give the look of success but ultimately hinder one from being successful in building God's Kingdom.

Just as in his book *Simple Church,* Rainer in another one of his works, *Breakout Churches,* talks about what it takes for a church to fully realize its God-given mission. In this book, he utilizes several examples of churches that have found "success" numerically, as well as missionally. While on the outset it can appear this book may only be about specific metrics such as numbers and size, it does help the reader to understand what these numbers represent. In this

project, this resource will be utilized to show churches who have found their specific calling and were faithful to their calling, even when they would not necessarily define the process a success.

Neil Cole in his book, *Church 3.0,* takes the idea of church as usual and totally transforms the understanding of what church was, is, and should be. Throughout this book, Cole reminds the reader that the world is changing, and the church needs to meaningfully change with the culture around it, and this requires redefining what the church should be doing and how it should be done. In this book, he takes the previously held view of ministry success as "Full Seating Capacity" and defines it now as "Full sending capacity." He says "With Church 2.0, we evaluated a church's success by how many people attended and how much money they left there. Because Church 3.0 is a movement, success is not measured by how many people come, but instead by how many go!"[17]

In his book *Comeback Churches*, Ed Stetzer analyzes 300 churches that were on the brink of closure and have been revitalized, and he discusses what changes needed to be made for this turnaround to occur. Most churches want to grow and have a sense of success. Stetzer, in his research, found that churches who had experienced a turnaround focused on three primary areas that led to a change. These areas were not found in focusing on numbers of people, amounts of offerings, or even the number of events. According to Stetzer, the three factors that were found to radically change a church were, "prayer, evangelism, and preaching."[18] It is hard to put a metric on this result, and this resource will be utilized to help better understand how to understand success in the intangible areas of ministry.

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[17] Cole, Church 3.0, 169.

[18] Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 200.

Resilient Ministry, written by Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie, is a work that focuses on the pastor and his identity in his role as a pastor and as a leader. So much of what a pastor does carries over into personal life, and the two worlds can nearly become one. In this book, they offer some approaches for pastors to understand their calling while understanding the need for a healthy balance. This resource will be utilized as a help for pastors to understand their feelings of failure or success in ministry do not define them as a pastor, a spouse, or as a parent. In their book, they share a story of a pastor who felt the weight of calling and asked the question, "I'm wondering how you . . . deal with the day-to-day, week-to-week reviewing of your call. I know that, inevitably, when I'm not getting the results in ministry— numbers, money, affirmation, people standing there hugging you and telling you how you have changed their life— how do I process it when that's not happening?"[19] This concept is especially poignant as it speaks to so many pastor who, because of lack of affirmation or perceived success, walk away from ministry never to re-enter.

Becoming a Healthy Church, by Stephen Macchia, is another work utilized in the presentation of this project. As stated before, metrics in church success, for many, comes down to numbers. Whether it is number of attendees, number of members, number of baptisms, or even an offering amount, numbers are the first metric that most everyone runs to. In this book, the author talks about ten characteristics found in healthy and thriving churches that must be implemented and measured regularly to understand the health of the church. Just as one would check a body temperature to see if someone was sick, these ten characteristics are values that can help a leader define whether they are seeing success in the mission where God has placed them.

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[19] Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman, and Donald C Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving, (*Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 64.

In chapter one the author talks about a healthy church having God's empowering presence and he ends the chapter by speaking about God's Kingdom coming. He writes, "God's empowering presence is clearly seen in healthy churches that advance the cause of God's Kingdom here on earth. Now, the Kingdom of God does not refer to a geographic territory in which God is King. Instead, it means a condition of the heart and mind and will where God is Lord of all."[20]

In his book *Kingdom First*, Jeff Christopherson begins by talking about what the Kingdom is and what it is intended to do. The premise of his book is Matthew 6:31-33, a portion of the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus tells his disciples and all those within ear shot to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."[21] While his book is specifically targeted at church planting, it is a relevant resource to anyone working toward building God's kingdom, whether it is a new church plant or one that is trying to figure out its place and call in the kingdom work of God. The author helps to define the term "Kingdom of God" where he says, "For our purposes let's understand the Kingdom of God (or Kingdom of heaven) to be Gods' active and sovereign reign through history bringing about His purposes in the world through Christ Jesus. In the simplest of terms, the Kingdom of God is what the world looks like when King Jesus gets His way."[22]

Innovate Church, Jonathan Falwell, general editor, is a resource for pastors who are in the trenches of ministry. There are chapters for every specific area, and one utilized especially for this project is chapter one where Falwell addresses ministry burnout and men who feel as

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[20] Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: Ten Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2003), 37-38.

[21] Matt. 6:33 ESV

[22] Jeff Christopherson, Mac Lake, and Ed Stetzer, *Kingdom First: Starting Churches That Shape Movements* (Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Publishing Group, 2015), 9.

though they have been failures in ministry. Quoting a Barna survey he says, "A few years ago pollster George Barna found that the average lifespan of a pastor in 1993 was only about 4 years. They just weren't prepared for leadership. In their book, Mcintosh and Edmondson found that loneliness, burnout, and inadequate education and unrealistic expectations were among the key reasons former pastors cited for giving up ministry."[23] While much of this project is about finding metrics to measure success without numbers, it will also speak to the current climate in ministry where many pastors step away due to the inability to realize success in what they are doing.

Calvin Miller in his book *The Vanishing Evangelical* reminds his reader what should be most important to the follower of Jesus. In this volume, he moves quickly into how church culture has given way to societal culture in relevance and doctrine. The thing that set's Miller's book apart from some others in this survey is that he does not blame society or the "world" for this fall from what the church should do, but he points directly to the church as *the* reason for this decline.

Much of what this project is about leans into how the church is trying to define its success in the culture where it lives, but instead of doing it God's way the church has chosen to do it the world's way, and it shows. It shows in the lack of strong leadership in churches; it shows in how churches have allowed culture to come in and take its heart and its doctrine, and it shows in how the church is defining its success in comparison to the corporate world. In the chapter on "When Big Isn't Great" Miller says, "While most mega-churches may cite their purist views of Scripture and the kingdom of God as the reason for their growth, I am not the first to

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[23] Jonathon Falwell, *Innovate Church*, (Nashville, Tenn.: B & H Books, 2008), 11-12.

ask if they are actually more influenced by American corporate theory. We evangelicals sometimes seem to be only the religious arm of the secular, corporate environment."[24]

Gilbert Rendle in his book *Doing the Math of Mission* explores the concept of measuring the intangibles of ministry and explains how it might be an incompatible endeavor. Like many leaders, pastors too want to know if they are, in fact, making an impact in peoples' lives, and the question to be explored in this project speaks directly to what Rendle is getting at. Concerning determining the metric of ministry, he says:

> Math and mission may strike some as incompatible at first. Can, in fact, ministry be measured in mathematical proportions? When it comes to a 'changed heart.' One of the primary experiences of an encounter with Christ, the answer may be that measures of such change are too personal to be calculated. When it comes to whether a congregation has been both intentional and fruitful in its mission, the answer is more readily yes-although we have much to learn about the why and the how of such measures.[25]

One area that needs to be addressed when one tries to measure perceived success or failure in ministry has to do with motive. If one is trying to measure success to show how great he or she has done or how much of a failure they have been, it should be noted that this is not what God intends for pastors to do. Measuring success or failure should be evaluated against God's Word and the call He has on the leader to bring forth life change in the people that He has given to them to lead.

Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, in their book, *Church Transfusion,* explore the idea of change in the church. Anyone who has been involved in a leadership position understands that change is a part of life, and there are those who would say you need to change or die. Many churches

[24] Calvin Miller, *The Vanishing Evangelical: Saving the Church from Its Own Success by Restoring What Really Matters* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 35.

[25] Gilbert R. Rendle, *Doing the Math of Mission: Fruits, Faithfulness, and Metrics* (Lanham Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 1.

choose not to change, and they do the same thing over and over and hope and pray for a different result, and to paraphrase Einstein's maxim, they end up dying of insanity. What these authors bring to the discussion is that changes in church ministry will inevitably expose other aspects of a church that must be changed, as well. Specifically, how does one measure success as a church and ministry? Many churches, as this project will show, have always measured their success or failures based on numbers and only numbers. What Cole and Helfer suggest is that one's thinking must shift from measuring numbers to measuring influence in the community. They say, "We must shift from institutional measures to measures of influence. Instead of the numbers question, we must look for the personal influence of the real church- the people who make up the spiritual family in whatever place they are found."[26]

Keith Meyer in his book, *Whole Life Transformation,* writes about leading a church and how his initial plan for ministry was to work with people and help them become devoted followers of Jesus, but instead he wound up focusing more on stuff than people. During his transformation, he realized it was a transformation of his character that he needed. He says,

> How did I get to the place where I was so off-task, caring more about my church's "organizational extension and survival" and measuring success in business terms— attendance, buildings and cash— rather than in becoming and making mature disciples of Jesus? How did church become more of a business organization for consumers of religious goods and services than a training ground for followers of Jesus?[27]

His experience in moving from measuring success in tangible ways to measuring them in terms of a level of impact and making disciples will aid in the understanding of how to create new metrics in ministry to be able to successfully fulfill the call God has.

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[26] Neil Cole, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically--from the Inside Out.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 170.
[27] Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 2010), 77.

Journal Articles and Research Studies

Harris Athanasiadis in his article entitled, "In Search of the True Church: Jesus Suspected Bigness and Both Individual and Institutional Success," helps the reader to understand the precise composition of a church. He talks about churches both large and small, and he describes why many churches are on decline because they refuse to change, while large churches are growing because they have focused solely on growth for growth's sake. It is a well-balanced article that speaks to how modern church is evaluated and viewed by the world and church-goers alike. He says of large, growing churches that, "We assume they have a solid faith and a deep intimacy with God because we automatically equate tangible growth with divine blessing. If a church is growing, it must be doing something right from God's perspective and, therefore, deserving the blessing and attention that comes with growth."[28] He goes on to say,

> "We should also be questioning our obsession with bigness as well as any promotionalism that claims bigger is better, that large churches are more divinely faithful and blessed, and that success in terms of numbers and money is what really matters. This reasoning may be in the interests of institutional survival, but it has little to do with the call of Jesus to take up our cross and follow him."[29]

Duke University of Durham, North Carolina has completed three rounds of a study called National Congregations Study where they have explored church over more than a decade to see how the trends have impacted local congregations. Their latest edition, published in 2015, provides keen insight into the church world and how it has evolved over the past few years. In this study they tackle topics such as worship, leadership, race, and the numbers, which is of high

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[28] Harris Athanasiadis, "In search of the true church: Jesus suspected bigness and both individual and institutional success.," *Presbyterian Record* 126, no. 8 (September 2002), http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A92534435/AONE?u=vic_liberty&sid=AONE&xid=f5bc8a63 (accessed January 29, 2018).

[29] Ibid.

value to the project.[30] Data from this research that will be utilized comes from what seems paradoxical. The study suggests, "Most congregations are small, but most people are in large congregations."[31] The data continues this line of thought and indicates "People are increasingly concentrated in very large congregations. The average congregation is getting smaller, but the average churchgoer attends a larger congregation."[32] Two seemingly opposite extremes, yet both are true.

Scripture

2 Peter 3:8-13

This Scripture indicates the timeline of Christ's coming Kingdom is related to our progress as kingdom-bearers. Also, it indicates our time formulas are measurements that we have constructed, rather than God's concept. This thought is important to the idea that God's measurements and our own are very different. As that idea is fleshed out further in the passage, we see that God's endgame is a new heaven and earth, where "justice will be at home."[33] This ultimately indicates that the current state of the world is not just, and we are both waiting for a Kingdom and a part of the mechanism God uses in that coming. This element appears to be central in understanding the Kingdom Parables.

Matthew 6:7-13

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[30] Mark Chaves and Alison Eagle, *Religious Congregations in 21st Century America: National Congregation Study* (Durham: Duke University, 2015), ii, http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/Docs/NCSIII_report_final.pdf.

[31] Ibid, 2.

[32] Ibid.

[33] N.T. Wright, *The Kingdom New Testament: A Contemporary Translation of the New Testament* (New York: Harper One, 2011), 482.

Commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, this passage holds out the fulfillment of God's Kingdom as a prayer priority. In verse ten, we observe Christ illustrating that our first order of business, after acknowledging God as our personal Father, is to work towards the Kingdom coming. This concept of heaven and earth eventually achieving parity with one another, or perhaps even merging as one, is a mystery that much of church culture has ultimately ignored. One should be asking, "Are we merely doing good works for reward in a heaven that we cannot see? Or are we working toward a heaven that comes to this earth and is its own reward?" This seminal prayer in the New Testament is misunderstood as often as it is repeated.

Matthew 4:17

In the echo chamber of denominational decrees, the concept of repentance has never been abandoned, but it has been misunderstood as noted above. Again, in this passage Christ asks for a transformation. The concept of a kingdom appearing shortly and a changed heart are undeniable ideals in the words of Jesus.

Matthew 5:1-12

One cannot speak to the idea of building God's kingdom while ignoring the essential characteristics of the inhabitants of the kingdom. When one thinks about how to measure success in church, the prevailing cultural views of success and failure instructs to measure numbers of people. In the Sermon on the Mount, which begins in this passage, the Lord turns that conceptual framework upside down and helps churches and leaders to understand that his measurements do not coincide with those prevalent views.

Matthew 11:9-16

The concept of a new cultural economy begins to emerge when one carefully considers the Scripture for a description of the Kingdom. Think about what it would mean to be designated

"one who is least in the kingdom of heaven" – in present cultural climate this phrase would amount to a pejorative, or at least a negative description. Even after 2,000 years of Christian expansion, being least continues to have little appeal. As proof, think about the cultural stigmas surrounding a small church or body of believers. While the believer may *know* Christ's words regarding standing, can one doubt that a lack of comprehension has hampered Kingdom progress, if indeed the true thoughts of Christ are not in practice?

Matthew 13:24-43

The Kingdom Parables are full of imagery to illustrate aspects of the Kingdom of God. In the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, two types of kingdoms are represented, one true and the other false, one with good wheat and the other weeds. God can see the true "wheat," And if God is the sower, He is knowingly watching the growth of the field, knowing that His "wheat" is not alone in the field. If the kingdom is full of both good wheat and of weeds, then both kinds of plants participate in the cultivating process while only one is ultimately the object of the harvest. This elevates the importance of the process, teaching that what happens between sowing and harvest is a legitimate matter of introspection, especially when one remembers the parable teaches that the desired product is only accessible if the process is allowed to complete itself.

The Mustard Seed Parable is often used as a way to describe faith solely. This may be a Sunday school curriculum miscalculation or misuse when oversimplified. Taking the parable at face value, one observation connected with the mustard seed is the Kingdom that starts small. This may have an application for Kingdom Architects. Size of origin does not dictate the scope of growth. In fact, realizing that the mustard seed Christ speaks of leads one to the understanding that the Kingdom of God is like a sturdy, pervasive, weed that proverbially naturalizes across climates and does not stay in one spot.

The Parable of the Hidden Leaven, with the concept of leaven being used to describe God's people, could have landed aversely with Christ's audience, given leaven's connection with sin or uncleanness as in the Passover preparations. However, this parable serves the same descriptive purpose of the mustard seed; small organisms that spread rapidly and seemingly without discernment to any environ. It could also serve as an irritant to those who were critical of Jesus' teaching on the lack of morals among those who called themselves the People of God. The application of this parable is quite simply that Jesus' Kingdom will look undesirable to those who adhere more to the law than the spirit of the law. And once it truly touches even those who love the unleavened status of their lives it will still transform them.

Matthew 19:23-26

The large and looming questions about the Kingdom, of interest to all who heard the teaching of the Lord was: who gets in and how? Jesus more or less addresses that directly here in this passage. While many have inferred that this passage is a standalone indictment of wealth, perhaps Christ is really alluding to the concept of earthly security; or even the idea of identifying with one's possessions as a source of power. Shedding earthly ideals, as important as they seem, and using God's less linear measurements of status is an essential part of identifying the Kingdom.

Luke 10:1-12

In this passage, Christ addresses the "how to" portion of Kingdom building. Surprisingly it's not a long formula, as some current church leaders and programming trends would have one to believe. It looks more like do good works, give God credit, and move on. It's also interesting to note that there is no complex description of discipleship or temple building here, confirming

again that Christ places far less emphasis on the external ideals that the previous covenant required for one to be spotless in the sight of God.

Luke 21:1-4

In God's economy and His kingdom, it is not about a specific amount of wealth or other resources that one can offer to God unless it is the whole. In this story, Jesus tells his disciples that this widow gave more than everyone because she gave out of her need not her excess. This shows the reader that Jesus does not put the same level or priority on things like money, time, or attendance as society does.

John 18:33-40

This passage will be applied to demonstrate that Christ's Kingdom-building power comes from the act of giving away earthly entitlements. He rejects the idea of having an offense in his game. In fact, he rejects the game in its entirety. As should Cultural Kingdom Architects.

Acts 2:42-47

The early Christian church was built around four primary activities. These four activities were teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. As this project will reveal, the blueprint of the church is quite simple and yet, in the modern day, can become so complex to the point of not being identified as a church, but a business. Luke shows the reader what true community is and while much of the language is descriptive, it can also be prescriptive in how the church should function and how a kingdom architect should desire to lead.

Romans 14:15-19

Again, Paul speaks directly to the ideal that the law of Moses was satisfied in Jesus. The spirit of the law is such that God's people should remain clean by sacrifice. A rite that Paul

would have been well acquainted with by virtue of his previous standing within the Jewish community. In that vein, the Kingdom operates from a place of satisfied sacrifice, as Christ completes the sanctification required for the Kingdom to be built.

1 Corinthians 4:20-21

Paul precedes this passage with something that must be noted as a loving correction of behavior. The word "admonish," while generally having negative connotations in current vernacular, indicated an appeal to one's mind in the original language. So, by the time Paul addresses Kingdom behavior in the passage we learn that perhaps the ways of the kingdom are not what the people respond readily to. The indication that Christ's power isn't what the people are drawn to even at the time makes one curious about the patterns of current ministry constructs.

1 Corinthians 15:50

Paul makes a point here that what is readily apparent to our senses is not the only thing at play in the design of Kingdom architecture. This concept identity outside of tangible measurement inheriting a kingdom was revolutionary then and remains so today. As modern Christianity becomes fixated on measuring itself, using terms such as "mega" or "contemporary," when the original designer had something more like "transcendent" in mind, one must reflect on the usefulness of our measurements or their necessity. If Christ intended for anything he said or did to be measurable in any way other than those featured in His story and His way, would he not have left more specific instructions for that measurement? This is, after all, the God who sent plans to Noah for an Ark, and the One who instructed His people to build a temple to very specific measurements.

Revelation 11:15-16

It could well be that this image was fixed in the mind of the Lord when he prayed that

God's will be done on earth as it is heaven. Heaven and earth meet, and "justice will be at home"[34] and the end of the struggle arrives. Perhaps in the context of the greater equation we wish there had been more detail spelled out to help get us right to this point? For all of time humanity has been rushing to quantify and classify, but maybe the only way to get from here to there is to resolve that we all die daily to ourselves. That constant call to repentance or transformation noted in 2 Peter appears to be a large part of the process by which one makes it to this point: consistently transforming and transcending just as the story of Christ has done for centuries.

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[34] Wright, *The Kingdom New Testament,* 482.

Chapter 2

Diagnostics for the American Church

When one looks at the landscape of church in America it does not have to look very far to see churches on nearly every corner of most cities and towns, each with a specific calling, a style, and outcome that they are hoping to attain. In comparing the landscape of small and large churches, there are more items to consider than just size. In his book, *The Vanishing Evangelical,* Calvin Miller says, "*Small* churches usually mean *close* churches. They are churches you can get to without driving very far. On the other hand, mega-churches serve a wide geographical area. They are more inconvenient, being thought of as generally across town, city, or metropolis."[35] Churchgoers can select a church for a variety of reasons, and while size does have some to do with it, location is also a criterion that impacts a final decision and as Miller suggests, the size a church will ultimately become.

Much of what goes on in many churches revolves around the specific style of the leader or leaders of the ministry. The one thing that should tie all churches together, is what Jesus says in Matthew 16:18 "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."[36] Jesus said He would build his church. Church ministry in 2019 has some significant challenges that can hinder the move of God if one allows themselves to get caught in the comparison games with others and adhering to the weight of numbers and metrics as the sole goal for ministry.

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[35] Miller, Vanishing Evangelical, 180.
[36] Matt. 16:18 ESV

The Small Church Lives in Discouragement

According to the National Congregation Studies published by Duke University, "In 2012, the average congregation had only 70 regular participants, counting both adults and children."[37] Yes, it is a surprise to many to see the number so low, yet the study suggests yet another staggering figure in just how many "small" churches there are in America. The study says,

> To get a feel for just how concentrated people are in the largest congregations, imagine that we have lined up all congregations in the United States, from the smallest to the largest. Imagine that you are walking along this line, starting on the end with the smallest congregations. When you get to a congregation with 400 people, you would have walked past about half of all churchgoers, but more than 90% (93%, to be exact) of all congregations.[38][39]

There are many churches of fewer than one-hundred who are perfectly content with whom they are and the people God has given them. On the other hand, one does not have to do much research or digging to find that many, not all, pastors of smaller churches, both rural and urban, live in a state of constant discouragement. Karl Vaters, in an article published by Christianity Today says,

> Discouragement is unquestionably the most widespread burden faced by small church pastors — and usually the most debilitating. I would estimate that more small church pastors have left the ministry before their time due to overwhelming discouragement than any other reason — maybe more than all other reasons combined. It comes from a combination of factors, but most of all from feelings of failure for not hitting the goals for numerical increase that are set, either by others or by ourselves.[40]

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[37] Chaves and Eagle, *National Congregation Study, 5.*

[38] Ibid.

[39] The 93 percent stat appears to contradict an earlier statistic from a 2016 Barna study that indicates that 46 percent of church goers attend a church of less than 100. This apparent contradiction is due to the pool used in the Barna study was mainly evangelical born-again church goers and the Duke study had individuals from all faiths.

[40] Karl Vaters, "The 3 Most Common Challenges Small Church Pastors Face – and How to Help," Christianity Today, June 1, 2018, https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2018/june/3-common-challenges-small-church-pastors-face-how-to-help.html. (Accessed October 14, 2018).

In a recent survey by the author of this project, he surveyed seventy-two pastors from all over America and asked them how often they feel as though their impact is of little value and why they feel as though it is of little value. One respondent said discouragement comes from a "lack of steady growth while others around us are growing,"[41] another one said, "we run 60 in a dead town of 200 people,"[42] and yet another responded with a remark about, "when people leave to go to the mega church across town."[43] Of the seventy-two pastors interviewed, nearly 60 percent said that they felt that their part in the building of God's kingdom is of great value while the other 40 percent said that they feel that their part is of a mid to low value.[44]

The respondents to the survey who said that their impact was of little value come from pastors whose churches have seen either a decline in attendance or a static attendance. In his book, *The Strategically Small Church,* Brandon O'Brian asks, "Could it be because we have bought into the notion that small churches are failed churches and they can only become successful if they follow a certain plan and grow to a certain size? Why have we allowed the ministry experience of one half of one percent of all churches to become the standard by which we judge the remaining 99.5 percent of churches?"[45] It is true that one can become woefully discouraged when one sees a church down the road explode while you are doing everything you know to do and you do not seem to see the same results.

David R. Ray in his book *Small Churches are the Right Size,* says, "the big, multihundred twentieth century protestant church is a deviation from what has been the typical church

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[41] Table A.3
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Table B.10
[45] Brandon J. O'Brien, *The Strategically Small Church: Intimate, Nimble, Authentic, Effective* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House, 2010), 10.

throughout church history." [46] He goes on to say "history is on the side of the small church. Bigness is the new kids on the block. Historically, protestant denominations in the United States have been comparatively small. At the time of the civil war, the size of the average protestant church was less than one hundred members."[47] This is in line with the statistics from the Barna survey from 2016 where it demonstrated the average church in America today has an attendance of less than one-hundred.

