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Assessing the Health of an Established Urban Church to Develop a Strategic Plan for Growth.

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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Liberty University School of Divinity, 2019

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The health of a church is solely dependent on the health of its leadership. The more the leadership becomes imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2), the more the church resembles the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). This work seeks to determine the kind of healthy church leadership, which generates a healthy church culture for multiplying disciples. The purpose of this study is to assess the health of an established urban church in midtown Manhattan, and to evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches in order to discover an evangelistic approach that may help this and other churches with a similar context to grow spiritually as well as in numbers. Therefore, this research project examines the currently available literature on Christian leadership, a healthy church, and church models in an attempt to discover models or practices that might help this particular church to be more effective in its multiplication of disciples. With the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz, this dissertation evaluates the health of this established church and utilizes T4T (Training for Trainers) to assess the change in leadership's disciple-making approach.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

The health of a church is solely dependent on the health of its leadership. The more the leadership becomes imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2), the more the church resembles the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). This work will seek to determine the kind of healthy church leadership, which generates a healthy church culture for multiplying disciples. This researcher will assess the currently available literature on Christian leadership, a healthy church, and church models. He will also review the internal policies of Calvary Baptist Church, which is the ministry context of this researcher. Through examining some of the current church leadership and church models, this project will attempt to determine some traits of a healthy church and evaluate the health of Calvary Baptist Church (CBC) in New York City against those traits.

Perhaps there is a need to adjust the current church model, or leadership style. Perhaps there is a need for a change in staffing. Malphurs suggests, “the key for spiritually healthy, biblically balanced churches is to bring on board the necessary full-time and support staff before you reach a plateau or things start falling through the cracks.”¹ He acknowledges that “this sounds risky, and many would object; however, it is how you as a staff in general and a point leader in particular proactively in faith lead the church forward.”² This indicates that the health of a church that results in growth through the multiplication of disciples and planting of new

¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21 Century Model For Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013), ch. 10.

² Ibid.

churches is not mutually exclusive from healthy leadership, rather they are interdependent and interconnected.

The assumption here is that only healthy leadership adopts an effective evangelism approach that results in conversions, multiplication of disciples, and more church plants. Therefore, the process of seeking growth through healthy church practices begins with healthy leadership. Discussing the difference between action research, which is grounded in a qualitative research paradigm and quantitative research, Stringer describes the limitations that “all social events are subject to ongoing construction and negotiation.”³ He states, “by incorporating the perspectives and responses of key stakeholders as an integral part of the research process, a collaborative analysis of the situation provides the basis for deep-seated understandings that lead to effective remedial action.”⁴ Therefore, church leadership and the congregation are equal stakeholders with this researcher to discover models, techniques, and practices that will help CBC to grow both spiritually as well as in numbers.

Ministry Context

This section of the thesis project focuses on the current ministry model that CBC exercises in the area of leadership and function, ministries, congregation, and church planting. This also contains a brief history of the church and its mission. Subsequently, this section is divided into several sub-sections.

³ Ernest Stringer, *Action Research*, 4th ed., (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 36.

⁴ Ibid.

Introduction to Calvary Baptist Church (CBC)

CBC is considered an established Baptist church with a one-hundred-and-seventy-year history. It is located on 57th Street between 6th and 7th avenues in Manhattan, which is also known as billionaire's row.⁵

A Brief History of CBC

Calvary Baptist Church opened its doors to the residents and visitors of New York City in 1847 as an independent Baptist church. Initially, worship services were held at the Coliseum, located at 450 Broadway under the name of Hope Chapel Baptist Church. In 1852, the church leadership started work on a new worship facility on 23rd Street. The church family relocated to the new 23rd Street sanctuary in 1854, at which time the church adopted the name Calvary Baptist Church.

Over the next decade, development and commerce along the 23rd Street corridor encouraged the Calvary congregation to move toward the purchase of new property on 57th Street near Sixth Avenue, where the congregation remains today. The new sanctuary opened on December 23, 1883. Over time, the need arose to update the facilities, and the vision of a church-hotel complex in the heart of Manhattan became a steel-and-concrete reality in 1931.⁶

The Mission of CBC

The mission of the church is to engage New York City and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ. CBC is committed to biblical truth, which is the gospel that Jesus preached (John 3:1-17; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Jude 3-4). In its urban setting where over 800

⁵ Katherine Clarke and Candance Taylor, "The Man Behind Billionaire's Row Battles to Sell the World's Tallest Condo," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 17, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-man-behind-billionaires-row-battles-to-sell-the-worlds-tallest-condo-11547739897>.

⁶ "Our History," Calvary Baptist Church, accessed May 7, 2019, <http://www.cbcnyc.org/history>.

languages are spoken, CBC values reconciliation with God and with one another, “which is the heart of the gospel message” (Luke 15:11-32; Luke 23:32-43; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Eph. 2:11-18).⁷ CBC also stands out in New York City for its open support for life and against abortion. CBC believes that life is a gift from God, our Creator and that every human being is made in the image of God and has intrinsic value and dignity (Gen. 1:26-28; Deut. 30:11-20; Acts 17:22-34; 1Jn. 2:1-2).⁸ Other values that are prevalent in CBC’s proclamation of the gospel and practice of Christians life can be listed as: Love/Compassion/Justice (Micah 6:8; Mt. 25:31-46; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); Faith (Mt. 17:20; Heb. 11:6, 8- 10, 13-16; Js. 2: 14-26); Transformation (Mt. 10:16; Luke. 6:40; Rom. 8:28-30; 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Eph. 4:11-16); Proclamation of the Word of God (Ps. 19:7-14; Jn. 6:60-69, 14: 1-6; 2 Tim. 3:16- 4:5; 2 Peter 1:19-2); and Witness through Evangelism and Missions (Mt. 28:18-20; Rom. 10:13-15).⁹

Membership and Attendance

The annual reports from 1969 to 2019 archived in the Business Office of CBC show that the membership of CBC is currently at its lowest. The current membership is 667. No changes have been made in how membership is determined during this span of time. Also, the actual attendance data from 2016-2019 indicates that in the last three years, the average attendance of CBC remains between 461-554, with the exception of major events during Christmas and Easter when attendance exceeds 1100. The average attendance also excludes the youth, children, and young adult attendees. The church is certainly not growing and is experiencing a plateau. Malphurs argues, “it is always safe to assume that you are close to a plateau. If you are not close,

⁷