The goal of this project is not to say that small churches are good and large churches are bad, but in measuring whether or not one is successful in kingdom building one has to ensure that they are measuring the right things. For instance, of the respondents surveyed, 75 percent of the respondents indicated that one of the more important factors in the measurement of success is Sunday morning attendance.[48] In their book, *Transformational Church* Thom Rainer and Ed Stetzer say, "From a ministerial perspective we wrestled with the desire to see the church grow numerically and maturity at equal levels. From an academic perspective, we endeavor to teach ministerial students the value assigned to each."[49] So, numbers, while they can and do tell some of the story of perceived success or failure, do not tell the whole story as it pertains to the success in building God's Kingdom.

In the 1970s, a new movement called the "Church Growth Movement" was said to have been founded by Donald A. McGavran.[50] In the book, *Contemporary American Religion*, the

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[46] David R. Ray, *Small Churches Are the Right Size* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982), 30.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Table B.12
[49] Ed Stetzer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* Nashville, Tenn.: B & H Pub., 2010, 25.
[50] Gary McIntosh and Paul Engle, *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: 5 Views* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2004),41.

authors indicated that this movement flourished in the United States, and it quickly became a

movement embraced by many leaders in the evangelical world. The book says,

> During the 1970s, denominational leaders began to recognize the movement as a force to
> be reckoned with. Some saw it as a distortion of true Christianity—a theologically thin
> numbers game, a lopsided evangelical counter to the social gospel, blatant racism, or a
> dependence on human strategies rather than on the Spirit of God. Nevertheless,
> membership losses, especially in mainline denominations, caused a growing awareness
> that "business as usual" evangelism was no longer bearing fruit. By the end of the 1980s
> nearly every North American Protestant denomination was restructuring its evangelism,
> its new church development, and its leadership training efforts to reflect insights and
> strategies gleaned from the Church Growth Movement.[51]

The Church Growth movement, as well intentioned as it might have been, produced a

culture in the church world that if you are not growing then you are dying. In the Journal, Critical

Issues Commentary, Bob DeWaay suggests that the church growth movement did more harm

than good to the church as he says,

> Whatever else the Church Growth Movement has done, it has convinced the majority of
> church leaders that if their local organization is not growing, this is a sure sign they are
> 'unhealthy' and failing. Rick Warren says, 'Forget church growth, Church health is the
> key to church growth. All living things grow if they're healthy. You don't have to make
> them grow—it's just natural for living organisms.' So, according to this thinking, failure
> to grow is a sign of disease or sickness. Having convinced pastors and other church
> leaders that they are failing, Warren and others leave them desperate for a solution. [52]

If what Bob DeWaay says of Rick Warren's stance on church growth and health is true,

then it leads one to believe that churches that are not growing or are declining in Sunday

morning attendance are dying and will be dead soon. In the survey presented by this writer, using

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[51] Wade Clark Roof, ed., *Contemporary American Religion* (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2000), 127.

[52] Bob DeWaay, "Faulty Premises of the Church Growth Movement," *Critical Issues Commentary*, no. 89 (July/ August 2005), https://cicministry.org/commentary/issue89.pdf.

the definition of church health from Rick Warren, nearly 30 percent of the pastors surveyed are pastoring dead or dying churches and 57 percent of churches are alive, but barely.[53]

Not only do small churches live in discouragement, but pastors of small churches live in a state of disenchantment as well. In *The Strategically Small Church,* author Brandon, J. O'Brian wrote "the primary disadvantage of the small church isn't our methodology. Neither is it our location, our worship style, or our lack of resources. Our primary problem is perception. Many of us have been trained so thoroughly to imagine ministry success in a particular way or according to particular criteria, that we've become disenchanted with our own churches."[54] Success can be defined in other ways than attendance numbers and this is how pastor's and church leaders must learn to evaluate themselves in building God's kingdom.

The Big Church Lives in a State of Overwhelmed

Roughly half of the seventy-two pastors surveyed reported they compare themselves to others pastors quite often.[55] This leads many pastors into a state of discouragement as it is quite easy to want what someone else has or to give into the notion that the other pastor does not have the problems that another might have. Carey Nieuwhof, in his book *Lasting Impact* suggests that when a leader falls into the trap of comparison he is using an old playbook. Nieuwhof says, "For the last few decades, simply being a cooler church than the church down the road helped churches grow. There was a day when all you had to do was *improve* the church you led in order to gain attraction."[56] He goes on to say, "We're quickly moving into a season where having a

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[53] Table B.6

[54] O'Brien, *The Strategically Small Church, 155.*

[55] Table B.13

[56] Carey Nieuwhof, *Lasting Impact: 7 Powerful Conversations That Will Help Your Church Grow*(Cumming: The reThink Group, 2015), 98.

cool church is like having the best choir in town; it's wonderful for the handful of people who still listen to choral music. And irrelevant to everyone else."[57]

Rick Warren in his book *The Purpose Driven Life* speaks early on in his book about how he did not set out to plant a huge, mega-church and become America's pastor. He writes,

> Very little of Saddleback's ministry was preplanned. I didn't have long-range strategy before I started the church. I simply knew God had called me to plan a new church on the five New Testament purposes, and I had a bag of ideas I wanted to try out. Each innovation we've developed was just a response to the circumstances in which we found ourselves. I didn't plan them in advance. [58]

Warren indicates that he did not set out to pastor a church of several thousand; rather he set out to plant *a church* and in doing so, planted a church that would eventually have multiple campuses, massive budgets, and a large staff. With this sizeable growth came the systems and strategies that are required to sustain such an organization.

Keith Meyer, in his book *Whole Life Transformation*, includes a chapter entitled "Church as Business"[59] where he describes the constant tension between doing the ministry that Jesus calls one to and managing the business aspect that comes from the growth of a church. He asks the question:

> How did I get to the place where I was so off-task, caring more about my church's 'organizational extension and survival' and measuring success in business terms-attendance, building, and cash- rather than in becoming and making mature disciples of Jesus? How did church become more of a business organization for consumers of religious goods and services than a training ground for followers of Jesus?[60]

He goes on to say that "The business metaphor that controlled most churches seemed to promote

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Richard Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1995), 27.

[59] Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation,* 77.

[60] Ibid.

the organization more than the transformation of people."[61] Meyer appears to be onto something with this understanding of the business aspect of church. Once again, in the survey conducted by this writer, one is able to conclude that success or failure in ministry is connected more to the metrics that are upheld by society. In *Being the Body* Charles Colson wrote,

> Cultural values have so captured the church that we equate success with size. It's a reflex reaction. If a church isn't growing, someone is doing something wrong… This is why church growth has become the hottest business in the religion world today. If 'customer is king,' then the church has to react as any organization does to the consumer demand, which means finding the right marketing strategy."[62]

Most will agree relevance to the culture around you is vitally important to the health and mission of the church, but when that mission oscillates from being people-centered to budgets, resources, facilities, and marketing, it could become a pay-for-play business that one can find anywhere else in the secular world. When this occurs, there is not only a desire for growth, but a mandate to grow which leads to the same discouragement found in pastors of churches with smaller congregations. Keith Meyer in *Whole Life Transformation* tells the story of Eugene Peterson and "his decision to stay in one church no matter what size it grew to or problem it encountered. His goal was to stay in one church for the entire course of his ministry."[63] This mindset is not one shared among most pastors; as many pastors, according to Thom Rainer in his blog suggests, "Pastors generally don't stay long at churches. The average tenure is between three and four years."[64] Interestingly enough, according to the survey conducted by this writer, 46 percent of the respondents say they have been in their current ministry for less than five

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[61] Ibid., 78.
[62] Charles W. Colson, *Being the Body*, (Nashville, Tenn.: W Pub. Group, 2003), 27-28.
[63] Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation,* 82.
[64] Thom Rhainer, "The Dangerous Third Year of Pastoral Tenure," Thom S. Rhainer, June 18, 2014, https://thomrainer.com/2014/06/dangerous-third-year-pastoral-tenure/ (accessed March 13, 2018).

years.[65] While this does not indicate that they are leaving their current situation, it does reveal that nearly half of the survey pool could possibly be out of their current role by the time this project is complete. This can be, in part, due to being overwhelmed by the need to keep up with the business aspect of the church, and once again, the pressure that accompanies comparisons with other churches based on size, facilities, budgets, and sometimes programming.

What the Bible says about Church Format?

While much of the book of Acts in the Bible is descriptive as opposed to prescriptive, one can learn from what was going on in the early church and why it went from a relatively small group to several thousand in a relatively short amount of time. In Acts 2:42-47 the author, identified as Luke the physician, says,

> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.[66]

Descriptive

The descriptive nature of what was occurring shows that the early church was doing four things; four things in such a way that everyone took notice.

Those things the early church did were:

Teaching – they taught together,

Fellowship – they fellowshipped together,

Broke bread – they ate together, and

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[65] Table B.4
[66]Acts 2:42-47 ESV

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Prayer – they prayed together.

This is a simple formula for *doing* church, well within the ability of the smallest group, yet when one reads verse 47, the Scriptures say they were "enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."[67]

Teaching

When one talks about church, there is an understanding that when the church gathers there will be a form of teaching that will occur. This can be done through Sunday school lessons, small group meetings, devotions, and of course the Sunday morning preaching. When one evaluates themselves on whether or not they are making an impact on God's Kingdom and see themselves as a success or a failure, they must understand the place and value of their preaching and teaching. According to the pastor survey conducted, 75 percent of pastors evaluate their success on the Sunday morning attendance which is directly tied into the preaching or teaching time.[68] Additionally, 27 percent of pastors said they evaluate their success on involvement in Sunday school and another 57 percent indicate they evaluate their success on small group involvement. [69]Teaching is vital to the building of God's Kingdom. and if one is faithful to this endeavor, success is in the Lord's hands: Isaiah 55:11 says "so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."[70]

The preaching and teaching element in a church is one of the most effective ways that God uses to challenge His people. While the numbers of people coming to hear a message or teaching produces metrics that can tell what is going on, the other elements of ministry evaluated

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[67] Acts 2:47 ESV
[68] Table B.12
[69] Ibid.
[70] Is. 55:11 ESV

based on those teachings can be baptisms and church membership. In the survey, close to 60 percent of pastors said they evaluate their success on numbers of baptisms, with an additional nearly 28 percent of pastors evaluating success on people moving from being an attender to becoming a church member. [71]

Fellowship

Beyond teaching, in the church there is a need for God's people to spend time together to encourage one another and do life together. Churches represent a gathered people. This is done in various formats such as small groups, fellowship time spent together before and after formal church gatherings, as well as connecting outside the confines of a specific church organized event or off campus. In the infancy of the church, fellowship must have looked much different from that typically seen in today's American church. The *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* indicates that the "Most comprehensive of these activities is fellowship (Gk. *koinōnia*), which means sharing together in material goods as well as spiritual wealth (see 1 John). This finds expression in a temporary widespread sharing and selling of "their possessions and goods" (v. 45) to meet the enormous needs of the Pentecost pilgrims and converted widows (Acts 6)."[72] Throughout Scripture believers are encouraged to gather together more often and spend time together, but gathering in the days of the early church was generally more than just getting together for a meal; it was an intensely personal gathering where sacrifices were made for one another. In Hebrews 10:25, the writer encourages believers that they not neglect "to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."[73]

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[71] Table B. 12
[72] W. H. Baker, *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House 1995), 889.
[73] Heb. 10:25 ESV

Broke Bread

Another important descriptive element found in the early church is the gathering together to share a meal together. Observing communion is an aspect of this type of gathering, but it was not the type of communion service experienced in modern settings. For churches celebrating the Lord's Supper, the observance often included church families and individuals gathering to share a meal together and, just as in the preceding section, fellowshipping and doing life together.

Prayer

The fourth and final part of the formula given as a description of the early church is prayer. Jesus, with his disciples, shared a sample prayer still repeated today, and throughout Scripture one finds verses about the power of prayer to change hearts. In Philippians 4:6 Paul writes, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."[74] Additionally, in James 5:6 the writer says, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."[75] There was a deep need for prayer in the early church and Luke reminds the reader that they remained steadfast in their devotion to Christ through prayers.

<div align="center">Prescriptive</div>

Diving into the realm of prescriptive methods of ministry may be one of the more controversial items this author addresses. There have been thousands of books written over the years, claiming to have the formula for success in the modern church. While many of these may have valid ideas, the point should be made that there are many blanks left in the language in the

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[74] Phil. 4:6 ESV
[75] Jas. 5:6 ESV

New Testament referring to exact instructions for what happens in churches. While there is a plethora of prescriptive instructions given to the people of Israel in the Old Testament, Christ simplified this code of ethics by taking the law on himself in Matthew 5:17- 20:

> Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.[76]

In knowing that Christ is the fulfillment of the prescription for the Body of Christ, we must examine his actions in Scripture to arrive at the prescription for the "how should we then live?"[77]

Teaching

Christ's teachings, if the church were to imitate them, often appear extemporaneous and overflowing with references to the Jewish Scriptures and prophecy. Sometimes the Lord is direct, though that usually involves one person. For example, to the woman caught in adultery he says: "...go, and from now on sin no more."[78] This personal plea, while seemingly generic is very pointed at this woman in particular, not to a crowd. When Jesus addresses crowds he tends to communicate in parable or proverbs. He saves commands and pointed accusations for individuals or very small groups as with Pharisees as he did when saying to them, "You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."[79]

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[76] Matt. 5:17-20 ESV
[77] Eze. 33:10 KJV
[78] John 8:11 ESV
[79] Matt. 12:34 ESV

In contrast to these pointed teachings and admonitions, when speaking to a crowd, Jesus often uses parables, and more literary content in order that the hearer might discern his meaning or intention. "The parables, in fact, are told as kingdom explanations for Jesus's kingdom actions. They are saying: 'Don't be surprised, but this is what it looks like when God's in charge.'"[80] It is almost as if Christ reserves harsh or hard words for conversations, rather than in oratories. When orating, as in The Sermon on the Mount, he utilized broad cultural concepts that relate to his audience in a way that makes them think and search their hearts for the truth. It is not that Jesus shies away from tough topics when before the crowd, but rather that He is willing and available for personal conversation. From this, one can draw the conclusion that the teaching of the church, Christ's living representative on earth, is not meant to be delivered in just one way, on just one level. What if Christ intends a pastor teach broadly, and also be capable of having conversations with the individuals that attend their church? A link must be made to the idea that large church formats may struggle in order to accommodate the latter. It is not impossible, simply improbable that deep and difficult correction or exhortation can be fully realized without a personal connection to the person speaking.

The prescriptive teaching methods as demonstrated by Jesus are diverse, and flexible. He does not demand a specific environment in which to teach, or a kind of crowd: he simply teaches wherever he finds himself in his daily life. The Messiah didn't have security detail or ushers, and he never required a song to introduce him. He was just a teacher who saw ways to teach the redemption He was ushering into the world.

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[80] N T. Wright, *Simply Jesus: Who He Was, What He Did, Why It Matters* (New York: Harper One, 2011), 91.

Fellowship

Just as we may examine actions with teaching, rather than observe a list of rules on teaching, so we must do the same with fellowship. One should note that Jesus never taught to an empty room. While he often withdrew from the crowds, he was never hermitic for long. With this example a pastor should see this pattern as prescriptive. Jesus did not isolate his relationships to only trusted friends; he risked being vulnerable with the crowd. Numerous times, the Gospels speak to this behavior, as in Mark 10:1 "And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his custom, he taught them."[81] Fellowship is vital to Christ's teachings, thus must be vital to the modern church and the pastors leading it.

The business world has ironically embraced these patterns, and though it can be argued the church should not be imitating the business world, it is interesting that vulnerability breeds trust both inside and outside the church. Patrick Lencioni, in one of his many books about team dynamics states: "For a team to establish real trust, team members, beginning with the leader, must be willing to take risks without guarantee of success. They will have to be vulnerable without knowing whether that vulnerability will be respected and reciprocated."[82] This business advice appears to be resonant with the call of Christ to be in deep community with others, often risking life to deliver redemption. In Luke 22 it is written: "And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been

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[81] Mark 10:1 ESV

[82] Patrick Lencioni, *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team: a Field Guide for Leaders, Managers, and Facilitators*, Leadership Fables (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 18.

determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!' And they began to question one

another, which of them it could be who was going to do this."[83]

Christ continued his pattern of fellowship, or if you prefer, *community,* in full knowledge

it would be rejected by some. The modern church must reflect on whether it is doing the same.

The questions posed to the modern church by the culture around it demand an answer, and in its

actions the culture should find the way of Jesus. In *the Way of the Dragon or the Way of the*

Lamb, Goggin and Strobel illuminate this perfectly:

> To be with God, who is always with us, is to be in community. To receive Christ entails that we partake in the life of his people. This is not somehow separate from Christ's mission in the world but is essential to it. The breakdown of genuine community is the fruit of the way below. Worldly power is allergic to vulnerability - really sharing life with one another and receiving others is intrinsically valuable. Worldly power always wants to identify people in worldly ways (like status), so that we can decide if we find them valuable. In contrast Christ calls us into the very place where we can know his power - community. It is genuine community, offering ourselves and receiving others as our brothers and sisters in Christ, that we come to know God's power in weakness. Community teaches us how much we need others and how beautiful and good that need itself is. Christian community is the incubator for God's power in weakness for the sake of love.[84]

Breaking Bread

To build on the concept of fellowship, which according to Merriam-Webster might be

defined as "a company of equals or friends: association,"[85] true intimacy among the church

includes breaking bread together or sharing a meal. Matthew 9:10-13 describes a meal between

stories of calling a disciple and teaching about fasting, Jesus pauses to demonstrate his humanity:

> And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those

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[83] Luke 22:21-23 ESV

[84] Jamin Goggin and Kyle Strobel, *The Way of the Dragon or the Way of the Lamb: Searching for Jesus' Path of Power in a Church That Has Abandoned It* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 120.

[85] *Merriam-Webster*, "Fellowship," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fellowship (accessed April 8, 2018).

who are sick. Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.[86]

Jesus used the breaking of bread as a tool to bridge the easy things we all agree on we all get hungry for the hard things we need to hear, but often do not take the time to listen for. Jesus broke bread with sinners, and in turn the early church broke bread in order to remember his ways: "Where people no longer share regularly in 'the breaking of bread' (the early Christian term for the simple meal that took them back to the Upper Room 'in remembrance of Jesus'), they are failing to raise the flag which says 'Jesus' death and resurrection are the center of everything' (see 1 Corinthians 11.26)."[87]

Prayer

The fourth prescriptive purpose of the church is in the area of prayer and praying together as a family of faith. Prayer is a unifying practice and one that is unparalleled in its power and purpose in the Christian faith. Of the power for the church, Stetzer, in *Comeback Churches* says,

> Praying for boldness and for a movement of God's Spirit within the community and in the lives of those who are lost is part of an effective outreach strategy. It's clear that comeback leaders, by praying strategically and fervently for themselves, their church families, and their communities, set the tone so that churches can experience revitalization.[88]

A foundational prayer for the Christian faith is found in the words of Christ where he gives the prescribed manner of prayer in the Lords' Prayer. In Matthew 6:9-13 one sees the sample prayer of the Lord where he says, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us

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[86] Matt. 9:10-13 ESV

[87] N T. Wright, *Acts for Everyone*, New Testament for Everyone (London: SPCK, 2008), 45.

[88] Stetzer, Comeback Churches, 70.

from evil."[89] A model prayer that unifies all believers. As pastors and leaders, being prayed for is vital to the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the pastor. The Apostle Paul knew that for him to be effective in his missionary journeys, prayers were necessary. In his book, *True Community,* Jerry Bridges says, "To Paul, their prayers were more important than their gifts. He could get along without their gifts (see Philippians 4:11-13), but he could not get along without their prayers."[90]

Getting Away from the Numbers Game

Many Sunday afternoons, pastors leave their church gathering with several questions in their minds. Did my message land on people hearts? Was the name of Christ glorified in our presentation of the gospel? What was the offering? What was the attendance? While there may be others and these questions are asked in no particular order, the pastors mind can be consumed with these thoughts.

In the survey about success and impact in their churches, the numbers questions definitely were a factor. Of the pastors surveyed 74.6 percent partially evaluate their impact or success on the Sunday morning attendance in their church, 23.9 percent evaluate based on Sunday school attendance, 56.3 percent in both small group involvement and giving numbers, 28.2 percent in the numbers of members in their church, and 59.2 in the number of baptisms.[91] Additionally, when surveyed, 56.3 percent of these pastors say that they compare their ministries to the ministries of other more than 50 percent of the time and 7 percent of these pastors compare

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[89] Matt. 6:9b-13 ESV

[90] Jerry Bridges, *True Community: The Biblical Practice of Koinonia* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 79.

[91] Table B.12

their ministry to that of others 100 percent of the time.[92] Once again, numbers tell part of the story, but they do not tell the whole story.

In *Transformational Church,* Ed Stetzer wrote, "The old scorecard of the church valued the external measures of the three Bs: bodies, budget, and building. The North America culture likes to count and so does its church. So we count the number of people attending, the number of dollars being used, and the number of square feet being inhabited for the purpose of the church."[93] Interestingly enough, the way that the church measures success is only slightly connected with the reasons people give for attending church at all. When asked the reason why people attend church, people almost never say because of the amount of money it brings in, because they like knowing how many people are in attendance, or because of the size of the building in which they get to worship. In a Gallup poll conducted in 2007 to study why people attend church, 23 percent said for spiritual growth and guidance, 20 percent said it keeps them grounded, 15 percent responded it was their faith, 15 percent indicated it was to worship God, 13 percent wanted to fellowship with the other members, 12 percent responded that it was because they believe in God or religion, and 12 percent indicated it was the way in which they were raised.[94] Ironically, one of the reasons indicated in this same study says 3 percent of the respondents will not attend church due to money and the fact they feel the church asks for too much of it,[95] which in the world of the pastor is one of the ways success is measured.

The fact that effectiveness is, in part, based upon church involvement, regardless of why they choose to attend, the leader would need to understand what is going on in the society around

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[92] Table B.13

[93] Stetzer, *Transformational Church*., 27.

[94] Alec M. Gallup and Frank Newport, eds., *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 2007* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 150.

[95] Ibid, 151.

them which could possibly hinder one's involvement in their church. In the book *Becoming a Healthy Church,* Stephen Macchia discusses several reasons for hindrances in building a church community, one of which is culture. He says, "Even those without a family are overbooked in their involvement with scores of interesting yet time-consuming activities. We are enmeshed in a driven society, and leisurely moments of building community with friends and family are fewer than ever."[96] Society is becoming less and less church centered and therefore measuring success on number of participants, while an indicator, is a limited one at best.

So, if churches measure their success on numbers for number sake, it is focusing on metrics that the people who are drawn toward church and God have no care or concern for. This will in many ways stifle the kingdom building of God and only build their own kingdom. In Philippians 1 Paul has an answer to those who focus too much on the metrics of visible success where he says, **"**The former proclaims Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice."[97] In *Transformation,* Jim Herrington says, "The old scorecard keeps us church-absorbed. As long as we use it, we will continue to be inward focused, program driven, and church-based in our thinking and leadership."[98] Metrics are important because they tell part of the story of what God is doing, but when one begins to focus on the metrics as the end goal and not the building of God's kingdom through the local church, the reach of the gospel is diminished.

Pastor on the Move

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[96] Macchia, *Healthy Church,* 81.
[97] Phil 1:17-18 ESV
[98] Jim Herrington, *Transformation: The Bottom Line from City Reaching: On the Road to Community Transformation* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Publishers, 1999), 106.

Pastor tenures in one church is extremely low as Thom Rainer indicates in his blog, "The average tenure is between three and four years."[99] This is not a good picture of the local church because as Rainer suggests, it takes between five and seven years for a pastor to become *the* pastor of the church to which they are called.[100] Rainer, in his book *Autopsy of a Deceased Church* says,

Years 6 to 10: Fruit and Harvest. My research is not complete, but it's more than anecdotal. A Church is likely to experience some of its best years, by almost any metrics, during this period of a pastor's tenure. Indeed, in my interviews with both pastors and members, I have heard this theme repeated. Both parties have worked through tough times. They now trust each other and love each other more deeply. [101]

While moving your pastorate from church to church is not inherently right or wrong, many pastors move on from the church they are leading after just a few years for various reasons. These reasons for moving so often are identified as family needs, conflict, reassigned, or even because they felt their time was up at their church. [102]

Many times, these moves may be the Holy Spirit moving people to a new role, but many times it is due to the discouragement or health, the business model of climbing the corporate ladder to a larger church, or even a move to a ministry where your pay would increase. Keith Meyer suggests that "One of the consequences of the church business model is pastoral careerism."[103] He

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[99] Rainer, Third Year.

[100] Tom Rainer, "Why It Takes Five to Seven Years to Become the Pastor of a Church," Thom S. Rainer, August 21, 2017, https://thomrainer.com/2017/08/why-it-takes-five-to-seven-years-to-become-the-pastor-of-a-church/.

[101] Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 59.

[102] Lisa Cannon Green, "Despite Stresses, Few Pastors Give Up on Ministry," Lifeway Research, September 1, 2015, https://lifewayresearch.com/2015/09/01/despite-stresses-few-pastors-give-up-on-ministry/ (accessed March 13, 2018).

[103] Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation.* 82.

goes on to say that "A church centered on the formation of disciples will need to lose its current

corporate life for kingdom life."[104]

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[104] Ibid., 83.

Chapter 3

Defining Success in Building God's Kingdom: Cultural and Biblical Success

Cultural Success

Large vs Small

Culture may declare bigger is always better: the perception is that if an organization, church, or group is "small" then it must not be functioning properly, or it is of less worth. Owners of successful business that have high volume sales, large staffs, personal assistants, and multiple houses reside at the pinnacle of success and the position that many entrepreneurs and start up shops seek to obtain. This notion is not lost on pastors and churches as the correlation between the pastor as a "business owner or manager" and church as a "business" are often correlated as a cursory glance as church leadership literature will demonstrate

The *National Congregations Study Journal* (Duke University), indicates that "size is one of the most important characteristics of any organization, including congregations. It affects everything else… There is a lot to say about congregational size, but one fact is fundamental: Most congregations in the United States are small, but most people are in large congregations."[105] It appears to this writer that the draw for many attenders at a larger-than-average church has a great deal to do with what the church is perceived to offer those who attend. Normally, larger congregations are expected to offer more service times, more programs for children, more events for the families, and have the ability to offer more ministries to meet the needs of a larger pool of people; much more so than the other smaller churches across town.

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[105] Chaves and Eagle, *National Congregation Study*, 5.

One could say the size of any specific thing has become a relatively easy metric which one can base major life decisions. If an organization is large and growing, it appears to be healthy and vibrant and can easily attract new clients, customers, or, in the case of church, parishioners. Making decisions based upon size or value applies to a range of things in modern times; from televisions, houses, cars, and meals: anything that can be measured numerically. The question to be asked is, "What about the size of a specific object, group, or a church makes it appealing or objectionable?" In measuring the size of a church, the answer, more often than not, lies more in a cultural perception than a biblical perspective.

Assumed in the call to lead a church is a desire to fulfill the Great Commission, as in Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."[106] Making disciples should be what the call to ministry is about, and when one has a desire to lead and grow a church for the kingdom, one assumes the number of disciples will grow. After all, we are told, things that grow measurably appear to be alive. Converse to this: living things that are small, below potential, or small relative to their counterparts, may be assumed to be dead or on their way toward their death. However, according to Karl Vaters in his book titled, *Small Church Essentials*, "Being small does not mean something is broken. If something is broken, you can't fix it by making it bigger."[107]

Positivity Paradox

When things are going well in ministry, why would a pastor imagine doing anything else? When the offering numbers are up, attendance is climbing, ministries are thriving, and there does not seem to be anything but blue skies ahead, one can easily get to the point of feeling

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[106] Matt. 28:19 ESV
[107] Karl Vaters, *Small Church Essentials: Field-Tested Principles for Leading a Healthy Congregation of under 250* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2018), 75.

true success in within arm's reach. The other side of this is true as well: when offerings are down, attendance is dropping, ministries are stagnant, and there does not seem to be anything but storms and turbulence, a leader can feel more as though they are failing, and a complete failure is inevitable.

In the positivity paradox within ministry and building God's kingdom, the cultural aspects around the ministry becomes the driver for the metrics one seeks to attain so as to feel that what a person does really matters. In a study published by the Barna Group, the report indicates that "Few report frequently experiencing the negative emotions Barna explored in the study. For example, the vast majority does not often feel inadequate in their calling (88%), lonely or isolated from others (86%) or emotionally or mentally exhausted (79%)."[108]

The report continues, "The bottom drops out on many elements of well-being for pastors who are least satisfied with their work, even compared to pastors who are struggling at their current church. The most significant gaps are on energy, support from people around them, personal finances and exhaustion."[109]

Nickels and Noses

In twenty-first century America, the perceived success of a typical church or organization can be derived from the metrics that are most easily measured and tangible to the general population as many of the authors cited show. In the church this writer pastors, it is nearly impossible to walk through the halls of the church facility without seeing everyone who is in attendance. This church is larger than the average church in America, but it would be considered by many to be "small." While attendance figures and offering amounts are metrics utilized by

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[108] George Barna, *The State of Pastors: How Today's Faith Leaders Are Navigating Life and Leadership in an Age of Complexity* (Carol Stream: Barna Group, 2017),1.
[109] Ibid.

this writer to gauge where things are headed, they are only two of the many metrics utilized to tell the story of this congregation. In 2014 when the author became the pastor of Discovery Church, the church was averaging seventy-five to eighty people in weekly attendance with offerings less than $2000 most weeks, and much of that was being given by seven or eight individuals in the church. If these were the only metrics being utilized to measure effectiveness, it would show that the church needed more people attending, more money given, and more people being involved in the stewardship of the church.

Fast forward four and half years to 2019 and there is tangible progress. Discovery Church is still considered a "small" church, averaging just over 150 people in weekly attendance, offerings averaging roughly $4000 a week, with more than 30 individual donations each week. Discovery Church is still "small," its offerings are a fraction of its counterparts in the community, and the number of individuals donating to the ministry, while more than tripled, is still relatively low for the number in attendance. Much of culture, both in and out of the church world, would indicate the effectiveness of Discovery Church remains low functioning, that is, if it was only looking at the "nickels and noses." But the real story of effectiveness is not seen only in the products or a specific number at a specific moment in time. It is seen in the "where has this church been" and "where is this church now?"

Cult of Personality

With the advent of podcasts, video webcasts, and social media, church ministry (specifically teaching and preaching ministries) are easier to produce and to access than at any other time in history. One does not have to look far on the internet to come across a webcast of what many would call, a "celebrity pastor." While there is nothing in the Bible indicating that it is unbiblical or unlawful to have a large following or weekly gathering in a specific church,

celebrity pastors have become the standard that many other pastors feel they need to emulate in order to be relevant and effective in their own context. Well-known evangelical pastors Steven Furtick, Ed Young, Andy Stanley, Rick Warren, Craig Groeschel and others have become household names in many Christian homes. While this is not bad, there can be a sense that in order to be effective as a pastor in a specific context, one needs to imitate the more well-known personality in order to effect change for the kingdom.

Cult of personality is nothing new to the world and especially not new to the Christian culture. As in any profession, one will see there are individuals who rise to the top very quickly, and this can be due to several things. These characteristics can be God-given abilities, an insatiable work ethic, being at the right place at the right time, being born into a specific family, knowing the right people, blessing of God, or a combination of all of the above. There are churches in America that see more than 30,000 parishioners walk through their doors each week, each person there for whatever reasons. Perhaps it is because of the man or woman who will be preaching or teaching in a specific church on a specific day. In a recent Barna Group report, *The State of Pastors,* that study indicates "The larger the church, the more frequently its pastor feels energized by ministry, and more likely it is for the pastor to report an increased passion for ministry during their tenure at the church. Once again these findings indicate that growth trajectory is a factor in some pastor's positive feelings about themselves and about ministry."[110]

Paul in his letter to the church at Philippi, wrote, "Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition." [111] In a letter to

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[110] Barna, The State of Pastors, 24.
[111] Phil. 1:15-17a ESV

his son in the ministry, Timothy, Paul writes, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions."[112] Paul is speaking to a time when people will focus on drawing crowds of people rather than effecting change for the kingdom. Crowds of people in a coliseum or arena do not necessarily indicate life change, nor do they indicate success, or failure, for that matter, in building God's kingdom.

The cult of personality in the church, in many ways, makes it difficult to distinguish between church ministry effectiveness and the ability to draw a crowd. While there are large churches that have been extremely effective, at least from an outsider's view, some students of the phenomenon point out there are also large churches where hundreds and thousands gather that give the perception of Kingdom building, when in reality they offer nothing more than entertainment and good vibes. In *Seeker-Sensitive: The Cons: Arguing with Success,* author Douglas Groothius writes*,*

> In their zeal for converts, seeker-sensitive churches may convert God's message into a form more likely to impress but less likely to save the unbeliever. If cultural relevance is our guiding principle for evangelism and church growth, we can become irrelevant to God's agenda, for the gospel will always contest, subvert, and make foolish "the wisdom of the world" (1 Cor. 1:20).[113]

As difficult as it may be, to make an honest assessment, one has to put away personal biases and look at what a true measurement of effectiveness in a specific ministry. One question a person might need to articulate is whether the specific ministry would still exist in its current form without the person or persons leading the church. Or is that ministry so tied to a single personality that it would not survive without that person.

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[112] 2 Tim. 4:3 ESV
[113] Doug Groothius. "Pro and Con: The Seeker-Sensitive Church Movement." Christian Research Institute. April 9, 2009. https://www.equip.org/article/pro-and-con-the-seeker-sensitive-church-movement/ (accessed October 14, 2018).

In 2016, Perry Noble's pastoral role in New Spring Church in Anderson, South Carolina was terminated. In the weeks and months following his departure, many wondered if it would be the end of New Spring Church. After a year without the presence of the founding pastor that lack of ministry was keenly felt on the surface.

> Attendance at NewSpring Church has been down in the year since it split with founder Perry Noble. Church leaders Friday told the congregation that giving is also down... That means that the days of free T-shirt giveaways, costing the church $300,000 a year, are probably done. More people would focus on those weeks rather than on weeks devoted to salvation, the church will now look to other measures like doubling of the number of people visiting small groups may have a longer-term benefit, said the Rev. Michael Mullikin, the pastor over administration and finances.[114]

New Spring has also taken a new approach to its leadership style after the departure of Perry Noble. The leadership team now consists of multiple lead pastors and multiple teaching pastors. In the scenario, while still imperfect, no single person has the ability to leverage their specific style or personality on a church, and a much more diverse base of parishioners appear to feel their call more to Christ and His church rather than to a pastor and his specific message.

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[114]Mike Ellis, "Newspring Attendance Down as Church Reinvents Itself a Year After Split with Founder," Independent Mail, July 22, 2017, https://www.independentmail.com/story/news/ 2017/07/22/newspring-attendance-down-church-reinvents-itself-year-after-split-founder/501580001/. (accessed October 14, 2018).

Biblical Success

Large vs Small

Just as there is tension and expectation in business growth, there is tension and expectation in the growth and effectiveness of a church. Historically, large churches are remembered - like the one in Acts, but are they responsible for the larger movement?

In Acts 2, Luke's observations of the beginnings of the first-century church says, "And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved."[115] Luke is indicating that the church began to grow by the day as people were being saved and baptized. The historical roots of the church can be linked back to the day of Pentecost where the Holy Spirit came, and the church began its explosive growth. The church began small and relatively in secret, and within a short amount of time it grew to a point where society at-large took notice.

This type of growth is not entirely uncommon in the church world today as some churches are able to open their doors and on day one draw crowds of several hundred as seen with a recent Life Church plant in Springfield, Missouri.[116] This type of growth may in fact be a result of a cult of personality, not with a specific leader at the helm, but because of name recognition of a specific brand of church, as in a metropolitan church with several campuses or branches throughout a region. It would be easy for pastors and leaders of these churches who see huge growth at the outset to feel accomplished. They may also believe they have reached some sort of perceived biblical success because they are experiencing "first century-type growth" centuries later.

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[115] Acts 2:47 ESV
[116] Frances Lin, "Two New Churches Opened in Springfield Sunday Morning," Ozarks First, October 1, 2018, https://www.ozarksfirst.com/news/two-new-churches-opened-in-springfield-sunday-morning/1488311608. (accessed January 6, 2019)

In *Sacred Roots,* Jon Tyson says, "The growth of the early church is arguably the most remarkable sociological movement in history. The numbers are staggering. In AD 40, there were roughly one thousand Christians in the Roman Empire, but by AD 350, almost 30 million. A remarkable 53% of the population had converted to the Christian faith."[117] That's a staggering growth of 30,000 percent in the church in a little more than 300 hundred years. While this kind of growth is not currently being seen in the church, there are churches and ministries that are growing and are flourishing.

In the survey in this project, a little more than 62 percent of respondents indicated that their churches have grown in the previous twelve months.[118] If one connects church growth patterns as a specific metric of perceived biblical success, then one might feel as though they are doing their part in the building of God's kingdom. However, of these respondents, 13 percent responded to the question "On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel your part of building God's kingdom is of little value?"[119] with rating of 6 or more, meaning they felt an above average sense their contribution was of little value. One of those respondents, expanded his comment: "I think the day-to-day work sometimes gets overvalued and draws people away from what makes us feel more apart [sic] of God's Kingdom. It's easy to lose sight when you get wrapped up in sermon prep [sic], hospital visits, even payroll, to think about the person you see at a restaurant or at football game and their need for Jesus."[120] Another stated: "I minister in a small declining town and county where change is very slow and the community is slow moving."[121] Obviously, there are various reasons to perceive church growth as little value, but

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[117] Jon Tyson, *Sacred Roots: Why the Church Still Matters (Frames)* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014),38.
[118] Table B.5
[119] Table B.9
[120] Table A.3
[121] Ibid.

the common factor among the six respondents which make up the 13 percent is an acknowledgment that the culture surrounding the church has changed.[122]

These six respondents, in their responses to the converse question of "On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like you're part of building God's Kingdom is of GREAT Value?"[123], were also enlightening. One states; "For the most part, the work of the ministry has become largely administrative and crisis management for me."[124] Another gets straight to the heart of this writer's suspicions and says: "Ironically, our church is one of the healthiest in the area with a broad cross-section of children thru [sic] adults."[125] This writer's suspicion is that growth patterns tracked numerically aren't the full picture of what makes a church successful.

The issue of concern with utilizing growth patterns as a major metric for perceived biblical success comes from the 11.1 percent of respondents who said their churches were declining, and the 26.4 percent who indicated that their churches were in a plateau.[126] If on the one hand a church is said to be experiencing success due to the sheer numbers of people attending weekly, that would assume the churches seeing decline or plateaus are not seeing success in any measurable quantities. In fact, it would indicate failure and lack of success.

It might be better to apply a different metric such as one found in the Kingdom Parables. In Matthew 13, Jesus likens the Kingdom of God to that of a mustard seed - something seemingly small grows into something large relative to its initial state. It is easy to get bogged down in ministry and feel as though efforts one is putting forth is of little value, when the stats don't seem to line up with success from a cultural viewpoint; whether it be in comparison to

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Table A.4
[124] Table A.3
[125] Ibid.
[126] Table B.5

other churches, pastors, or themselves. Drawing from the idea of comparison, when one looks at

the parable of the mustard seed, it is often incorrectly interpreted as a "large tree" and one thinks

of a large sturdy oak. This is not the case. The mustard plant is, historically speaking, a large

plant that grows almost anywhere and has very little need to tend to it. The black mustard seed,

common in the region at the time Christ speaks of it, would be regarded as a very small seed

from which a useful and seemingly impossibly large plant grows.

> Shinners, an expert in the field of botany, has been quoted at length to show that the
> mustard seed in Bible times was the smallest garden-variety seed and, with the exception
> of tobacco, remains so today. That Jesus was referring to garden-variety mustard seed is
> evident from the context. His analogy is between the growth of the Kingdom and the
> growth of an intentionally planted seed, i.e., garden-variety ("…which a man took and
> sowed in his field"). In every NT instance where sperma is used botanically, it is used in
> an agricultural sense of being sowed (cf. Matt 13:24, 27, 37; Mark 4:31; 2 Cor. 9: 10).
> Also, on every such occasion, it is used in connection with the verb speirw which means
> "to sow." The derivation of sperma from speirw further augments the argument that Jesus'
> use of sperma in Matt 13:32 referred to that which was planted by man... This conclusion
> is fully supported by both classical usage and the papyri evidence. Therefore, it may be
> concluded that when Jesus called the mustard seed the least of all seeds, the reference
> was to garden-variety seeds, and Sinapis nigra was the smallest of all such seeds. This is
> a reasonable conclusion and it squares with both the Greek and the context of the
> disputed passages. [127]

Why does Jesus compare the kingdom of God to a mustard seed? It is one of the smallest

seeds his audience knew of, and when it is planted it grows large, it grows strong, and it grows

anywhere in the region of origin. Many times, the focus is upon its size at full maturity, but what

Jesus is trying to convey to his audience is that measurable size is relative to where it began, not

compared to a different plant. This kingdom parable leads one to wonder, what if the Kingdom

of God is intended to start like a mustard seed, and should be viewed as small and easily

attainable, with the potential to take over a field? This parable, often mis-contexualized is

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[127] John A. Sproule, "The Problem of the Mustard Seed," *Grace Theological Journal* 1, no. 1 (1980): 37-42.

conveying the concept that original growth measurements do not factor in to the perception of the Kingdom's final product. When one understands the economy that Christ sets up in this parable, one realizes that God is not focused on measurable metrics; rather he is focused on supernatural factors that cannot always be measured or predicted.

Karl Vaters, in a recent article in Christianity Today, says, "Big churches are great. But they're very rare. And they're not the only way to see the Kingdom of God move forward."[128] In the book of Acts, when one sees the New Testament church you do see the component of a large church forming, but it is not necessarily one large gathering. It may have been a large group meeting in smaller groups to make up The Church.

Small changes within an autonomous community may be an ingredient for growth, but it must be combined with actual life change. So often, the goal of a church morphs from a focus on the Gospel message and seeing lives transformed by that Gospel to crowd size and numerical growth. Alan Hirsch in his book F*orgotten Ways* suggests,

> In neglecting the two essential elements of discipleship and worship, we had devolved into a sort of worship club for trendy young people alienated from the broader cultural expressions of church. We had inadvertently fallen prey to a Consumerist co-option of the church. We had substituted entertainment for mission.[129]

Biblical success in building God's kingdom must be rooted in Matthew 5 and the Sermon on the Mount where the blueprints of what mattered in the kingdom are given. Every pastor has a desire to experience an Acts 2:41 moment where thousands were added to their church. But to what end?

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[128] Karl Vaters, "11 Advantages of Having 50 Churches of 100 Instead of 1 Church of 5,000," *Pivot*(blog), *Christianity Today*, July 20, 2017, https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2017/july/50-churches-100-instead-of-1-church-of-5000.html (accessed January 29, 2018).

[129] Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements*, second ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2016), 34.

Jon Tyson shares a moment in their church where they realized that size and ambition had become more important than the building and ushering in of a kingdom that was here and not yet. He says,

> The process was so slow you would not have been able to observe it at any given moment, but the end result was there: the joy was gone. It wasn't any one thing in particular, but everything combined that led us to replace wonder with work, people with programs, organization with power, and dreams with duties.[130]

Tyson appears to have discovered the reality of health in church growth is that healthy growth does not happen overnight or predictably, it is a process and it takes time.

Worth Found in Truth

In contrast to the culturally-based perceived success of effectiveness as a pastor, one has to find out what measurements to place upon themselves in order to evaluate whether or not they are effective in their part of building the Kingdom of God. In the survey the question is asked, "If you ever feel your part is of LITTLE value at any time, what makes you feel this way?"[131] The responses, while varied, focus on style, unmet results, and at times comparison. Respondent three indicates that the perceived lack of effectiveness in building God's kingdom is due to the changes in culture and what people expect from their leaders. The respondent wrote, "The culture has shifted in the last decade or two and an increased value on the youth, hipness and style of the younger pastor has made those who are middle-aged and older less relevant as they are considered 'old school' and out of touch, even if they do not have a traditional mentality. Youth and coolness are worshiped."[132] Respondent number eight attributes perceived limited

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[130] Tyson, Sacred Roots, 33.
[131] Table A.3
[132] Ibid.

value in the kingdom to observable results and to complainers: "Not seeing the results that I had hoped for and allowing for the naysayers and complainers to live in my head."[133]

While unmet results, age, and relevance can be a factor in measuring one's perceived value, another concern for many pastors in the survey has to do with the comparisons with and loss of parishioners to mega-churches nearby. Respondent number ten says, "The constant focus on large churches makes mine look less important."[134] Respondent four says, "I usually feel alright until someone compares me with a 'rock star' pastor."[135] Respondent fifty-five says, "When I compare my ministry with other ministries."[136] And, respondent twelve says, "When people leave to go to the mega-church across town."[137]

Cult of personality, while it can make a leader feel valued and treasured for a time, surely has an expiration date as popularity waxes and wanes with the times. The one thing in ministry that does not have an expiration date is the value of the truth of God's word and effectively communicating God's word through actions, words, and specific giftings. In Paul's first letter to Timothy he shares a truth that Timothy needed to hear. He says, "If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task."[138] In the desire of this noble task, one can easily move from the motive to please God, but then shift as the applause and spotlight motivates desire to be praised and adored for their accomplishments and what culture deems as valuable.

In *Sacred Roots*, Jon Tyson addresses this shift: "We expect brilliance from the pulpit, but often accept mediocrity in our souls."[139] That shift occurs when effectiveness in the building

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[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] 1 Tim. 3:1 ESV
[139] Tyson, Sacred Roots, 41.

of God's kingdom ceases to be a primary motive and attention is given more to what culture deems as important and necessary. Paul, once again in speaking to Timothy says, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions."[140] People then as now experience a reduced passion for the Gospel and gravitate towards avenues in which they will hear and do what they want as opposed to what is needed for their souls.

Quantity as a Qualifier

As a spiritual leader, it can become normal at times to relate numbers with success, activity with effectiveness, and growth as a primary goal. This mindset is seen in the business world, and, whether consciously or not, it can find its way into the church world where the focus is removed from the one lost sheep to the great crowd of the ninety-nine.

In years gone by in the church world, one would find success and effectiveness in growing not only parishioners, but in numbers in Sunday Schools, and Sunday School classes. One of The Church Growth Movement's chief goals for the church was to grow through scientifically measurable means such as "sociological research to analyze data, discern receptivity, set goals, and design strategies."[141] According to the American Society for Church Growth, Church Growth is:

> A discipline which investigates the nature, expansion, planting, multiplication, function and health of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of Christ's commission to 'make disciples of all people.' Church Growth advocates strive to integrate the eternal theological principles of God's word concerning the expansion of the church with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as the initial frame of reference, the foundational work done by Donald McGavran.[142]

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[140] 2 Tim. 4:3 ESV
[141] Roof, *Contemporary American Religion,* 127.
[142] Gary McIntosh and Paul Engle, *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: 5 Views* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2004),40-41.

While the Church Growth movement gave significant insight into the growth patterns of the churches in North America, its misinterpretation and incorrect implementation did much to enable followers to lose sight of the goal of an effective ministry. As Elmer Towns suggests in the book, *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: 5 Views*, "In the first twenty years of the movement, research focused on principles; lately the focus has been on discovering new techniques, programs, or methods."[143] This is an alarming trend according to Towns: it became about numbers for numbers' sake; it became about starting ministries to add to an already full slate of programs; and it became about implementing methods over the message of the Gospel. Towns goes on to say,

> When viewing Church Growth, we must remember the following:
> 1. Methods and programs are not the same as biblical principles. While a technique or program may accomplish a biblical result because it contains some biblical principles, techniques and programs are not the same as absolute truth.
> 2. Methods and programs may be used effectively by certain people at certain times in certain circumstances but will not be equally effective overall.
> 3. Principles alone are biblical; they transcend programs and methods.
> 4. Methods and programs tend to change with time and culture.
> 5. Methods and programs may be effective in one contemporary setting but no in the next.
> 6. Some programs may be effective when used in specific time frame but become ineffective with changing circumstances.[144]

As this project contends, growth in number can be an indicator of effectiveness in ministry as a spiritual leader, but it only communicates a partial story of what is going on and how the ministry is functioning. It is important to keep statistics and have a keen understanding of what is going on in the ministry, but one needs to understand how to interpret these numbers without making them central to the mission of the church.

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[143] Ibid. 47.
[144]Ibid.

Less is More

Another number to consider when evaluating effectiveness, in addition to the number of people or the number in an offering, is the number of ministries in which a church has chosen to involve itself. In the world of art there is the concept of minimalism, defined as, "a style or technique (as in music, literature, or design) that is characterized by extreme spareness and simplicity."[145] "The term itself, now common currency, appeared in the mid-sixties but was largely unheard outside of art and avant-garde music circles until the eighties…"[146] Minimalism has found its way into discussions about church effectiveness as well. Thom Rainer in *Simple Church* says "Most church leaders operate under the assumption that more is more. It seems logical to assume that more programs equal more impact. One would reason that churches that offer the most programming would be the most effective."[147]

The idea of "simple church" and "less is more" in the church is a method in which a spiritual leader limits the activity of the church to those that are deemed mission critical. The idea is if it does not help to fulfill the stated mission it is not done. Carey Nieuwhof in a recent blog post titled "9 Things That Worked in the Church a Decade Ago That Don't Today," says

> Instead, be strategic and focused. Do whatever helps move people the most clearly and deeply into a growing relationship with Jesus, and do whatever advances your mission into the city. Make no mistake: What people become involved in becomes the mission. So choose carefully.[148]

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[145] "Minimalism." Merriam-Webster.com. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/minimalism (accessed November 14, 2018)

[146] Edward Strickland, *Minimalism: origins*, 2nd ed. (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2000),1

[147] Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples*(Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 2006), 213

[148] Carey Nieuwhof, "9 Thing That Worked in the Church a Decade Ago That Don't Today," *Carey Nieuwhof* (blog), January 2016, https://careynieuwhof.com/9-things-worked-church-decade-ago-no-longer-work-today/.

In the survey, one cannot help but see how churches that are plateaued and declining seem to have more active ministries and outreaches than the churches that are growing or on a positive upswing. The churches that have seen growth, whether significant or merely some growth, indicate that their model of church is a more simple and robust style where they have just a few ministries that enable them to fulfill their mission. In *Everybody Always*, Bob Goff says "It's easy to confuse busyness with progress and accomplishments with pleasing Jesus."[149] Breaking this concept down for many pastors would be a difficult feat as 25 percent of pastors in the survey have been at their current church for more than fifteen years[150] and while change and self-reflection is possible, it is harder to overcome a state of stasis the longer a ministry model has been in place.

The model in the early church was simple, and Jesus in His call to the disciples says, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them."[151] Ministry, while it does require some inevitable structure to function, can also become ineffective and bureaucratic with too many programs or ministries with too narrow of a focus, and a larger emphasis on systems over the mission of the church.

It's Not About the Leader

In earthly kingdoms it is incumbent upon an individual to be born into a specific family and to have a specific pedigree to be considered worthy to be the leader and heir to the throne. In contrast, God's kingdom it is the weak chosen, it is the outcast that He uses, and it is the poor

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[149] Bob Goff, *Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People,* Nashville, Tennessee: Nelson Books, Thomas Nelson, 2018, 210.
[150] Table B.4
[151] Luke 9:3-5 ESV

that He deems worthy. In his book *Kingdom First,* Jeff Christopherson says "God chooses the people the world dismisses as unnecessary. 'Small' is the consistent value of the Kingdom of God. God chooses the weakest, the youngest, the slowest, and the least in terms of pedigree, nationality, giftedness, education, or past reputation."[152] This is not to say that only the marginalized have prerequisite qualification to become a leader His kingdom, but in the kingdom that He is building, those at the helm have to realize that they are stewards not owners, shepherds not ranchers, and conduits not reservoirs.

Kingdom Architecture

Steward

In his letter to Titus, Paul gives some guidelines for a leader's stewardship and metrics for life and effectiveness. He writes, "For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach."[153] Being above reproach requires one to be held accountable for one's actions, leading the ministry in a way that is congruent with the heart of God, and realizing that it is God who ultimately receives the credit for anything that occurs under the watch of the leader. Since the dawn of humanity it has been the hallmark of men and women to desire praise and adoration, but in the kingdom of God one has to hand those longings over to God or else it can become quite easy to measure one's effectiveness or failure in the applause of man and base one's worth on mere numbers. Managing the affairs of another can be quite cumbersome and at times one may have the desire to manage for their own benefit and not for the benefit of the master.

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[152] Christopherson, Kingdom First, 12.
[153] Titus 1:7a ESV

Being a steward requires discipline in every area of life. In *the Chief Steward: A Manual on Pastoral Leadership*, J. E. Hermann, speaking to the pastor and leader as being a steward says,

> The man of God must be God's man, a man whose life has been taken over by God and sanctified for His use. The principles and practice of Christian stewardship must become the absorbing passion in his life. He should endeavor to become *the number one steward* in his congregation. His entire activities as pastor, his personal life, must be convincing proof that he practices what he preaches.[154]

Being the number one steward requires one to actively live this not only in church life but in home life before one's family. Many pastors struggle to keep balance in their lives in the pursuit of success in building God's kingdom, and when the balance is off, one of the two competing forces, ministry and family, will likely fail. Burnout and fatigue are often the end result, and this is obviously not what God intends for His kingdom builders in their pursuit of effectiveness for the Kingdom. In *The State of Pastors* (Barna Group), the authors write,

> Pastors who are very satisfied with their vocation and very satisfied with their current ministry, or who rate low on spiritual burnout risk, are most likely to report practicing their top essential discipline (usually prayer) every day or more often. By contrast, those at high spiritual burnout risk are less prone to practice every day, and more inclined to do so only a few times a month or less often.[155]

Another area of stewardship pastors often deal with is time utilization. Being busy does not always equate to effective ministry. In the survey conducted for this project, fifty-one of the seventy-two pastors self-report that their current church has four or more programs to connect with the community.[156] In a far more enlightening point: thirty-three of those seventy-two report having five or more programs to connect with the community.[157] One respondent in particular

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[154] J. E. Herrmann, *The Chief Steward: A Manual On Pastoral Leadership* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 15.

[155] Barna, The State of Pastors, 29.

[156] Table B.11

[157] Ibid.

highlights the matter that concerns this researcher most: respondent sixty-four, from this point referred to as sixty-four, states their current ministry hosts not only the multiple choice answers provided by the survey: "Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.), Regularly Scheduled worship services,"[158] but also states that, "We host YMCA camps, AA, SCAN, Counseling, Lego camps, Math camps."[159] With a program-heavy ministry this particular pastor answers the survey item "Describe a situation, within the context of ministry, in which you feel like a failure."[160] with the response: "Attendance dropped."[161] sixty-four falls classically into the positivity paradox described previously answering questions about measured success in the ministry, with an answer to the survey question: "If you ever feel your part is of GREAT value at any time, what makes you feel this way?"[162] The response was, "Success is 'Have I been obedient to what God has asked me to do?'"[163] This researcher must ask: If sixty-four along with many other respondents, to this survey know that God's expectation has less to do with numerically measured success; why do they rely so heavily upon those metrics as guideposts?

The next respondent to the survey, sixty-five, answers the "Describe a situation, within the context of ministry, in which you feel like a failure,"[164] with self-reflection that echoes back to his peer Sixty-four. Sixty-five says "Usually in hindsight, when I allowed myself to get in the way. Sometimes I let it be about me instead of about God. Things get confusing because they don't work out the way we think they should, but we can't see the big picture. We have to accept that God does things his way in his time." [165] The heartbreaking accuracy of this reflective

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[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Table A.6
[161] Ibid.
[162] Table A.4
[163] Ibid.
[164] Table A.6
[165] Table A.6

response leads this author to lean into self-reflection as a tool for positive growth among the pastorate.

Speaking to the effectiveness and overall satisfaction of a pastor in that role, one also has to look at how their time is utilized when correlated with giftings. In *The State of Pastors,* Barna says:

> ...Pastors who are discontent in their current position seem to spend much of their energy on logistics and operations (manager-administrator) and on helping people work out their relational issues (counselor-referee). This theory is bolstered when we consider the top frustrations of low-satisfaction leaders: 'Implementing change in the church' (27%) and 'church politics' 38% are among the top five tasks that cause these pastors frustration- yet these irritations are barely on the radar of very satisfied pastors.[166]

Stewarding a ministry to its full effectiveness is going to be tough as one has to, many times, put personal agendas and personal desires aside to ultimately achieve biblical success in building God's Kingdom. Numbers may tell part of the tale when evaluating success, especially when using a modern cultural playbook, but stewarding well requires one to play by a different playbook. Numbers and growth do not depend solely on the leader, therefore, focus on what you can control, not on what is out of your control. Samuel Chang, in his book, *Cracking Your Church's Culture Code,* in discussing the disappointments one may have in looking at the numbers says "Accepting responsibility for what we can control- and making a steadfast commitment not to complain about what's outside our control- are crucial ingredients in spiritual, emotional, and relational health."[167]

Shepherds

In the role of shepherd, a pastor becomes the ultimate steward as one can clearly see in Psalm 95:6-7a. The psalmist says "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before

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[166] Barna, The State of Pastors, 73.
[167] Samuel R. Chand, *Jossey-Bass Leadership Network Series*, vol. 54, *Cracking Your Church's Culture Code: Seven Keys to Unleashing Vision and Inspiration* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 91.

the LORD, our Maker! **7** For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."[168] While numerical growth appears to be the chief marker of successful church planting and management, the image of shepherd may well have been replaced with that of a rancher, and worse, a rancher who is managing an enterprise rather than to a flock. Taking that imagery, a little further, modern pressures demand pastors to become not only shepherds of sheep, but ranchers of many flocks of sheep and managers of shepherds. Dr. James Emery White, a proponent of the rancher model, in a 2013 blog post asks the question, "So what is keeping many of these churches from reaching their full potential?"[169] He goes on to answer his own question where he says, "In many cases, I think it's something as simple – but decisive – as the Shepherd/Rancher divide. This is based on the premise that there are two basic kinds of church leaders: Shepherds and Ranchers."[170]

The sheep and shepherd illustration are common throughout Scripture. In the Gospels, Jesus is viewed as the "Good Shepherd," and in the epistles, a pastor one is viewed as an under shepherd. As a pastor, or a cultural kingdom architect, one has to look at the framework laid out in Scripture for the role of a shepherd. In the Gospel of John, there is this job description for a shepherd, given by the Lord himself:

> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.[171]

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[168] Ps. 95:6-7a ESV

[169] James Emery White, "The Shepherd-Rancher Divide," Crosswalk.com, February 25, 2013, https://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/dr-james-emery-white/the-shepherd-rancher-divide.html. (accessed February 2, 2019)

[170] Ibid.

[171] John 10:11-15 ESV

This is a place where numbers, or perhaps, a single number, becomes vitally important to effectiveness evaluation. To a shepherd, one who aspires to be like the Good Shepherd, every single person or sheep is valuable. Jesus, in the parable of the Lost Sheep in Luke fifteen says, "I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."[172] What is the point here? Numbers do matter, but not necessarily in the way we might think. God's concern of numbers is never the bottom line in regard to souls.

Think what this upside-down approach to numbers might mean when evaluating the effectiveness of those driven by personality or celebrity. According to John MacArthur in *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*, "Shepherds are without status. In most cultures, shepherds occupy the lower rung of society's ladder. That is fitting, for our Lord said, 'Let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest and the leader as the servant.'"[173] This view of the pastorate is in direct contrast to the current trend of personality cults that exist as discussed earlier in regards to cultural success. MacArthur goes on to say that "personality cults exist, because pastors and Christian leaders strive for celebrity status. The true man of God however seeks the approval of his Lord rather than the adulation of the crowd. Humility is this the benchmark of any useful servant of God."[174]

Being a celebrity pastor, while it affords one many luxuries and conveniences, once again focuses more on what culture deems as a specific level of success or achievement. While some pastors who have attained "celebrity" status can appear to more of a rancher than a shepherd, it

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[172] Luke 15:7 ESV

[173] John MacArthur and The Master's Seminary faculty, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 2005,1.

[174] Ibid, 16.

does not change the metaphor that Jesus applies to himself or what his desire is for spiritual leaders.

Being a shepherding pastor requires the pastor to fulfill several specific functions related to how a shepherd tends to sheep. In John 10:14-15, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep."[175] Outside of being willing to protect the flock in which they have been given watch over, "a shepherd leads, feeds, nurtures, comforts, corrects, and protects; responsibilities that belong to every churchman."[176]

Conduits

A third and final view of spiritual leaders in biblical success found in kingdom architecture is found in the idea of being a conduit, not a reservoir. In modern business culture, power and authority is found in top positions or organizations: CEOs and presidents of businesses and corporations. Once again, there is a perception held by many in the religious world, that the church should run like a business, and thus would have people in powerful positions to exert authority and power in the ministry. Is this necessary in order to validate a ministry leader as successful?

By its very definition, a reservoir is "an artificial lake where water is collected and kept in quantity for use."[177] In comparison to that of a cultural kingdom architect, a reservoir in this context would be where power and authority would be stored up for use when necessary. While not inherently harmful, it can work contrary the goal of building God's kingdom and can, at times, be utilized to build one's own kingdom, perhaps without full realization on the leader's

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[175] John 10:14-15 ESV
[176] MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry,* xii.
[177] "Reservoir." Merriam-Webster.com..https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reservoir (accessed November 10, 2018).

part. For instance, among management styles of churches one could identify churches that are pastor led, some deacon led, others elder led, and even those purely congregationally led. Each of these specific styles will have specific advantages and disadvantages, but important to this discussion are the varied levels of control within the styles. In some cases, a board of elders or deacons may dictate the specific direction of the church but without an understanding of biblical stewardship. Or it may be that a pastor who has become an authoritarian with an agenda contrary to the needs of the people. And in some cases, the pastor has rightly authorized a contrary agenda when leading those whose inclination is to only fulfill their own wishes and desires regardless of biblical direction. These are just some of the dangers associated with pooling power in an unbiblical model.

Conduits on the other hand, are "a natural or artificial channel through which something (such as a fluid) is conveyed."[178] In the case of a cultural kingdom architect, being a conduit as opposed to a reservoir, power does not begin with the leader nor end with the leader. In this scenario authority is received and transmitted to the congregation or a board and it is given away to the appropriate leaders who have an understanding of their role according to Scripture and function as such. As in the stewardship image, authority or power does not stay with the one who received it; it is given away, and others are empowered to lead through their specific gifting in the way that God sees fit.

In biblical narratives, God's choices for leadership do not always makes sense at first glance. His call can come to the outwardly unqualified or flawed. It does follow then that the Kingdom is built by people of varied backgrounds, with various levels of wealth, strength, and

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[178] "Conduit." Merriam-Webster.com. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conduit (accessed November 10, 2018).

power. Being a cultural kingdom architect requires one to have the ability to discern what they are able to accomplish and what power or authority will need to be given away to empower others to fulfill the work of the ministry. Wilson in his book, *Pastoral* Ministry says "Instead of viewing themselves as orchestra directors who remain in control of every played note, they see themselves more like jazz bandleaders who allow their colleagues to control the direction of the piece within set boundaries. This is a flattened leadership structure where powerful servant leaders see themselves as 'first among equals.'"[179]

In Ephesians 4:11-12, Paul in his letter to the church at Ephesus writes, "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."[180] While many pastors would love to take advantage of the opportunities given in this passage to give some of their responsibilities to others for building up the body, it also requires a leader to give away some power and authority in the process.

The process of empowering can be a tough venture for some. The very definition of empower is "to give official authority or legal power to."[181] Ministry can be viewed by some as an entrepreneurial task, one that depends upon the one in charge, the pastor in this case, to be able to fulfill every task. A reservoir approach makes success dependent on one person, one personality, or one specific group for the mission to occur. Being a conduit instead, allowing things to flow through one's leadership, makes for a more fruitful ministry and more disciples being made, however it can be bruising to the ego. Power, for power's sake is the very antithesis

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[179] Jim L. Wilson, *Pastoral Ministry in the Real World: Loving, Teaching, and Leading God's People*, (Wooster, Ohio: Weaver Book Company, 2015) 195.

[180] Eph. 4:11-12 ESV

[181] "Empower." Merriam-Webster.com. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empower (accessed December 14, 2018).

of the Gospel message and is something that must be avoided if one seeks to be a successful cultural kingdom architect. Goggin and Strobel write, "Just as Adam and Eve grasped for power apart from God, so do we. Just as Cain wielded his power to destroy his perceived competition, so do we. A way of power exists that is good, true, and beautiful; but there is also a way of power that is evil, false, and ugly."[182]

With the acknowledgment that the church of the 21st century has been leaning in the direction of measuring itself against the financial successes of modern businesses, it's easy to think that this de-evolution signals a turning point in church history. The questions that arise are weighty and pressing. This author has attempted to enumerate the problems in this particular miscalculation of the global church in this project up to this point and is left with no firm answers of how the church pointed in the directions it did. One thing is certain, the church does not have an expiration date or predictable life cycle while its earthly manifestations and leaders come and go as one sees in Matthew 16:18.[183] With all that is set forth in the previous chapters this author finds himself asking the classic question of 2 Peter 3:11 and 12; "what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God…" What must the shepherds of the church do in order to become the cultural kingdom architects of the church in the coming century? In the next chapter this researcher, author, and pastor intends to demonstrably map out a solution.

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[182] Strobel, *The Way of the Dragon or the Way of the Lamb*, 7.
[183] Matthew 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Chapter 4

Why Does It Matter?

At the outset of the project this writer's goal was to develop a project that would help ministry leaders have a better understanding of how their part of the building of God's Kingdom is making an impact by redefining what success looks like in their particular culture and setting. In the time of research and the writing of the project there have been a large number of personal transitions that have occurred in this writer's ministry. These transitions have enabled this writer to employ the data found within this document to assess the view of his own success and effectiveness in a way that has been valuable. Given this shift in viewpoint, this writer believes there are some key points of reference that determine whether or not a minister can identify their own success in the role of 'Cultural Kingdom Architect.'

Research Expectations

Self-reflection

Leaders and pastors often times struggle with the life skill known as self-reflection. Self-reflection can be a daunting task for many, especially those in ministry, due to the fact that there is an inordinate amount of critique received on a daily basis from the people which one leads, which leads to an internal reaction that tends to control the receiver. In this writer's experience, one either becomes a perpetual cheerleader in response, to the point of an inability to receive the critique; or one falls to discouragement and that in turn leads to life choices that may or may not be beneficial to the church. In the preliminary stages of this writer's research implement he had to be cognizant of his own limitations in self-reflection. One realizes the mote in another's eye much more readily than in their own, as if Jesus himself were asking this author, "Why do you

see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" [184] And so as this research was gathered, so was the skill of self-reflection through several means by this author.

One of the realizations occurred when this author tried to think of a non-numeric way to analyze the progress in his own congregation. Without numbers, could one quantify progress? In pastoral ministry there is an element of "pastoral counting" that occurs on both the negative and positive ends of the spectrum. It is easy for one to reflect and highlight moments of great numeric growth as they indicate that some measure of success or effectiveness has occurred. In these moments it can move from the feeling of a "God Moment" to a proud "I Moment" where one takes the credit for the move of God or from the perceived success. Conversely, when one assesses the ministry and realizes things have not been on an upswing; the numbers are down from where they were a year ago, and it does not appear as though there has been any measured growth or effectiveness, one can blame God for His inattentiveness to the pastor or one can blame themselves for the lack of numbers. There is a saying this author has heard, "if you take the credit for when things go poorly, you will take the credit when they go well." Self-reflection requires the leader to have an acute understanding of their role as the shepherd and steward and not as the owner. Upon investigation, the Scriptures address this concept directly, in 2 Samuel 24, David conducts a census. In this situation he was counting what was the Lord's and not his own and God had a dim view of his actions. David was asked to be faithful and lead the people, no matter the number. By conducting an official census David took his role too far. God is concerned with His goals for His people, but it appears he is far more concerned with the

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[184] Matt. 7:3 ESV

motives at work within their hearts as they approach the tasks he gives them. This concept is repeated throughout Scripture, and if this project were a sermon, the material would be plentiful. As this project was an outward expression of self-reflection for inward developments within this author's mind, it has been difficult to avoid writing this project in the tone of a wailing prophet. The respondent's involved in the survey only cemented this researcher's belief that self-reflection is the missing component in fully addressing the problems that lie ahead for the global church.

In the anonymous survey conducted by this writer the expectation was to have respondents answer in a self-reflective fashion, where the answers were given truthfully and honestly without fear of judgment. Anonymity was a salient requirement that this author believed would ensure a more honest response. While there is no way for this writer to know whether or not the responses were given 100 percent truthfully, the area of growth and decline in the survey is not consistent with the data given from other major research firms in the area of church numbers and closures in America. In a January 2018 Article titled *Hope for Dying Churches,* by Thom Rainer, "Between 6,000 and 10,000 churches in the U.S. are dying each year. That means around 100-200 churches will close this week. The pace will accelerate unless our congregations make some dramatic changes."[185] Mark Clifton in his book *Reclaiming* Glory says,

> Every year in my denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), nine hundred churches disappear from our rolls. Most of them just close their doors. But the reality is that's just the tip of the iceberg. According to Lifeway Research Statistics, only about 15 percent of SBC churches are healthy, growing, and multiplying churches. The vast majority of our churches in North America are struggling. [186]

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[185] Thom Rainer, "Hope for Dying Churches," Facts and Trends, January 16,2018, https://factsandtrends.net/2018/01/16/hope-for-dying-churches/.

[186] Mark Clifton, *Reclaiming Glory: Revitalizing Dying Churches* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 5.

While there are many churches being planted each week to combat some of the closures, if this trend is to be curbed it is going to require church leadership to take notice of their surrounding and become self-reflective in a whole new way.

Biblical Understanding of the Mission of the Church

A second expectation of the research conducted by this writer was for the respondents of the survey to have an awareness and understanding of the mission of the church that Jesus is leading through his people. Ministry models and styles vary among denominations as well as church to church in each denomination. While models and styles are elements one should consider in how their specific church functions, it is only a piece of the puzzle that one utilizes to fulfill the mission, a model is not the mission. As one looks through the responses in the survey conducted, the conclusion of this writer is that most who responded have a good understanding of what the mission of the church is in building God's kingdom, it is answering the question of "how to fulfill the mission of the church" that is the area in which they struggle, and the area that appears to distract and mislead them the most.

The call to ministry is a high calling and one that is not to be taken lightly. The sheer fact that seventy-two individuals responded to a survey on this topic indicates that there is a desire to have a greater effectiveness in their role and what their unique function is in building God's kingdom right where they are. For one to adequately understand their role in building God's kingdom as a pastor or a leader, it is incumbent upon the leader to have a keen sense of what the role of the church is in the world. Without the understanding of how these two roles interact with one another in culture today it is near impossible to adequately measure any kind of success or effectiveness because one will always be aiming at a moving target or not knowing where they are coming from.

Value Based Primarily on Metrics

As with the growth or hopeful growth of any business or organization one has to know what to measure and how one is going to measure effectiveness. At the outset of this project, this writer knew that numbers and metrics would be a primary gauge to measure how effective or ineffective one was at building God's kingdom. This writer knew that the metrics many pastors would use to gauge their success would be the attendance numbers, offering amounts, number of active ministries in their church, number of baptisms, number of new members, and other hard and fast metrics that were easy to quantify.

It is no surprise to this writer that individuals who indicated growing numbers had a higher sense of worth, while others with stagnating or dwindling numbers had a lower sense of value. One can look at the data and clearly see that individuals who felt they were more effective had less numbers of active programs but were in growing ministries while some who had more active programs had a plateaued or declining number of involvements. These two opposing views do not indicate that one is more successful or that one is more ineffective than the other in the building of God's kingdom. This data presents the case that pastors who are finding unique and creative ways to be a kingdom architect in their community find effective ways to minister differently based upon their culture. Neither one is inherently right nor wrong, but merely different. Numbers and metrics are an important element to measure, but it is one of many measurements that one must be employing to have a full picture of the work that God is doing through the church in the building of His Kingdom.

Broad Response from Various Generations

As of 2017, the median age of the evangelical pastor, according to George Barna, is fifty-four years of age. This is ten years older than the median age of pastors twenty- seven years

ago.[187] The aging of the American evangelical pastor is an area of concern because as more

pastors retire and move away from ministry there are not the same number following them in

their place. The largest generation, as of July 2016, in America is the Boomer generation

followed closely by the Millennials.[188] This data is critical in understanding how leaders and

pastors from various generations measure effectiveness because there is a much different

expectation of how the church should function across the generational lines.

Receiving responses from individuals across various generation lines was invaluable as it

ensured that the responses could be compared and contrasted as to how they view and value

effectiveness in their role of building God's Kingdom. Individuals who have been in ministry for

three or more decades have seen culture change slowly, but more consistently, over their time in

ministry. Contrast this slow and measured change with individuals who have been in ministry for

one decade or less are seeing culture shift daily. This shift in culture, while it does not change the

gospel message and its impact, does impact how one delivers the message and how one is to find

value in their role as a cultural kingdom architect. One of the goals of this project was to develop

a more timeless perspective that could be superimposed into any ministry setting; a framework

that manages the numeric components of a successful ministry through a lens that doesn't rely on

metrics for its conclusions.

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[187] George Barna, "The Aging of America's Pastors," Barna, https://www.barna.com/research/aging-americas-pastors/ (accessed January 6,2019).
[188] Richard Fry, "Millennials projected to overtake Baby Boomers as America's largest generation," Pew Research Center, May 1, 2018, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/01/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/. (accessed November 14, 2018)

<div align="center">**Research Outcomes**</div>

Piety and Denial

Pastors and leaders who work in the ministry are doing so as the calling of God on their life. Ministry is unlike any other vocation as it involves more than just going to a job and completing tasks. The work of the ministry does not have a specific completion date; it is ongoing. Over time, the never-ending task has the propensity to take a toll on some. This can lead many to walk away from the task given to them and for others it manifests itself into a sense of piety and denial, used to deflect a personal sense of inferiority. Rather than just admitting that the building of God's kingdom has taken a toll on their life, many leaders gloss over any concept of self-reflection with trite, formulated piety.

Piety

With regard to the sense of piety that some exude, one individual in response to the question of feeling of little value to the building of God's kingdom simply responded, "I do not ever feel this way."[189] Respondent three, also went on to indicate that "all ministry is of great value" [190] in response to the question: "If you ever feel your part is of GREAT value at any time, what makes you feel this way?"[191] Perhaps respondent three does indeed feel this way authentically, as-they also said they'd recently retired, but more likely in this author's opinion respondent three has been trained to avoid self-reflection as a means to maintaining their ego and enthusiasm, as discussed in the Positivity Paradox section of this project. Boasting more than thirty years of experience in the pastorate, respondent three was an outlier in this study. Of the

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[189] Table A.3
[190] Table A.4
[191] Ibid.

twenty-two respondents claiming to have been in the ministry for more than thirty years, most did self-reflect at least some.

While the majority of the responses to the question of feeling valuable to the building of God's kingdom appear to be genuine and authentic, this response, while noble and a desire for all in ministry appears callous and not self-reflective to the general plight of all humanity in their feeling of worth in any venture. When asked "If you ever feel your part is of LITTLE value at any time, what makes you feel this way?"[192] Respondent sixty-five, who also has thirty years or more in ministry states "Age, sometimes I feel like a relic of a bygone era."[193] While this particular response is not pious, respondent sixty- five absolutely self-reflects to the explanation this author suspects to be true among most ministers when he says: "Usually in hindsight, when I allowed myself to get in the way. Sometimes I let it be about me instead of about God. Things get confusing because they don't work out the way we think they should, but we can't see the big picture. We have to accept that God does things his way in his time."[194] when asked to "Describe a situation, within the context of ministry, in which you feel like a failure."[195] There is a deep sense that most respondents surveyed are trying to overcome piety or at least acknowledge it can factor in to one's outlook, and yet the issue is pervasive. How does one ensure sincere self-reflection instead of piety? While this researcher attempted to establish indicators for that problem in the survey, it was only partially successful.

The intended desire for this aspect of the survey was to strike a self-reflective nature and allow people, in an anonymous survey, to express in written form feelings that they may have about their role in building God's Kingdom. There are moments in all leaders' lives where things

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[192] Table A.3
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Table A.6

fall into place and one feels validated by the outcomes they are seeing and on the other side feel diminished and demoralized by poor results. This writer has felt both ends of this spectrum but as with anything that has a pendulum swing, nobody should feel as though their value is dictated by a single moment, if that is the case, the apostle Peter was an utter failure.

Denial

Similar to the issue of piety found in the survey, denial is another aspect that one can contends with in regard to finding worth in their role in building God's kingdom. While the pursuit of building God's kingdom is a spiritual calling and one for everyone who calls themselves a Christian, pastors and Christian leaders' shoulder much more of the responsibility. This responsibility is in the constructing of effective environments and gatherings for individuals to grow into and become disciples in the pursuit of building God's Kingdom. Pastors and leaders, over time, can descend into the denial phase when they are unwilling to self-reflect on their role or how their role has had an impact, positive or negative, in the building of God's kingdom.

When the numbers are increasing and ministry appears to be effective in its mission, one can think highly of the processes and environments that they have created or implemented and feel as though they are producing for the kingdom. But when the numbers begin to get smaller and the systems and processes that were put into place begin to have less effectiveness as they once did; denial sets in and one can double down on what they view has been effective and refuse to change the process to become effective once again.

Throughout the process of deciphering the survey, one sees that many pastors surveyed have a sense of mission and appear to be self-reflective. But there are many who would do well

to reflect on their methods, how they measure their own effectiveness, and if they, or their methods, could be the hinderance to the move that God is wanting to make in their ministry.

The Next Big Thing

Throughout one's time in ministry, one will have the opportunity to attend conferences and fellowships where one will find new and creative ideas to implement in their ministry that have seen success and effectiveness in other ministries. These conferences are no doubt a welcome encouragement and a tool used to stimulate creativity in one's heart and mind, but many times one leaves a conference with a countless number of ideas that one wants to implement the second one returns to their ministry. One must proceed with caution in starting something new just because it has seen success elsewhere.

There is a phenomenon in the business and church world where one wants to get in on the ground level of the "next big thing." The "next big thing" can be something seen at a conference, read about in a magazine, or in the modern era, seen in social media. The caution one needs to heed in starting something new because it worked elsewhere is due to the fact most of the time significant research and money was used to develop that program specifically for a culture that may exist exclusively in its original context. So, for one to take hold of this idea and implement it into their church model, hoping that it will be that one thing that revives the church, would be a misstep. Many times, it ends up redirecting much needed time, energy, and resources chasing something down that was never intended to be part of the ministry in which it was re-implemented.

Throwing more ministries and activities onto the calendar is a temptation of many pastors to revive the church or to inject some needed energy into the church. Additionally, while the introduction or continuation of some ministries is vital to the health and well-being of a ministry,

one has to ensure that the ministry is having the intended impact upon the individuals it was designed for or else one should consider the removal of that event or activity. Thirty-three respondents out of seventy-two claim to have at least five programs to connect with the community in which they exist, this includes regularly scheduled worship gatherings.[196] As if five programs is an unwritten threshold of some sort, only five out of seventy-two respondents indicate upwards of six regular programs to connect with the community in which they exist for the church in which they minister.[197]

Measuring effectiveness in specific ministries is critical to the health of the entire church, but as this entire project has been suggesting, one has to know what to measure and how to measure. Just because a ministry may have only a few people attending, does not necessarily mean it is ineffective. For instance, in the church that this writer pastors, there is a small group of individuals who meet weekly to pray for the needs of the church. This group ranges from two to six people in attendance. In comparison with the size of the congregation, this group does not appear large. But, as anyone in ministry knows, the power of prayer is immeasurable and therefore a ministry like this is not only allowed to exist with its small numbers, it is encouraged to exist due to the nature of the ministry that it performs.

Every pastor and leader must identify ways they measure effectiveness of the ministries that comprise the outreach of their church, otherwise, a ministry can funnel a large amount of resources into a group that has ceased to perform its original purpose. A busy and full calendar of ministries and events, while it may promise to offer more fruitful and effective ministry, can

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[196] Table B.11
[197] Ibid.

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become a trap in which true kingdom impact is not occurring, but it can also hinder the growth, effectiveness, and success of ministries that could and would thrive if they were allowed.

Numeric Metrics as a Value-Based System

The nature of this project has been to bring light into how one measures effectiveness in ministry without the use of numbers as the primary metric. While that has been the desire of this writer, it has been a challenge to wrap one's mind around due to the fact that numbers, growth, and shrinking are an immediate way for one to draw conclusions about almost anything in life. One does not have to look at the survey conducted by this writer too long to notice that the number one way that anyone measures their congregation is numbers. It was found in the questions asked, it was found in how the questions were answered, and it was even found in how one compares their own ministry to the ministry down the street or across town. Numbers are important to how we measure anything, but numbers can also lie about the true nature of any given thing.

In the survey conducted, 75 percent of the respondents indicate that they evaluate their impact or success based upon their Sunday morning attendance.[198] While this number is quite high, it should be noted that this number is not the only way in which the respondents measured effectiveness. Many others, while indicating Sunday morning attendance as important, 59.7 percent also stated that they measure their effectiveness through the number of baptisms that they are seeing in their worship gathering.[199] In his book *The Emotionally Heathy Church,* Peter Scazzero says in a section called Questioning Church without Limits, "It takes great maturity for a church to identify opportunities and to choose not to take advantage of them. Each church, like

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[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

each small group, ministry, and individual, has God-given limits."[200] He goes on to say, "I always assumed continued numerical growth for every local church was God's will. It is not."[201]

While it is possible to measure effectiveness by the worship gathering number in a Sunday morning service, to fully understand how one should view this number it is incumbent upon the pastor to understand the worship attendance trends that are happening in the American church. According to a Gallup poll in 2018, "Church attendance has edged down in recent years. Gallup's latest yearly update from its daily tracking survey shows that in 2017, 38% of adults said they attended religious services weekly or almost every week. When Gallup began asking this question in 2008, that figure was 42%."[202] Overall attendance trends in the church are on the decline. Thom Rainer in a Blog Post titled "*Five Reasons Church Members Attend Church Less Frequently,*" says, "about 20 years ago, a church member was considered active in the church if he or she attended three times a week. Today, a church member is considered active in the church if he or she attends three times a month."[203] While Mr. Rainer's information discusses the attendance at multiple gatherings in one week, it is important that one see the drastic decline in attendance overall and how one should view their "active" church participants in how they measure the effectiveness of the church as a whole.

Sunday morning attendance and baptisms, while they were the two highest ways in which the respondents evaluate themselves, a number that was much lower is in the number of members in one's ministry. Only 27.8 percent of the respondents indicated that they evaluate

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[200] Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship That Actually Changes Lives*, updated and expanded ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010), 141.

[201] Ibid.

[202]Frank Newport, "Church Leaders and Declining Religious Service Attendance," Gallup, September 7, 2018, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/242015/church-leaders-declining-religious-service-attendance.aspx (accessed November 14, 2018).

[203] Thom Rainer, "Five Reasons Church Members Attend Church Less Frequently," May 22, 2017, https://thomrainer.com/2017/05/five-reasons-church-members-attend-church-less-frequently/?sfw=pass1551299349 (accessed November 14, 2018).

their effectiveness by the number of members that call their church their church home. This way of evaluation is in line with the trend of church membership that is occurring in the American church in the last several years. According to a Pew Research study published in 2015, 70 percent of the adults surveyed claimed to be a member of a church or synagogue in 1992 compared with 2014 where that number has fallen eleven points down to 59 percent.[204] What this data suggests is that measuring effectiveness by church membership is on the decline due to the fact that fewer people value church membership as they once did.

Generational Differences in Measuring Outcomes

Across various generations of the pastorate, outcomes and methods have very different valuations, often aligning with one another based on age and stage of life as well as length of time spent in the pastorate. This is especially apparent in a few specific compartments of Christendom. A generation ago the Church Growth movement was the strategy that many churches employed to accelerate growth in their congregation and church was viewed as successful if it was growing. By Dr. Richard J. Krejcir in His article titled, The Problem with Most Church Growth Paradigms, in his critique of the church Growth movement says, "Another big mistake made was the concentration and overzealous adoration of numbers over discipleship. A bigger church meant a better church."[205] While not all in this generation employed this method of growing their church, it was a major way in which many evaluated themselves and this model

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[204] "Church Membership: Long-Term Trends," Pew Research Center, October 29, 2015, http://www.pewforum.org/2015/11/03/u-s-public-becoming-less-religious/pf-2015-11-03_rls_ii-84/. (accessed November 14, 2018)

[205] Dr. Richard J. Krejcir, "The Problem with Most Church Growth Paradigms," ChurchLeadership.Org, accessed February 2, 2019, http://www.churchleadership.org/apps/articles/default.asp?articleid=41934&columnid= (accessed February 2, 2019).

of evaluation is apparent in many of the respondents who have been in ministry for more than twenty years.

Contrast the previous generation of church ministry leaders with the leaders of today and one finds that, while there are some that would still employ the church growth strategies, many have come to the conclusion that growing a church is found through discipleship, relationships, smaller gatherings, and non-traditional ways of gathering. As a Pastor, this writer, while he intends the church he leads to grow, focuses on relationships, intentional shepherding, and discipleship to grow the church in which he leads. This pastor has received both criticism and praise for his methods and strategies of growth. It is apparent that the individuals with a church growth mindset based around numerical metrics view this model as a limited view of what God can do. Conversely, others who understand the importance of relationships and shepherding people intentionally understand that this type of growth, while it may be slower, more time-consuming, and exhausting at times, leads to deeper development of the individual and leads to many more measurable outcomes than that of being just a number.

In addition to the generational differences in measuring outcomes in a specific church, Thom Rainer in a 2017 article titled *Six Reasons Pastoral Tenure May Be increasing* says, "Moving to larger churches is no longer considered a career path by many pastors. My generation as a whole viewed "bigger as better" as a career path. If you did well at one church, you would quickly get "promoted" to a larger church. Many Gen X and Millennial pastors do not have that perspective."[206] Rainer goes on to say, "More pastors understand the benefit of staying at one place longer. I have heard from many pastors who cite my research and others as a reason

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[206] Thom Rainer, "Six Reasons Pastoral Tenure May Be Increasing," March 15, 2017 https://thomrainer.com/2017/03/six-reasons-pastoral-tenure-may-be-increasing/. (accessed February 2, 2019)

not to move. They understand the early years at one church are often the most difficult, and that the tenure past five years is often the most fruitful. They are thus willing to endure short-term pain for long-term gain."[207] In the Southern Baptist Convention, the typical trajectory of a pastor was to start at a small church, move to a larger church, and end up at a county seat church where one could gain influence and stature among the SBC Brethren. This model, while still employed by many, is one that younger generations have come to abandon as they tend to dig deeper into their communities where they are instead of exiting at the first sign of trouble. In multiple studies put out by Lifeway Research, Guidestone, annual church profiles, and the Rainer Group, they indicate that over a twenty year period the tenure of pastors has extended by nearly 2 years from 3.6 years in 1996 to 6 years in 2016.[208] What this can indicate is that individuals who pastor churches from generation X and Millennials are more likely to stay in their current position for a longer period of time. This correlation can be the result of how they evaluate their effectiveness, relationships and depth as opposed to the metrics that can more easily be found and accessed.

Measured Results from the Survey

Longevity in Ministry

Longevity in ministry, whether in one position or many over the span of a career as a whole is another area of concern that plagues the modern American church. The number of pastors that stay in ministry for an entire career is getting smaller and smaller. There are various reasons pastors may choose to leave the ministry. These reasons are numerous and can vary from burnout, health concerns, financial, and family issues among others. In a recent dissertation by

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[207] Ibid.
[208] Ibid.

Jackson Andrew Hester titled Stress and Longevity in Pastoral Ministry: A Phenomenological

Study, he says,

> Lance Witt, president of Replenish Ministries, mentions that one out of every three pastors will burn out within the first five years of ministry. Lifeway Research, which Witt contributed to, also shows that dealing with stress is a prevalent concern for pastors, which affects their ability to fulfill their duties, maintain healthy relationships, and maintain their own personal health.[209]

In the survey conducted by this writer, the percentage of individuals that indicated that

they have been in ministry for more than twenty years was 47.3 percent or thirty-four of the

seventy-two individuals surveyed. Of the pastors from the survey that indicated that they have

been in vocational ministry for twenty years or more, it can be extrapolated that these pastors

have a keen sense of value in the building of God's kingdom. This is seen in how the twenty-two

respondents answered the question of "how often do you feel like you're part of building God's

kingdom is of GREAT value?"[210] The average response to the question came out to 7.9 out of

10.[211] This indicates that there is immense value in longevity and how one derives value from

their ministry and experiences over a long period of time. It is easy for one to cut and run when

the going gets tough in ministry, but the proof of the value in longevity in ministry is not only

found in the value one finds in themselves in the role of a pastor, but in the quality of the

disciples that one produces over an extended period of time. As the adage goes, "people do not

care how much you know, until they know how much you care." For one to have maximum

impact in the building of Gods kingdom, it is incumbent upon the leader to let time do its work

and allow God to restore one's soul.

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[209] Jackson Andrew Hester, "Stress and Longevity in Pastoral Ministry: A Phenomenological Study" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), https://repository.sbts.edu/bitstream/handle/10392/5469/Hester_sbts_0207D_10422.pdf.

[210] Table A.4

[211] Table B.10

Poor Design or Faulty Implementation

At the outset of this project, conducting a survey and finding experts in the field of Christian ministry were the two major ways one would find the data one was looking for in the pursuit of understanding how leaders evaluate their effectiveness in building God's kingdom. In this pursuit it became abundantly clear that, while there is a significant amount of resources and data for people to implement growth strategies, the majority of the strategies and systems one is given as an option to employ focus solely on growth in numbers. Whether it is in number of ten ways to increase Sunday morning attendance, seven ways to collect more in the offering, or fifteen ways to add more community groups to your ministry.

While none of these strategies or systems are inherently wrong as the goal *is* to build God's kingdom, this writer suggests that it is short-sighted to focus solely on numbers for number sake. As this project has indicated, numbers are an effective way to measure outcomes, but they tell only part of the story. The research that has been conducted has been thorough in understanding what the experts in the field are saying about Christian ministry and the health of the church as a whole. Additionally, this writer has done extensive investigation into how the church is doing from media, news outlets, and social media. In recent weeks and months there have been many prominent pastors and leaders who have been released from their respective ministries for various reasons and this has shed a light into value systems of the churches they lead and the churches themselves.

Recent events that have occurred within the church world, coupled with what the experts in the field are not saying, this writer has come to the conclusion that what the experts say about numbers and strategies could be having a correlative effect on the poor health of either the church and/or its leaders. Earlier in this project the concept of "cult of personality" was discussed

and what one is seeing today is the fall of the individuals who were the recipient of the support and praise in those environments. At some point a leader can allow the laser-beam focus on numbers to become the reason they exist and when this occurs, it becomes less about being a shepherd, caring for the health and well-being of the one they have been given charge and more about a CEO managing assets and numbers.

Not as Diverse as Desired

When the survey was created, the goal this writer had for the outcomes and respondents was to have more than 200 responses from a variety of pastors across generational, denominational, and philosophical lines. While the survey was anonymous and there is no real way to tell whether or not these goals were satisfied with regard to the various generations, denominations, or philosophy, the pool of individuals that responded was much smaller than was the hope. This lack of information could have been curbed had the survey been conducted with a monetary or reward attached. Additionally, though it would have required more time, energy and effort, a more thorough way to collect the responses in a more measurable way would have also been to have a survey that was not anonymous but one that collected data from its respondents with more biographical data.

Misunderstanding of Survey

The survey as a whole would be viewed by this writer as a success overall but if there was a chance to go back and change some of the questions, this writer would definitely take that option. There were some in the pool of individuals who misunderstood the questions, and this can be seen in how they respond to questions that required an answer that was measured on a scale from one to ten. This misinformation or lack of understanding is easily ascertainable by the reading of the responses that were either before or after the given answer.

Conclusion

From the outset of this project, the information has been plentiful. However, the scholarly research regarding the specific topic covered in this project is minimal. It seems like every blogger, pastor, and para church director has something to say about becoming a Cultural Kingdom Architect, but few, if any have approached the subject with the goal of avoiding numerical measurements of success. Even fewer address the reasons so many formulas, how-tos, and arguments revolve around this topic: the desperation a typical pastor feels as they approach the work ahead of them in their specific ministry. The pastor's surveyed in this project, and apparently in the broader culture struggle to identify success or failure in 'Building God's Kingdom.' The American church specifically disagrees amongst itself as to what success looks like in this endeavor and therefore people in ministry can feel discouraged or un-affirmed when their measure of success does not hold up to others' views of perceived success.

The spectrum of church size fails to measure success: as this researcher found much evidence to support the idea that the average small church lives in discouragement, from the pastoral point of view. One would think that a large ministry would avoid that discouragement, but their burden of being overwhelmed often has the same effect on the clergy, apparently. With these two truths existing in tension with one another, this writer looked for other forms of classification to explain what might be going on with the clergy, or cultural kingdom architects. Why are both ends of the church size spectrum struggling to measure and acknowledge success? Conversely, can these kingdom architects acknowledge shortcomings or failures? The answers that emerged from this researcher's survey and the deep dive into scholarly articles on the topic at hand yielded a few notions worth exploring.

This researcher chose to explore the concepts that appeared to haunt the subjects in the survey. Most of the concepts that were difficult for the respondents to reflect on in a meaningful way revolved around the concepts of success as the business world views it. The formats of churches are a logical reference point to analyze, in this regard, given the business ideal that fresh, new, and original thinking is praised in every facet of a capitalist society. In the summary of the research, this writer found that the only format items that impacted the success of a ministry were the ones specifically set forth as prescriptive. A church should teach, fellowship, break bread together, and pray. While numbers are referenced in Scripture in regard to gatherings, they are not prescriptive. Often, the pastors surveyed had many programs outside of these parameters. This author found the varying formats of church to have little or no impact on the measurements of success as cultural kingdom architects among those surveyed.

A point of interest that did have bearing on the perceptions of success among those surveyed was longevity in the ministry, and longevity in their current position. The concept introduced by Keith Meyer, of "pastoral careerism,"[212] poignantly leads into the problem relating to one's church in the same way a CEO would relate to their business. Upon review of what the cultural success of the church would look like in contrast to what a kingdom success of the church would look like, it is entirely apparent that the global church needs to return to a kingdom-centric view of success in order to fully realize the kingdom architecture that must be constructed. This project introduced the concept of the "Positivity Paradox," that allows cultural kingdom architects to focus on the numeric successes in order to forget that the kingdom is not

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[212] Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation.* 82

quantifiable. This paradox appears to be pervasive among those surveyed formally for this project, given the language used to reflect on their perceived successes.

The Positivity Paradox appears to open a leader up to several areas of concern, not the least being the creation of a cult of personality. This author would venture to guess that few leaders set out to build churches that are not firmly relying on Christ for their faith, but when a leader chooses to underutilize the accountability and self-reflection tools in their proverbial toolkit in favor of the Positivity Paradox; Christ is easily replaced as the focus of a church's devotion. Biblical success in the ministry does not require one to have large church body, a perfect church, a perfect pastorate, or a great location. It only requires the foundation of truth. Among the respondents who were capable of self-reflection it is apparent that there needs to be new benchmarks derived from our oldest resources for measuring success in ministry.

No project on metrics and the church could adequately be completed without addressing the consequences of the Church Growth Movement. The bulk of attitudes toward success dealt with in the survey for this project have their roots in the Church Growth Movement. While it is tempting to ignore numeric metrics entirely, in reaction to such a distortion of what Christ's original intent for cultural kingdom architecture is, it would also be lacking and not full-bodied. Finding a better way to perceive the goal set forth in Scripture, of going into all the world to share the good news, is the undeniable conclusion of this author. The realization of the fullness of what Kingdom Architecture is, requires some definitions for those who intend to implement this work, and appreciate their own part in it.

Cultural Kingdom Architects are defined in this project by the roles they emulate from the biblical perspective: Stewards, Shepherds, and Conduits. They find themselves as the managers of resources granted to their care, and it is in this view of themselves that the

framework for determining success in ministry emerges. For the framework, this author would like to propose as a tool to reframe how one views themselves within the concept of Cultural Kingdom Architecture. In other words: how is the minister doing with the work of ushering God's Kingdom into existence more fully? The Cultural Kingdom Architect must be willing to challenge the standard operating procedure: "The cost of following Christ is great. We cannot become complacent with the status quo just to avoid conflict. We must lead."[213]

Known from this point forward as the "re-framework" it is a tool that utilizes the minister's ability to self-reflect and encourages a deeper understanding of the truth as one engages the re-framework again and again. One's biblical understanding of the mission of the church, along with the ability to self-reflect will help ministry leaders have a better understanding of how their part of the building of God's Kingdom is making an impact by redefining what success looks like in their particular culture and setting.

The Re-framework

The re-framework is a series of guided prayers, individual to the person using them. They can be said all at once, or over a period of time, in whatever fashion the respondent wishes. While this prayer is obviously not canon, parts of this patterning are drawn from prayers in the Bible. They are also intended to encompass the spirit set forth by Bill Donahue in his book *The Irresistible Community*, "We boldly face reality when we are clear about who we are in Christ - loved, chosen, redeemed, blessed, empowered, gifted, free, and fully alive. At the same time, we

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[213] Thom S. Rainer, *Breakout Churches: Discover How to Make the Leap* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), 87.

must acknowledge that we are also needy, broken, scarred, vulnerable, and weak."[214] The prayers are as follows:

- **Who Am I?** *A centering prayer that intimates who the respondent views themselves as in relation to Christ. One could review the way David addresses God in many passages, but specifically in the opening of Psalm 86: "Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am godly; save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God. Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul."[215] Of course, one should use language that feels comfortable and conversational for their context.*

- **Why Am I Here?** *A Restorative prayer that walks the respondent back through their call to belief in Christ, their call to ministry, and their call to the specific body of believers they currently serve.*

- **What Is Burdening Me Right Now?** *A descriptive prayer that imparts exactly what the scenario is in front of the cultural Kingdom Architect. This prayer should include the respondent's feelings, hurts, concerns, and honest reflection on the burden. Much like Gideon explains what is troubling him in Judges 6:13,*

  "And Gideon said to him, "Please, my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian."[216]

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[214] Bill Donahue, *The Irresistible Community: An Invitation to Life Together* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2015), 46.

[215] Ps. 86:1-4 ESV

[216] Judg. 6:13 ESV

One might also find a model in the Book of Jonah, chapter two, that shares a frank assessment of being in the middle of undeniable struggle.

- **What Is God Revealing to Me Through This?** *Ask God this question, with earnestness, realizing the answer might be difficult to receive and that personal growth might be required in the answer. Though the scenario is probably quite different, David's prayer of repentance in Psalm 51 could serve as a guidepost for asking this difficult question from God: "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment."[217]*

- **Pause, To Let God Respond.** *This pause may be for 10 Minutes, it might be for 10 days. It should be an intentional time of waiting for God's answer that the respondent should fully & specifically acknowledge to God.*

- **After the Amen:** *A Cultural Kingdom Architect should have a team of accountability that is comprised of three people. At least one of these people should not attend the same church, and at least one of them should be a longstanding relationship of five years or more, the members should follow Jesus, be trustworthy, and be easy to communicate with on a regular basis. Accountability teams do not include a spouse or people on the payroll one finds themselves stewarding. After you do the re-framework, it is wise to seek counsel from the team of accountability. While there was a time this would have been*

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[217] Ps. 51:3-4 ESV

rare, "More Pastors now seek some regular accountability in their lives than in

the past. They meet regularly to confess sin, talk about difficulties, seek counsel,

and mutually encourage one another."[218]

- **After the Pause:** *When the intentional pause is over, and one has shared the*

  burden with their team of accountability; thank God for something related to what

  is being experienced in the moment.

- **Acknowledge the Answers:** *Obviously God is not a vending machine. One can't*

  put in a prayer and get an outcome. However, a prayer centering the respondent

  in the moment where they feel most challenged is a way to engage what they

  might otherwise forget: God is specifically invested in their success at building

  His kingdom. If the answer is hard, and requires self-reflection, the Cultural

  Kingdom Architect has to have a way to acknowledge that and tap into the

  personal development that occurs when one is honest before God, and

  accountable, and willing to self-reflect through the lens of Scripture's description

  of their role and calling.

By walking through this process of re-framing the scenarios that surround them, a pastor

can learn to acknowledge that the value of their individual ministry that seems discouraging in

the numerical metrics is actually an opportunity to grow past that discouragement. Rather than

hopping to the next job or people group, the minister who re-frames will be able to dig deeper

into situations that are difficult and realize that numerical measurements are not part of kingdom

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[218] David E. Fitch, *The Great Giveaway: Reclaiming the Mission of the Church from Big Business, Parachurch Organizations, Psychotherapy, Consumer Capitalism, and Other Modern Maladies* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2005), 91.

architecture. By re-framing, this author hopes to shed more light on the various measures of success in building God's Kingdom and enable church leaders to feel affirmed by the Holy Spirit in their individual approach.

Once the minister has done the work of internally re-framing what is happening, it is incumbent on them to act on what they learn through the re-framing process, in their ministry setting. Here are the suggested steps for implementing what one learns as they re-frame:

- **Communicate openly:** *Perhaps have a meeting with one's staff, deacon board, and/or volunteers about the discernment one is seeking in the given situation. If the matter is of a more private nature that does not need committee oversight, one's accountability team should be communicated with, as well as perhaps one's spouse.*

- **Acknowledge Jesus Is in The Room:** *In order to avoid the cult of personality trappings and as a reminder that the situation is not something controllable, one must acknowledge the catalyst for the re-framing process: Jesus is concerned with our situation and wants the His Kingdom to grow. The word grow is a double entendre and must be viewed through the lens of personal growth through Christ, not in a numerical sense.*

- **Align the Goals with Scripture:** Remind oneself of what the essence of a church is within the cultural kingdom architecture. The bible never mentions Upward Basketball, AWANAS, or any specific outreach programming, release the need to be what the community expects and choose to reflect the Acts model first, other scheduled items are optional, but the Apostles' Teaching, Fellowship, Prayer and Breaking Bread are not:

  > Acts 2:42-47 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food

with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.[219]

- **Avoid the Positivity Paradox:** *As much as it depends on the minister, they should be grounded in reality and truth. The temptation to justify actions or paint the situation in self-serving language that always appears like good news is a real threat to authenticity and the re-framing efforts. Follow the advice of Proverbs 27:2, "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips."[220]*

- **Examine the Metrics**: *Numerical measurements are valuable clues at times, but they are not the full picture of any given situation. This author would caution the respondent to examine the metrics in the presence of God. Pray through the gathered attendance numbers or other data, rather than internalizing it as a badge of honor or shame. This author suspects that many of the kingdom parables found in the New Testament speak to the principle of metrics being less than indicative of outcomes.*

The re-framework is indeed a work in progress, and this author intends to utilize it over the course of his ministry with the hope that it provides data for future cultural kingdom architects so that they might avoid the pitfalls of viewing the work of God's Kingdom as something that can be quantified solely with numerical metrics. Rather than basing one's concept of success upon the attendance in any given situation, it is the hope of this author that pastors would begin installing new guideposts discussed in the re-framework so that they can rise out of discouragement or overwhelmed and into the security of becoming Cultural Kingdom Architects.

Limitations of this Project and Desired Advancement of the Research

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[219] Acts 2:42-47 ESV
[220] Prov. 27:2 ESV

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When this author began his research, there was little data that spoke to the specific suspicions he had. After spending years watching peers, colleagues, and mentors live in valleys of discouragement about their own ministry experiences, this project led to some conceptual awareness as to the reason so many struggles to remain encouraged and secure in their role as pastor. As a first step in the right direction this survey worked. Given the information gained, and the development of the re-framework, this researcher feels that despite some of the limitations; this field is just beginning to take shape. If the research were to begin again, this researcher would ask a few additional questions in the survey to limit the subjective nature of the responses. For example, "What do you consider to be a large church in attendance?" or "How many programs are at work within your current congregation." and a more abstract question, "In your own words, articulate the purpose of the church on earth." While none of these would have earth shattering consequences, they would be interesting to note in addition to the research gathered.

Where Does One Go from Here?

As with many things a person dedicates large portions of one's life to, this research project has transformed the author and his experience. This research began at the same time as this writer's first lead pastorate position. Perhaps the most consequential pieces of research that were collected for this author was the portions on longevity in ministry. It is understood that the first years at a given church are some of the most predictably difficult, and this author took great solace in the fact that many other people shared in that experience. Also, encouragement was derived from observations of those who remained in their ministry context despite the difficulty. It is impossible to replace longevity.

The other most consequential finding for this author is the discovery of formulaic

answers from the respondents who struggled to self-reflect. The difficulty of self-reflection has

impacted the ministries this researcher has served in for the entirety of his career. The concept of

being truthful in self-reflection, is lost on many. This project confirmed that for the author. In

response, this author has taken the steps of the re-framing and implemented most of it into his

regular habits. There are many loose ends involved in this research project, but one that is

entirely firm is that Cultural Kingdom Architects will shape the way God's kingdom is ushered

in on earth. It is this author's sincere hope that they can fully realize that fact, and remain

focused on the goals of God, not what the current culture recognizes as success. While remaining

relevant to a culture is not a negative thing, it often distracts the leaders of the church from its

Scripture implied goal of furthering the work of Christ's Kingdom. A cultural Kingdom

Architect is to be concerned solely with God's version of success, as this author hopes to be.

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Appendix A

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5">Table A.1</td></tr>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Number</th>
<th>Do you consent to participate in this study?</th>
<th>Are you currently a pastor in a church?</th>
<th>How long have you been in vocational ministry?</th>
<th>How long have you been serving as the pastor of your current congregation?</th>
</tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>5-10 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>20-25 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>More than 30 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>20-25 years</td><td>20-25 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>5-10 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>15-20 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>More than 30 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>10-15 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>9</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>2- 5 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>25-30 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>11</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>15-20 years</td><td>10-15 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>12</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>5-10 years</td><td>5-10 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>13</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>10-15 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>14</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>2- 5 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>15</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>1 Year or less</td></tr>
<tr><td>16</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>10-15 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>17</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>15-20 years</td><td>5-10 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>18</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>Less than 1 year</td><td>1 Year or less</td></tr>
<tr><td>19</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>5-10 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>20</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>10-15 years</td><td>1 Year or less</td></tr>
<tr><td>21</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>More than 30 years</td><td>10-15 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>22</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>5-10 years</td><td>2- 5 years</td></tr>
<tr><td>23</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>25-30 years</td><td>20-25 years</td></tr>
</table>

24	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	1 Year or less
25	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	5-10 years
26	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
27	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	15-20 years
28	Yes	Yes	2- 5 years	2- 5 years
29	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	2- 5 years
30	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	2- 5 years
31	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	2- 5 years
32	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	5-10 years
33	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	1 Year or less
34	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	2- 5 years
35	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	10-15 years
36	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	5-10 years
37	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	2- 5 years
38	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	10-15 years
39	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	2- 5 years
40	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	5-10 years
41	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	20-25 years
42	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	5-10 years
43	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	5-10 years
44	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	20-25 years
45	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	5-10 years
46	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	2- 5 years
47	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	20-25 years
48	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	5-10 years
49	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
50	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	1 Year or less
51	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	2- 5 years
52	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	2- 5 years
53	Yes	No	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
54	Yes	No	15-20 years	1 Year or less

55	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	15-20 years
56	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	1 Year or less
57	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	5-10 years
58	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	2- 5 years
59	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
60	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
61	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	20-25 years
62	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	2- 5 years
63	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	1 Year or less
64	Yes	Yes	25-30 years	10-15 years
65	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	More than 30 years
66	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	15-20 years
67	Yes	Yes	15-20 years	10-15 years
68	Yes	Yes	More than 30 years	15-20 years
69	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	1 Year or less
70	Yes	Yes	10-15 years	1 Year or less
71	Yes	Yes	20-25 years	2- 5 years
72	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	5-10 years

			Table A.2		
Respondent Number	Please select the appropriate option regarding the attendance level of your church in the past twelve months:	If you have seen growth, by how much?	To What Do You Attribute Your Growth, Plateau or Decline?
1	Growing	Growing A lot	New campus, booming area
2	Growing	Growing a Little	Clarifying vision, executing strategy, and building trusting relationships
3	Growing	Growing a Little	contemporary ministry
4	Plateauing	Not Applicable	Plateaued community
5	Growing	Growing a Little	Relocation
6	Growing	Growing a Little	We have recently gone through a system of evaluating our values and what we want to see done within our church as well focusing on outreach more.
7	Growing	Growing a Little	Giving families answers about passing their faith to their children.
8	Declining	Stayed the Same	Shifting demographics and reflection of overall decline in Christianity in USA.
9	Growing	Growing a Little	Building connections with visitors/new people
10	Declining	Not Applicable	Predatory practices of other churches
11	Growing	Growing a Little	New pastor instilling a family atmosphere
12	Growing	Growing A lot	Empowering leaders
13	Declining	Not Applicable	We always do what we have always done
14	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Leadership
15	Growing	Growing a Little	Personal invitation.

16	Growing	Growing a Little	The Holy Spirit, obviously. But also a foundational shift in the church in terms of what it means to be a church member and to follow Christ. A top down transformation in the hearts of our people as they actualize the meaning of community. As this becomes more realized people have begun to invite others, though there is still work to be done.
17	Growing	Growing a Little	consistent effort over time
18	Growing	Growing a Little	Homeless shelter, Women's Ministry
19	Growing	Growing a Little	The work will of the Holy Spirit in preaching the truth in a heavily Catholic/Lutheran/Methodist populated area AND the personal invitation approach by the membership
20	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Pastoral Transition
21	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	We live in a military community. Families come and go quite frequently.
22	Growing	Growing a Little	Excitement of regular attenders. Events and outreach methods
23	Growing	Growing a Little	new themes around living the faith every day, getting people connected to faith in daily life, answers their question, "What difference can this make in my life?"
24	Growing	Growing A lot	Change of leadership
25	Growing	Growing a Little	Personal invites
26	Growing	Growing a Little	We are in a rural type area. Growth here is slow and steady. Our mission is to share Christ and make disciples.
27	Growing	Growing a Little	Ministry in the community
28	Growing	Growing A lot	Reaching the lost and spiritually restless and the generosity of the church reaching out to the community to serve beyond our church walls.
29	Declining	Not Applicable	Old age
30	Growing	Growing A lot	Discipleship / community focused
31	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Passion and Vision

32	Declining	Not Applicable	Pastoral Transition
33	Plateauing	Not Applicable	Trying my best to instill follow up programs in the church as a whole. I currently do that in CM and it's not being done successfully in the church as a whole.
34	Growing	Growing a Little	Vision and philosophy
35	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	It's just happening.
36	Declining	Not Applicable	Decline of cultural Christianity, lack of evangelistic fervor.
37	Growing	Growing a Little	Renewed momentum and being intentional in the teaching
38	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	Because of being older congregation, younger people feel out of place.
39	Growing	Growing a Little	new move of the Lord, led by openness of lead pastor to equip all members to operate in their areas of Christ's call.
40	Plateauing	Not Applicable	Lack of focus on discipleship
41	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	People have more focus on sports than church.
42	Growing	Growing a Little	we have been very active with our community outreach effort
43	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Community programs see some growth and some personal evangelism among the people as well. Not tremendous growth, but a little.
44	Growing	Growing a Little	Free meal on Wednesday evening has drawn in a great number of children and teens that stay for our midweek ministries.
45	Plateauing	Not Applicable	God is trying to teach/break me of something.
46	Declining	Not Applicable	Lack of quality
47	Growing	Growing A lot	Intentionality.
48	Growing	Growing a Little	Leading people to audit

49	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	Humanly speaking, a generational gap (missing generational group) as a combined result of a split twenty years ago and a rapidly changing demographic in our area of ministry. Those from 45-60 are missing from our church, so while we are growing among the younger adults our more senior people are dying off at about the same rate as the younger adults are coming in, resulting in an attendance plateau.
50	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	Too much inward focus instead of outward focus
51	Growing	Growing A lot	We're a church plant in a large community, recently relocated to a larger venue, and we maintain a heavy focus on outreach.
52	Growing	Growing a Little	Getting a full-time pastor to lead the flock.
53	Growing	Growing a Little	New programs
54	Growing	Growing a Little	salvation decisions from small group connections with friends / family
55	Growing	Growing a Little	We are a growing community and at the same time we have had several families within our church get job transfers to other areas of the country
56	Growing	Growing A lot	A general refocusing by new pastor driven by a strategic planning (mission, vision, values) that was previously missing.
57	Growing	Growing a Little	continuing doing what meets the needs of the people and staying true to God's word as well as showing God's love.
58	Growing	Growing a Little	leading the church back to community involvement
59	Plateauing	Not Applicable	I'm slowing down age related
60	Growing	Growing a Little	Young staff, working with new families. Emphasis on discipleship
61	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	Demographics -
62	Growing	Growing A lot	Just happening by God's grace.

63	Growing	Growing a Little	Bump in attendance due to new pastor excitement for the first 5 months. Because we are doing an internal revitalization the church realizes that we are desperate.
64	Plateauing	Stayed the Same	Last year was a huge turn over year for us. We have a high military group, and many were given orders, some retired, other bought houses out of town etc...
65	Growing	Growing a Little	We have a new senior pastor, a young man that is breathing new life into our vision as a church.
66	Growing	Growing a Little	Change in leadership....new vision moving forward
67	Growing	Growing a Little	We had been growing a lot then had 2 moral failures of pastors and one moral failure of a leader. These failures killed our growth for a season. Many job responsibilities were shifted around, and many things slipped through the cracks. In the past 12 months we have restaffed, created a new healthier culture, and address some gaps in our ministry. I believe that has been a contributing factor to our growth.
68	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Evangelism emphasis
69	Growing	Growing A lot	Simple church philosophy. Focus on main mission of helping people find and follow Jesus. 3 ways: Reach, Relate, Reproduce
70	Growing	Growing a Little	New pastor, new staff, new systems of assimilation, new vision
71	Plateauing	Growing a Little	Recovery from 10 years of decline, growth from new pastor/vision
72	Declining	Not Applicable	Deaths among membership; other family issues preventing attendance

Table A.3			
Respondent Number	**How would you describe your ministry's style?**	**On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's kingdom is of LITTLE value?**	**If you ever feel your part is of LITTLE value at any time, what makes you feel this way?**
1	Expositional, Contemporary, Missional hybrid	7	The culture has shifted in the last decade or two and an increased value on the youth, hipness and style of the younger pastor has made those who are middle-aged and older less relevant as they are considered "old school" and out of touch, even if they do not have a traditional mentality. Youth and coolness are worshiped.
2	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	2	I usually feel alright until someone compares me with a "rock star" pastor
3	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	7	I don't feel that way ever
4	Mostly traditional with some contemporary elements	5	Lack of visible results
5	Traditional	1	Lack of congregational response and no noticeable spiritual growth in believers.
6	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	Not seeing the results that I had hoped for and allowing for the naysayers and complainers to live in my head.
7	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	0	NA

8	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	The constant focus on large churches makes mine look less important.
9	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	Unresponsiveness of others
10	Traditional	2	When people leave to go to the mega church across town
11	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	Lack of time to contribute
12	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	5	Lack of encouragement
13	Traditional	0	not applicable
14	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	3	Leadership
15	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	0	I do not feel little value at any time. FYI I am not a pastor, and I am required, to answer how long I have been a pastor, so I am going to put less than a year.
16	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	7	I think the day-to-day work sometimes gets overvalued and draws people away from what makes us feel more apart of God's Kingdom. It's easy to lose sight when you get wrapped up in sermon prep, hospital visits, even payroll, to think about the person you see at a restaurant or at football game and their need for Jesus.
17	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	7	I minister in a small declining town and county where change is very slow, and the community is slow moving
18	Contemporary (Attractional with	2	Sometimes I feel like the people aren't inspired all the time

	Traditional elements)		
19	Untraditionally traditional; and above-mentioned Hybrid	0	I can't remember a time when I felt this way. I might chalk it up to a lack of sufficiency to lead but I try hard to see His work even when I feel as if I've failed in an area
20	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	When it seems like I have failed
21	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	9	I do not think in those terms. All Kingdom work has value.
22	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	It seems that the more time you spend with individuals who are not making forward progress in your life, one tends to become frustrated or seemingly missing the mark
23	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	2	Moments when I think I have been preaching and teaching the kingdom for years and I hear from people that the openness and graciousness of the kingdom is not lived in their lives.
24	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	I don't feel this way.
25	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	0	I never do
26	Traditional	1	This is probably due to the work of the flesh in us. Sometimes we cannot see our way clear and it creates doubt.
27	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	Lack of seen growth in church members
28	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	Satan trying to bring me down.

29	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	The daily routine/ covering multiple positions like janitor, handyman, etc...
30	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	8	Na
31	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	10	n/a
32	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	N/A
33	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	0	n/a
34	Attractional	9	Fatigue
35	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	Not seeing people mature in The Lord.
36	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	9	People hear, but do not respond or change.
37	Traditional	3	When I'm spending more time on administration than teaching
38	Traditional	8	Lack of response and growth
39	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	Only when anticipated responses to God's Word are overwhelmingly less than expected.
40	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	6	Problem solving in areas that don't directly equate to gospel or church growth.

41	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	Lack of commitment by congregation.
42	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	Not applicable
43	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	The enemy.
44	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	3	Inability at times to see appreciable impact or change in individuals to which I am ministering.
45	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	7	Lack of steady growth while others around us are growing.
46	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	Lack of contact with people
47	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	0	I never feel this way....no ever.
48	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	0	N/A
49	Somewhat based on the regulative principle.	2	When I lapse into a consideration of attendance figures.
50	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	the feeling that eyes keep looking inward despite trying to point them outward.
51	Attractional	2	It's difficult to see the big picture of our part in "THE" Kingdom, when your little part of it is messy or struggling through a particularly difficult season.
52	Contemporary (Attractional with	1	Sometimes disappointments in people make you wonder.

	Traditional elements)		
53	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	Not seeing lasting results in the lives of people
54	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	usually from perceived failure, or some personal conflict with a member
55	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	Bottom line when I process things through my "fleshly" view
56	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	N/A
57	Traditional	2	We sometimes see little dedication in some people, and we are offering much opportunity to grow if they would only commit.
58	Missional	1	When I compare my ministry with other ministries
59	Traditional	4	Lack of growth
60	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	0	no
61	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	1	Not mine to determine
62	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	3	Comparison with larger ministries, being overseas can make one feel alone or disconnected with networks of ministries.
63	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	We run 60 in a dead town of 200 people. I've been part of bigger ministries in cities such as a booming church plant in Orlando etc...

64	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	I would say by looking at numbers. if it is stuck or declining you could feel less valuable.
65	Traditional	2	Age, sometimes I feel like a relic of a bygone era.
66	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	So much pain suffering in the world with little relief...want to see God's grace flow over the land
67	Attractional	3	When I am bogged down in office work, church politics, or etc.
68	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	1	I feel like my life and ministry have mattered.
69	Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Missional)	1	When there is no vision and focus from top down.
70	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	1	mainly when I put my eyes on myself and off of Christ or other people.
71	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	5	Lack of community impact
72	Contemporary (Attractional with Traditional elements)	2	When congregants show little interest in participating in things outside Sunday worship.

Table A.4			
Respondent Number	On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's kingdom is of GREAT value?	If you ever feel your part is of GREAT value at any time, what makes you feel this way?	How does your church connect with the community in which it exists? (Check all that apply)
1	2	For the most part, the work of the ministry has become largely administrative and crisis management for me.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Internet presence
2	9	My relationship with Christ and the confirmation of the Spirit	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program; Door-to-Door Visitation
3	8	all ministry is of great value	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
4	5	When I hear from someone positively affected by my ministry	Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
5	7	Response to God's Word and noticeable growth in believers.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Door-to-Door Visitation; Personal witness of congregation
6	5	I feel my ministry is of great value about half of the time because I get to see glimpses of life change in others that I have been investing time and energy into.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects

7	8	We are helping churches in multiple countries to strengthen the family unit.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Training parents to pass their faith, even non-members.
8	7	Whenever we see a life changed, marriage saved, or people who were weak become strong.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services
9	8	Understanding what building Gods Kingdom entails	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
10	8	Seeing the spiritual growth and faithfulness of God's people.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
11	7	Members tell me how I impact them	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
12	5	Changed lives	Some of the above
13	10	Seeing other people participate in building community with others	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
14	10	When discipling	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Door-to-Door Visitation
15	10	I am continuing to bring other to Christ.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program

16	4	There are moments that smack you in the face that God reminds you of what you're doing and why you're doing it. A breakthrough in a relationship, a family mended, hearts touched through a kind act or even occasionally through the Word on a Sunday morning.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
17	3	ironically, our church is one of the healthiest in the area with a broad cross-section of children thru adults	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; nursing home ministry
18	8	When people are saved	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or another kids-oriented program; Door-to-Door Visitation
19	10	He uses us to be His hands and voice and though He needs me not: he uses this church to build His kingdom...that rocks!	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
20	8	When people's lives are obviously changed.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
21	9	My confidence in the power of the gospel	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services
22	8	Leading people to Christ, baptizing, reading the Word together, seeing new small groups start, seeing interest from new people and then the connection that sticks	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Recovery programs
23	7	Watching the light come on for people, experiencing how life-	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects

		giving it is for them when they discover their life matters to God and find a way to express it.	
24	8	Our calling is significant because of the significance of Him who calls us. Therefore, when we faithfully serve Him obediently according to His calling this is of great value because of the value He brings to the equation. We may never know the tangible significance of our involvement in His ministry while here on earth, but we do know that there are no insignificant callings and that ALL of God's ministry is of great value, therefore our part of it is greatly valued.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services
25	10	Making disciples who make disciples.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Upward Sports
26	9	The immediate result of knowing Christ and the eternal piece of life make building God's kingdom of great value.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program; Door-to-Door Visitation
27	8	When you see growth in others especially salvation	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Work in community programs
28	9	Seeing lives transformed and changed on a regular basis. Seeing many people making first time decisions to follow Christ.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Door-to-Door Visitation; Adopting community schools back pack gives, shoe gives, serving lunch

			to teachers, gift cards for teachers, free laundry serves at laundry mats.
29	7	Preaching the Word of God, evangelism	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
30	8	Discipleship / 1 on 1 spiritual growth	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
31	10	The truth is we all play a part and we must play that part well and totally committed	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services
32	6	Watching changed lives	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
33	10	Being in ministry make me feel this way :)	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
34	8	See life change.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
35	8	Seeing people grow in their relationship with Christ.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Food Pantry
36	3	God's Word does not return empty.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
37	8	After teaching, the response I receive from the kids	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.)
38	2	I don't!	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects

39	8	When the Holy Spirit confirms His kingdom work in the life change evident in community members as well as Church constituents. He's often reminded me that even ONE equipped fully-devoted follower of Jesus is worth all personal cost!	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Civic club volunteer support through the year
40	5	Getting to baptize believers and have direct conversations with individuals who want to share where they are spiritually.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Upward and partnering with local schools.
41	6	Blessed by helping change people's lives.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program; Door-to-Door Visitation
42	10	God uses human instruments to achieve his will. I see myself as an instrument in his Hands.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Door-to-Door Visitation; Free Health Screenings
43	8	Love my job! Seeing victories in believer's lives, new followers of Christ...it is what keeps the ministry blood pumping!	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
44	7	When I see or sense the transforming work of God in people's lives whom I am mentoring.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program; Feeding homeless. Rehab projects for poor.
45	5	Galatians 6:9; 1 Cor. 15:58. Faith, God has promised fruit as a result of the work.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects

46	5	Preaching	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
47	10	LIFE CHANGE! Stories being rewritten by GRACE every day at GRANITE!	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
48	10	Seeing people that understand and live a Gospel centered life	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
49	8	When I consider the sovereignty of God and the absolute necessity for faithfulness to God's Word and one's calling.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Door-to-Door Visitation; An effective website and social media presence.
50	6	When people demonstrate Gods love by serving and those served come to know Christ, because they see that love in action.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
51	9	Salvations, Observable spiritual growth, Favor in the community, Measurable growth in other metrics (attendance, giving, volunteers, small groups, etc.)	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
52	9	It is eternal in value. That, in itself, makes it great.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; MOPs program
53	8	Seeing spiritual and practical changes in the lives of people	Regularly Scheduled worship services; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
54	7	people trusting Christ, or seeing some life change however big or small is a big deal for that person	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services;

			AWANA or another kids-oriented program
55	8	Ephesians 4 is s constant reminder	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
56	8	Concentrating on long term exponential growth (making disciples) as opposed to short term linear growth.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
57	9	when we see people witnessing for the first time in their lives or commenting in a Bible study showing their spiritual growth, we feel that there is value.	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
58	10	When I see how God is using the ones I minister to	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Free coffee and prayer
59	7	Building leadership because of my experience	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Special music programs
60	10	What we have been privileged to be a part of locally and globally.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Engaging in the community. Taking our witness of our lives into the community. faith and works
61	9	The reward of being faithful	Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Food Pantry
62	8	Confidence that teaching/preaching the Bible/gospel will be	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services

		blessed and always has value.	
63	9	Seeing salvations, discipling men, counseling marriages etc...	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Door-to-Door Visitation
64	7	Success is 'Have I been obedient to what God has asked me to do?'	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; We host YMCA camps, AA, SCAN, Counseling, Lego camps, Math camps.
65	10	Everything, because everything works and everything matters if God is in it and our only motive is advancing the Kingdom.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
66	5	I know that He calls me to live to bring Him glory and that the light of Him will draw others to himself...just wish it was more. Thank for His grace in my weakness	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
67	7	I feel great value when I am used by God to encourage, teach, exhort, explain Him to others and see their lives grow from discounted and misinformed to connected and their faith is becoming something that is their own. I also feel great value when I am able to witness this happening. When someone's life is noticeably changes (regardless if I did anything or not) makes me	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; Renting our facility to a theater company. Exposes people to our church and provides a home for a community initiative.

		feel like there is value in this investment.	
68	10	Lost people need to be found; found people need to grow	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Service Projects; AWANA or another kids-oriented program
69	10	I see the growth in people. Many are finding and following Jesus.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects; AWANA or other kids-oriented program; Local school involvement
70	8	God has placed my family here for this time. I understand all of the parts working together to build the Kingdom of God.	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services; Service Projects
71	6	Most often when I encourage or bless other ministers	Community Events (Movie nights, Church in the Park, etc.); Regularly Scheduled worship services
72	7	When I have mentored someone and prayed with them, and their lives have significantly improved.	Regularly Scheduled worship services

Table A.5			
Respondent Number	How do you evaluate your impact or success? (Check all that apply)	What is your definition of success as it relates to ministry?	On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you compare your ministry's success to another ministry?
1	Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Health of the Church is more important to us than the size.	Seeing people be discipled in the Word of God and then discipling others.	5
2	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Weekly Giving; Salvations, Unity of the Body, Congregational participation	Leading my church to accomplish God's purpose for us in our community	8
3	transformational growth of the membership	Are we growing in our love for God and others	1
4	Sunday morning attendance; attendance at our VBS	Faithfully obeying my call; faithfully giving glory to God	5
5	Involvement in outreach	Spiritual growth in believers	2
6	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of people involved in the stewardship side of the church.	I define success in ministry by seeing the lives changed in the people in our church as well as the people that they bring. It is not a numbers game; it is about seeing people leave better than they came in and them making disciples that make disciples.	7
7	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Results of an annual healthy family evaluation.	God has not called us to be successful, God has called us to be faithful.	3

8	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Number of members	Am I doing my best and is my best improving things?	8
9	Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Witnessing life change	3
10	Prayer meeting attendance	That God's people live, breathe and obey God's word.	3
11	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	How involved are the members?	7
12	How many become disciples	Changed lives	7
13	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Salvations	Getting people involved in discipling others and building community	1
14	Number of baptisms; Weekly Giving	Multiplication	10
15	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Number of people who come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.	10
16	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	When I'm making time for others and seeing the opportunities God sends my way. Knowing that I'm walking with Him and allowing the Fruit of the Spirit to actually manifest. It's easy to get caught up in the 'nickels and noses,' but allowing my walk with God to influence how I interact and lead my community.	4
17	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; repeated attendance and involvement	the amount of people with regular contact and the amount of new people impacted; the retention of children and adults	6

18	Weekly Giving; Number of members	Souls being saved for the kingdom	3
19	Number of baptisms; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Moving them to their next level of discipleship	Kingdom Growth-individual growth within the kingdom	7
20	Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; number of salvations	If people are growing closer to Christ.	6
21	Sunday morning attendance	growth and maturity in the body of Christ	7
22	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Growth in numbers equal success for our church	People who are devoutly following God's Word in such a way that impacts their entire lives and encourages other people to take note about what they think about Jesus and to make action about it.	7
23	Sunday morning attendance; Weekly Giving; Number of members	The numbers above are markers but they tell only a small part of the story. The quality of the relationships we have in the church, are people to open to others, are they willing to serve and be generous in giving.	3
24	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Success is moving forward-making progress. It may be great or small progress, but all progress is success.	2
25	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; Spiritual growth	Making disciples who make disciples	8
26	Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance	Success is seeing personal growth as well as corporate growth long term.	1

27	Message of gospel shared	Taking God into situations and places where he is needed	1
28	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Salvations and rededications to Christ	Reaching people for Christ and serving the needy.	3
29	Faithfulness	Being faithful to all that God has entrusted you with	5
30	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Na	8
31	Sunday morning attendance	Changed lives/ focus. That people go from what they were doing to something else. More committed people serving	7
32	Sunday School Attendance; Weekly Giving	Are people growing closer to god?	2
33	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; if there is fruit	If lives are being changed and people are growing in their relationship with Jesus	7
34	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Life change	8
35	Discipleship Growth	"That you would bear fruit and that fruit remains."	5
36	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Life change	8
37	The depth of relationship with Jesus	When a person moves from knowing who Jesus is to	5

		make Him the most important aspect of their life	
38	Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Number of members	Souls coming to Christ	5
39	Number of baptisms; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; People moving from audience (bench warmers) to active ministry participant or servant leader	Evidence of God's Presence in services, as well as people equipped and making the most of every opportunity God provides to pray, care for individuals, and share their testimony.	2
40	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	I'm learning that the stories of life-change that happen near you seem to bring energy and a focus toward God.	4
41	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Helping people	3
42	Small Group involvement	Seeing church members show signs of spiritual maturity	3
43	Number of baptisms; Small Group involvement; Number of members; Salvations	Seeing people know and follow Christ.	2
44	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Weekly Giving; Number involved in ministry	Fruit that lasts	7
45	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of people volunteering.	Are you doing it? I always fight the temptation to gauge ministry success by ministry results and they two are not always mutually inclusive.	10
46	Faithfulness	Faithfulness	7
47	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group	Moving people from consumers of the vision to	1

	involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; Volunteers	owners of the vision. Success is when our church reproduces.	
48	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Disciples becoming disciplers	2
49	Increased participation in ongoing discipleship ministries and fruitfulness.	Second Timothy 2.2	1
50	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Seeing people sharing Christ and serving others.	2
51	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Measurable life change.	8
52	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Weekly Giving	Having a vibrant, healthy membership where we are producing followers of Christ.	3
53	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement	Reaching people for Christ and seeing people saved and baptized	4
54	Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement	life change, and personal growth	8
55	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	If people are truly being discipled, growing in their faith and then reproducing it in the lives of others	6
56	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members; Facilitating individual growth in our discipleship process.	Multiplying disciples.	7
57	Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement	we are having an impact that changes lives. I am to preach and teach and serve and God will give the increase. If I am faithful, then I am successful.	4

58	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; measured spiritual growth	faithfully giving the Word to others so that they can pass it on	5
59	Sunday morning attendance; Spiritual growth of my people	Christians living each other, strong families, people going forward with their lives	3
60	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Changed lives	Seeing people become disciples who make disciples	1
61	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement	Faithful focus to the will of God	2
62	Sunday morning attendance	Faithfulness, though we at times place unhealthy focus on visible fruit such as attendance, salvations, or baptisms.	6
63	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Spiritual growth of a few members.	Equipping the saints for the ministry.	6
64	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Obedience to what God has asked of us.	Make Disciples. If we aren't, we are failing.	5
65	Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; People's involvement in the ministries of the church	Attitude and perseverance, can you change and adapt in methodology yet remain steadfast to core biblical truth.	10
66	Are those we lead loving others well...living a life of service and compassion	Obedience to what He has called us to, but the outward measurements leak in	1
67	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Sunday School Attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving; Number of members	People develop a faith that is their own and its growing.	8

68	Sunday morning attendance; relationships established	Our members are having regular significant conversations with unchurched friends.	3
69	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Success is when a church helps people find and follow Jesus.	10
70	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement; Weekly Giving	Salvation and baptism are high on my list of success. Ministry buy in by lay leaders. Realistically, numbers are a big part of success. Numbers equal life-change.	5
71	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Weekly Giving; Number of members	Multiple factors: Growth, depth, imp [act	7
72	Number of baptisms; Sunday morning attendance; Small Group involvement	Seeing lives changed by the gospel	3

	Table A.6		
Respondent Number	**Describe a situation, within the context of ministry in which you feel like a success.**	**Describe a situation, within the context of ministry, in which you feel like a failure.**	**If you retired or moved on from vocational ministry right now, would you feel as though you made ANY impact in building God's Kingdom? Please answer Yes or No and explain why or why not.**
1	When I see an unconverted individual experience genuine Biblical conversion and begin to pursue the life of a disciple.	When pettiness, consumerism and immaturity inspire people to leave those who have invested deeply in them leave to attend the next cool attractional church on a whim or impulse.	Probably in a very limited way. I feel like my most important ministry moments have occurred in one-on-one and small group relationships, rather than in large crowds of attenders.
2	When our people bring people, or minister to others in tangible ways.	When a family leaves or others compare your church to someone else's	Yes. Our churches have grown through conversion and I have been faithful to make hard/controversial decisions when necessary. I have done my best.
3	When I feel like I have done my best to feed the flock	When I say something that I should not have said.	Yes...I have been retired for one year and see my humble ministry going on in other people's lives that I have influenced.
4	When someone outside the church tells me of our influence	When I look at our lack of growth year to year	Yes. We have seen people saved; people from here who are out serving God in other places
5	When I see a great percentage of congregation involved in outreach events.	When there is little participation in outreach events.	Yes. Congregation has a visible and viable impact in our community in

			many areas outside our services.
6	Recently I met with a family that has been impacted greatly by our church and they mentioned the community aspect of the church being reason they have felt this way. Building community is a huge value of our church.	I feel like a failure when I invest heavily in people and they turn around and leave me and the ministry that we are a part of.	Yes, when I was a youth pastor the kids in our youth program hated me but as they grew up and were getting married and having kids, they asked me to be a part of their lives in their weddings and baby dedications. I see that ministry success cannot be measured in the short-term events but on the long haul. I feel like a failure daily but realize that it's a long game.
7	Seeing healthy families where the father has taken his rightful place and is teaching his own children @ home.	When fathers just don't get it or ignore their position in the home.	Yes! The number of families and churches implementing the strategy of teaching spiritual formation @ home.
8	We do have some very dedicated, loyal, and loving people who are part of this particular church because the want to be.	We have a struggle reaching and holding millennials and youth.	Yes. In reality most of Christianity takes place in churches the size of mine. This still does not totally erase the occasional feelings of failure.
9	When someone I've been mentoring shows spiritual maturity and growth	When I don't feel like the work I do is recognized	Yes
10	Biblical counseling and discipleship	Lack of growth in numbers	Yes. I have seen God change people's lives.
11	People tell me I impact them	Not being able to spend more time	Yes. I have seen a number of people grow toward Christ.
12	When I have been a good influence	Administration	Yes! Many have accepted and grown in Christ!

13	When I see people gathering together in smaller groups across cultural barriers	When people listen but don't act	Yes, I've seen other people grow and serve God in various capacities.
14	Personal discipleship	Inactive	Yes, I'm still a disciple maker
15	Our church in a park gets a great response in non-believers coming to hear the gospel.	As a lay person, I cannot think of a failure. Our small group ministry is slow in catching on. We have a vibrant Sunday School program.	Yes, many seeds have been planted. None of us, will see the impact of our witnessing and sharing the good news until we are in heaven.
16	One situation where I felt like a success is when I have someone from our community reach out in times of trouble for a listening ear or some spiritual guidance. Building those relationships that, even when they feel burdensome at times, feel comfortable to call in the middle of the night - or even better, to know that people are building relationships through small groups.	Missing things that are obvious. Finding out after the fact that something has happened or missing the signs that something is going on with parishioners. I know I can't know everything, but the moments when I feel like I'm too late to help are the biggest times I feel like a failure.	Yes, absolutely. There are people and memories that I can always look back on to know that the Holy Spirit guided me as a tool to help lead people to Christ or to help people develop a deeper relationship with Christ.
17	involvement of people in serving in some capacity, or the hunger to know more about God's Word and salvation	when I feel as if we are maintaining in a holding pattern for weeks or months at a time	Yes, in countless ways. I believe that I bring fresh perspective and much needed learning to the church, especially in doctrinal issues and culture
18	When a woman that had been on drugs for years	When the number of people start going down	Yes, I love serving the people

	came and received Jesus for her Savior		
19	I've watched over 50 people say yes to Christ in a little over 2 years in a church plant of 120	I've watched as the back door has remained open and over 40 people have left because they did not get connected to their next step-huge fail on my part	Yes
20	When there is a great impact made on a group of people that helps them come closer to making a decision to follow Christ as their savior or helps begin that conversation.	When I have made someone feel as if they are not important.	Yes. It has been my privilege to have many people who we have ministered to over the years stay in contact. They share the successes they have and how our time in ministry with them has helped them grow closer to Christ, see families restored, people called to ministry, etc.
21	by preaching and teaching the Scriptures	I don't feel like a failure; sometimes I do get discouraged with lack of church growth.	Yes, I think many people's lives have changed. They are growing in their relationship with Christ.
22	When I am able to sit down with an individual and hear their problems and then dive into Scripture together to find out what the next step is for them. This process is the ball rolling but to be down the road a bit and hearing them celebrate what God is doing in their lives, what they are reading and how they are reading and lastly how they have been sharing their faith with other people.	I think it's the same as above...except in reverse. There is no growth, push, care or concern for the matters of God when you know this individual has not only expressed concern but who has demonstrated concern for the things of God's Word yet totally disregards it or writes off the idea or notion of following Christ's literal words written down for them.	Yes. I think I have modeled a life for people to follow and mimic so that they too can grow in a healthier better understanding what God has not just called them to do, but the entire world. I feel like I have made a lasting impact on individuals who are now pursuing Christ when they in no way thought they would or would still be yet at a higher level of intensity and sincerity. Showing people the Gospel and watching

			them give their lives to Christ right before your eyes and then taking the progressive steps to do what a Christian ought to do would be a huge determiner of success in my eyes.
23	Every time we open up another opportunity to serve the community, people respond well.	personal relationships where we have simply had to walk away from one another because we can't agree to disagree isn't an option for them.	Yes. I've heard many stories over the years of the impact of the congregation I serve on the community. I hear from community members about the positive, influence of our congregation on the community.
24	Again, I don't believe that success is so tangible that it has specific numbers or benchmarks necessarily because success for a particular ministry may look different than success in a different ministry. In our case since we have arrived, we have seen steady growth in attendance and membership. Offerings have risen and continue to climb, and souls are being saved. I believe those things are in response to obedience and thus successful.	I was the pastor of a church that had to close because it could not financially continue. Though I was not responsible for the financial failure of the church having to shutter the doors of a church I started felt like a failure.	Yes. I have had the privilege of winning several souls to Christ and contributing to the maturity of believers. I don't think I would be able to pinpoint the exact impact on the Kingdom but I have been obedient and seen God bless and every impact in the Kingdom of God regardless of its evident external impact to others is significant when God is the Author and Facilitator of it.
25	Seeing a student take a step closer to Jesus.	Seeing students take steps away from Jesus.	I am not retired
26	We simply look at where we are going.	We simply look at where we have been.	N\A
27	Salvation	Not able to reach some	No if anything was accomplished by God and I was just his vessel to accomplish. It is not a

			measure of my success but of obedience
28	Serving and loving those in need outside our church walls.	Spending as much time as I'd like developing and pouring into our lead volunteers	Yes
29	The unity and love of the church/ helping the church to change	Evangelism	Yes, lives have been impacted
30	Authentic relationship, accountability, and discipleship	Na	Na
31	People agree to volunteer; they see the need and passion	When we don't have enough help	Yes, but I think retiring now would dampen that impact b/c I think at times people look to you to be strength and consistency.
32	Listening the people share God stories of how their life is different.	Watching people leave the church	Yes. I am not my job.
33	Instilled safety and security measures in the children ministry	When there was a conflict at church, and I didn't handle as well as I should have.	Yes, because I've personally seen lives changed and others that have served under my ministry go on to be in full time ministry
34	Leadership and vision	Speaking	Yes. The church we have planted would continue.
35	Seeing people serve others leading them to Christ.	When people only want to be served.	Yes. I've had the privilege of seeing many people I've ministered to become active in ministry themselves.
36	I feel like my ministry is successful when I see people applying the Biblical truth that is taught.	I feel like a failure in ministry when people refuse to apply the Biblical truth and continue to make the same mistakes and	N/A

		continue dwell in their sin and dysfunction.	
37	When I see people excited about being part of ministry and serving others	When I've been too busy with "stuff" that I lose focus of the people	Yes, because I did what God had called and asked me to do. We may make the plans, but God orchestrates our step and when I'm in the will of God and His leading of course what I do will make an impact for His kingdom
38	When spiritual growth can be observed.	Lack of church outreach.	Yes, if I can point to persons continuing in their spiritual walk.
39	When hearts are changed by the openness of individuals to the Voice of the Lord - i.e.: altar responses, attitude or directional adjustments to line up with the Word.	I don't really feel like a failure, but it breaks my heart when I am unable to lead a person to a point of submission to the Word, or healing in their body.	Yes, even before vocational ministry I was serving the LORD in the areas he called me to...and will continue until my last breath. I do not need to SEE the results of what His Spirit is doing in the hearts of others, simply trust and obey. That's my success - all He asks; therefore, it impacts His kingdom.
40	We've had a few new group leaders start leading community groups.	Message and vision prep for our college ministry.	NA
41	People attend the church and have a good relationship with them	When 2 of my 3 kids went to drugs.	Yes, because I have seen a lot of souls saved.
42	There are several members who in the year's past were not involved in any church activities but are now leading ministries aimed at reaching out to the community.	When a ministry in the church has not been able to thrive and fulfill its goals.	Yes. I am very comfortable with the leaders that have come up at the church and confident that they will continue the work that is currently going on.

43	People are growing in their spiritual walk, people who are lost are being reached.	No one attends or people fail to see or support the vision.	N/A
44	When people are enthusiastically volunteering for ministry and new people are drawn to that ministry.	When I am leading, and no one is following.	Yes. I believe many people's eternity have been altered because God allowed me to become an influence in their lives. And consequently, many more lives have been influenced by the impact of their lives.
45	When people who openly did not accept or believe in God are now living as disciples and growing in their faith. We have a several in our church.	When those who God has tasked me to lead are not vitally engaged in the growth of the ministry of the church, either in their time or finances.	I know that there are people who would stay active in their lives as disciples whereas before their integration into our church they would not. That would help me to know that an impact has been made.
46	When other people get involved in ministry	Lack of growth	Yes... some people have been impacted
47	Seeing peeps saved, baptized, serving, and launching services or campuses	Don't have these feelings	YES! The spiritual landscape of NEW ENGLAND continues to change!
48	People made into disciples	Being a bi-vocational pastor, I feel like a failure when opportunities to minister conflict with my secular job.	Yes, Families have accepted Christ and made into disciples.
49	When I see Christ-likeness exhibited in a Church member, conduct and attitude that is inexplicable were it not for Christ.	That does not often happen and should not ever happen, since I am by God's grace a great success in Christ!	Yes. God has graciously given me a ministry of grace to reach the lost and make an impact for Christ by His grace, while also giving me a ministry of vindication in the lives of those who reject my ministry and message and who will be

			held accountable for their response come Judgment Day.
50	When I see our people getting involved in serving our community and letting them know that Christ loves them.	When our church confuses the expectations of a project or event, being disappointed because they were expecting many saved from cleaning up the jogging trails in the community.	Yes. We have impacted people local and globally, seeing needs met and souls saved. The more I see our church turn that corner, looking more outward than inward, the more I feel I have made a difference here.
51	When someone in my church does something, we taught outside the immediate context of a church gathering - sharing their faith, dating their wife, being generous, etc. Also, when metrics (measurable goals) are showing signs of health.	When people bicker over superficial things to the neglect of the mission. When metrics indicate we're not succeeding at making disciples effectively.	Yes. I've been very fortunate to SEE the fruit of our work up to this point. If my ministry ended now - bittersweet as would be - I would still feel that I fulfilled God's purpose, and that there were many people with personal stories of life change which point to that end.
52	Highest Easter attendance in the history of the church.	Unable to keep some old-time members.	Yes. We have thousands who have been saved and baptized. We have hundreds that are in ministry, and many more active in churches where they now live.
53	Seeing people freed from addictions, marriages strengthened and people becoming strong and consistent worshipers	Seeing people serve with joy for a while and then drop out	I haven't retired or moved on from ministry

54	good healthy group of students go to an event/ host an event, like camp, where they were challenged Biblically, and decisions were made	an event or service falls flat, gospel was given, truth was shared and there was no "appearance" of change or challenge	Yes!!!!!!!!! Because I have 15 years' worth of relationships with students who are now adults who are healthy Christians actively involved in their churches. Whether or not they needed me is beside the point, I got to be alongside them for part of their journey. Is this the case for all of them, nope, but I still have healthy relationships with many of them as well. God is good and his word changes lives, and to have had a front row seat at watching HIM change lives has been amazing
55	When people's lives are being transformed	When people leave for worldly reasons	Yes, have had the opportunity of seeing many come to Christ and growing in Him
56	Providing a class, group, experience, opportunity etc. in our Growth Process that allows someone to experience growth and health in their relationship with God and others.	Knowing someone fell through the cracks and was not assimilated into a group within our Growth Process.	Yes. I have been faithful and followed God and know that He is working even when I may not see clearly where and how He is working.
57	when one of the women in our church went to visit her dying brother and was able to lead him and his wife and daughter to the Lord. She was not able to do such when she came to us and as she was faithful to come and we were faithful to teach and encourage her, we saw growth.	When I catch myself thinking that it all depends on me and I see that I cannot help someone. not that I could not help someone but that I got my eyes off the one who can.	Yes, we are conscious of many ways in which we have impacted God's Kingdom through the ministries we have had. People have come to know Jesus as savior. People have grown in their desire and ability to share God's word. People have come to the place of

			repentance and striving for spiritual purity. People have a better understanding of God's word and finally People are closer to God in a personal knowledge and commitment type of personal relationship.
58	growth of leaders	total involvement of members	Yes, because of the ones that I was able to disciple/mentor
59	Led a young man to Christ seeking Gods help just before going to jail, then he came home and immediately wants to be baptized and now wants to marry his live in and serve God	My inability to change with the culture	Yes, many have come to know Christ and gone on to serve. Sat down to eat the other day with a missionary and two pastors. (There are more out there) They were all my "kids" in the ministry. Thanking God for the small part he lets me be in all those people's lives
60	Locally, providing help and hope when a flood hit our area. Our Mop's ministry. Church planting and humanitarian aid around the world.	Always more to do and reach.	Yes, we started with no people, no money no building. Now have seen hundreds of lives come to faith, church runs over 300 and our presence is a force in the community.
61	Spiritual growth in people	Length of time it takes to instill vision	Yes - God's blessing as ministry impacted lives
62	People who have no understanding of the Bible/gospel grow in learning who Jesus is and what He has done.	Planning events or programs that are not well attended.	Yes, because I have confidence that those in our ministry have grown in their knowledge of Christ and trust that the Spirit has grown them to maturity in Christ.
63	Developing leaders through personal discipleship. I'm working with 3 deacons	Because we run 60 and I'm it...I am trying to get momentum in several	Definitely. Through personal discipleship there are 7 students

	currently to make disciples who make disciples.	areas and sometimes it isn't effective. Lack of planning and communication.	headed towards full-time ministry and missions. Praise God! Salvations of many others too.
64	A salvation or launch of a new ministry	Attendance dropped	Yes. Lives have been changed and people are more like Jesus
65	I'm still here, my part in ministry may change but God can still use me in some capacity.	Usually in hindsight, when I allowed myself to get in the way. Sometimes I let it be about me instead of about God. Things get confusing because they don't work out the way we think they should, but we can't see the big picture. We have to accept that God does things his way in his time.	Yes, because people have told me so. Over the years people have told me of the impact I have had on their lives and the encouragement I have been to them. Now rather that is true or not is irrelevant, if they think it is true and it aids in their walk with God and the advancing of the kingdom then my time on this earth is well spent.
66	Seeing those overcome by the world moving with God's grace to a place of service...only possible because of the Holy Spirits work	When I am overcome by the concerns and measurements of success that the world uses	Still serving in full time ministry
67	Teaching people about who Jesus is. Resolving conflicts. Challenging/confronting people with how they are living.	Being a developer of other leaders. Being someone who equips others for works of ministry.	Absolutely. I believe God has used me and my life to have altered the path of others' lives.
68	Neighborhood youth comes for afterschool drop in time and stays for Bible study. Learns/hears for the first	Failure is not a helpful term. Unfruitful or unproductive may be better. That sense of	Yes. People's relationship with Jesus has deepened and lives have been transformed

	time about David and Goliath.	having an event not connect with people as deeply or richly as we would have wanted is an ever=present evaluation process.	because of the Holy Spirit's work through the ministries in which I've been able to share.
69	When you have growth year over year by 15% increase and 1500 salvations	When we are not focused on our mission and values. Eyes elsewhere.	Yes. I have been a part of several churches and my impact has been different in each. Because of my efforts and God's blessing, there are people that have grown closer to the Lord, came back to the Lord and deepened their relationship with Him or have been introduced to the Lord because of my involvement in ministry.
70	Leading our leadership team. I have seen great steps taken this year in the leadership team and that feels like a success. Also, anything new that I want to try, we are able to try, with little to no pushback. As a leader, I feel like a success.	In the area of salvations, baptisms, and membership. Coming from the mission field to the US has been a challenge. It was very normal to have 10-15 people accept Christ and be baptized each month. Here it has not been the case. There has been fewer salvations and baptisms. And it seems that people are less interested in joining a church, but they will get involved, tithe, be faithful and serve.	Yes. God has allowed us to be a part of what He is doing around the world. We know that He is working and building His church and we have joined Him. In our current ministry, we are asking God to use us in reaching our community.
71	When someone is helped dramatically in their life or relationship, when someone is saved	When someone comes into the church, we fail to connect, and they drift away	Yes. Even under the worst of circumstances there are small victories.

| 72 | Baptisms in last year and those members' lives have significantly changed for the better. | Some newer converts left church. Some have quit attending services regularly. | Yes, absolutely. Any life changed positively is worth it. |

Appendix B

Table B.1

Do you consent to participate in this study?

72 responses

● Yes
● No

100%
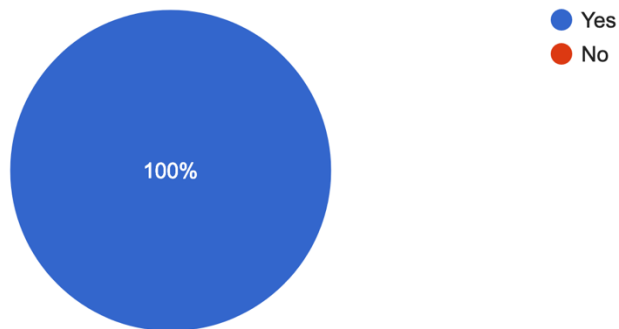
Table B.2

Are you currently a pastor in a church?

72 responses

● Yes
● No

93.1%
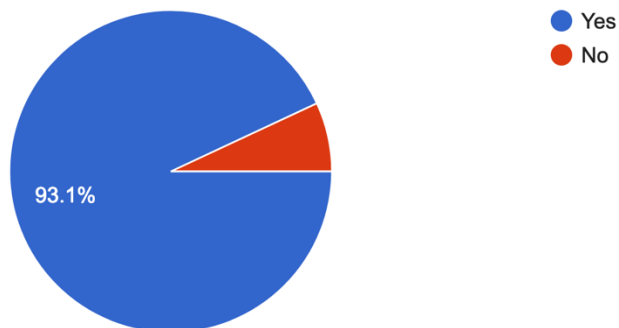
Table B.3

How long have you been in vocational ministry?
72 responses

Legend:
- Less than 1 year
- 2- 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20-25 years
- 25-30 years
- More than 30 years

30.6%
12.5%
13.9%
18.1%
15.3%
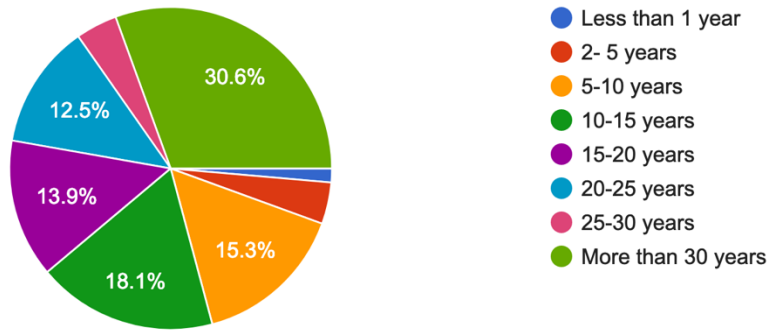
Table B.4

How long have you been serving as the pastor of your current congregation?
72 responses

Legend:
- 1 Year or less
- 2- 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20-25 years
- 25-30 years
- More than 30 years

9.7%
19.4%
11.1%
15.3%
30.6%

Table B.5

Please select the appropriate option regarding the attendance level of your church in the past twelve months:

72 responses

Legend:
- Growing
- Declining
- Plateuing

11.1%
26.4%
62.5%
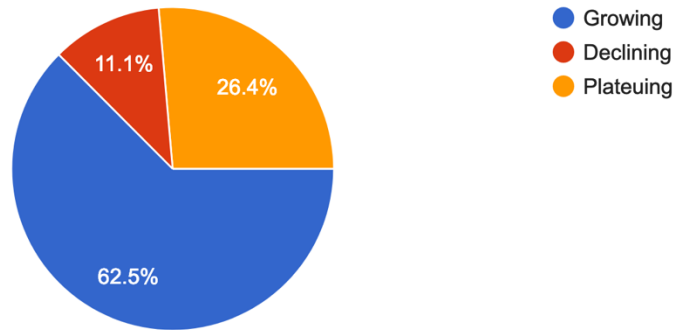
Table B.6

If you have seen growth, by how much?

72 responses

Legend:
- Growing A lot
- Growing a Little
- Stayed the Same
- Not Applicable

12.5%
16.7%
56.9%
13.9%
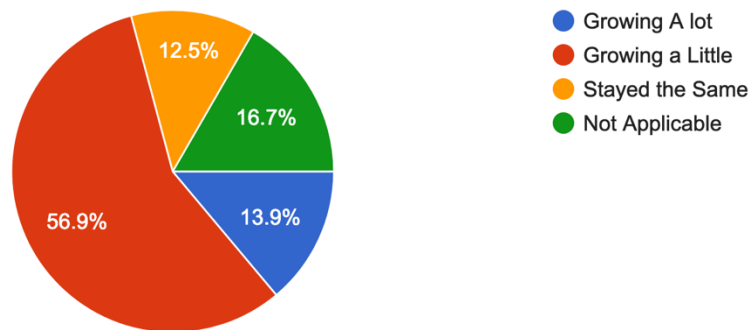
Table B.7

How would you describe your ministry's style?
72 responses

Legend:
- Liturgical
- Traditional
- Contemporary (Attractional with Tra…
- Attractional
- Hybrid (Mixture of Attraction and Mi…
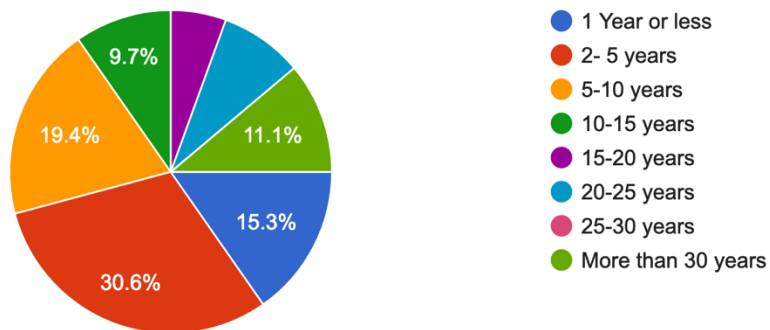- Missional
- Expositional, Contemporary, Missio…
- Mostly traditional with some contem…

1/2
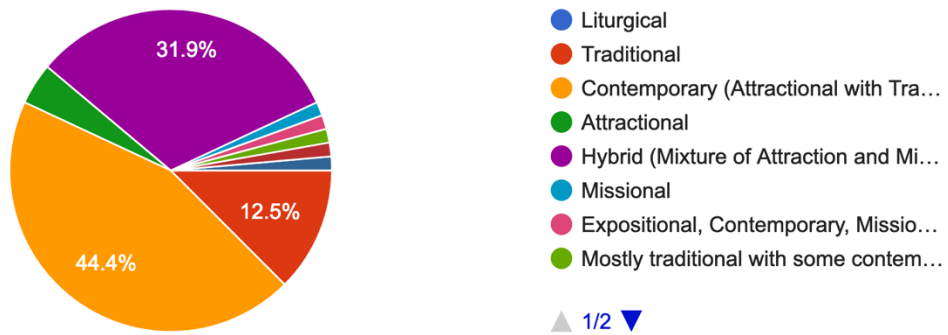
Table B.8

How would you describe your ministry's style?
72 responses

Legend:
- Untraditionally traditional; and above mentioned Hybrid
- Somewhat based on the regulative principle.

2/2

Table B.9

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's kingdom is of LITTLE value?

72 responses

Average Response= 3.4%

Table B.10

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you feel like your part of building God's kingdom is of GREAT value?

72 responses

Average response= 7.9%

How does your church connect with the community in which it exists? (Check all that apply)

72 responses

Bar chart showing responses:
- Community Events (Movie nights, Church ...): 56 (77.8%)
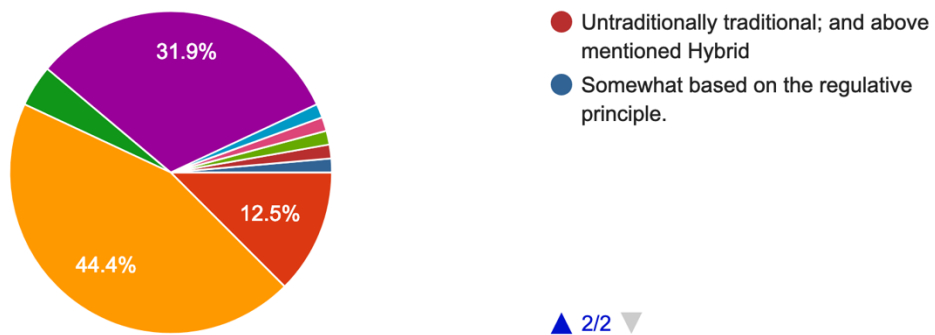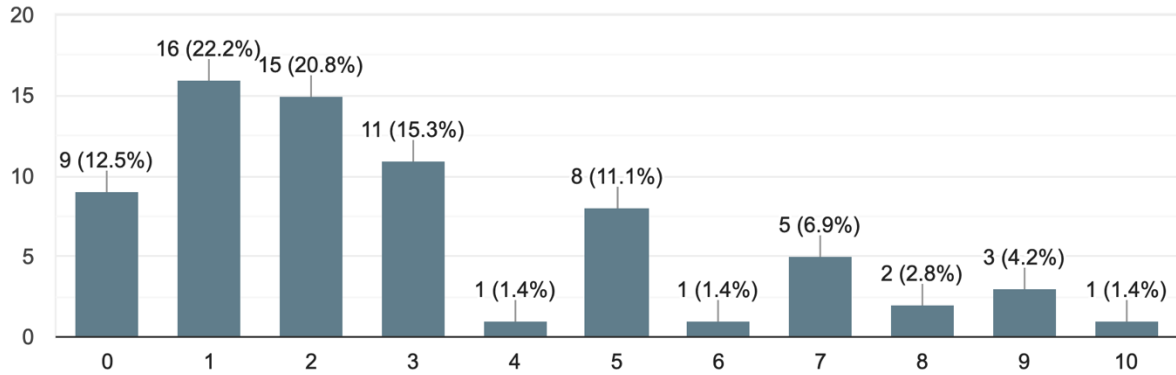- [unlabeled]: 69 (95.8%)
- Service Projects: 50 (69.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 32 (44.4%)
- Door-to-Door Visitation: 10 (13.9%)
- Food Pantry: 2 (2.8%)
- Internet presence: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- Training parents to pass their faith, e...: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- nursing home ministry: 1 (1.4%)
- Recovery programs: 1 (1.4%)
- Upward Sports: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- Adopting community schools back pack gi...: 1 (1.4%)
- Upward and partnering with local school...: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- Feeding homeless. Rehab projects for po...: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- MOPs program: 1 (1.4%)
- Free coffee and prayer: 1 (1.4%)
- Special music programs: 1 (1.4%)
- We host YMCA camps, AA, SCAN, Counselin...: 1 (1.4%)
- [unlabeled]: 1 (1.4%)
- Local school involvement: 1 (1.4%)

How do you evaluate your impact or success? (Check all that apply)

72 responses

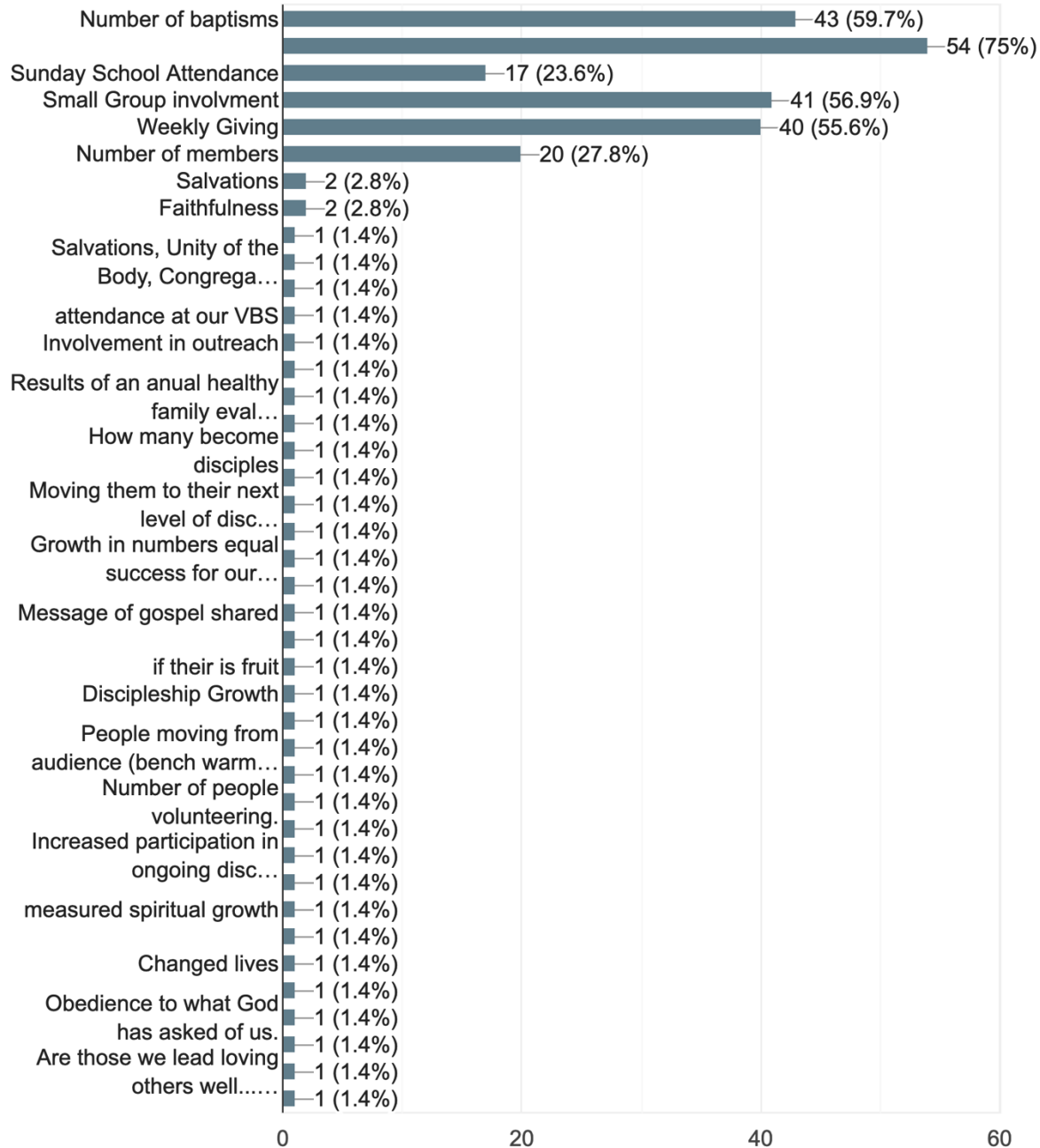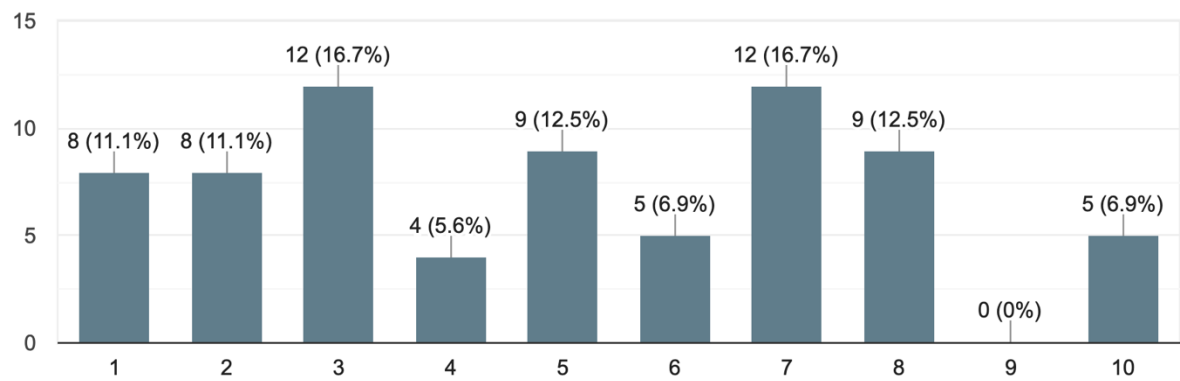| Category	Count
Number of baptisms	43 (59.7%)
	54 (75%)
Sunday School Attendance	17 (23.6%)
Small Group involvment	41 (56.9%)
Weekly Giving	40 (55.6%)
Number of members	20 (27.8%)
Salvations	2 (2.8%)
Faithfulness	2 (2.8%)
Salvations, Unity of the Body, Congrega…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
attendance at our VBS	1 (1.4%)
Involvement in outreach	1 (1.4%)
Results of an anual healthy family eval…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
How many become disciples	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Moving them to their next level of disc…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Growth in numbers equal success for our…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Message of gospel shared	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
if their is fruit	1 (1.4%)
Discipleship Growth	1 (1.4%)
People moving from audience (bench warm…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Number of people volunteering.	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Increased participation in ongoing disc…	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
measured spiritual growth	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Changed lives	1 (1.4%)
Obedience to what God has asked of us.	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)
Are those we lead loving others well……	1 (1.4%)
	1 (1.4%)

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you compare your ministry's success to another ministry?

72 responses

Appendix C

January 24, 2017

Philip Bassham
IRB Exemption 2718.012417: Defining Success in Building God's Kingdom

Dear Philip Bassham,

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 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 46:101(b):

> (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 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,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971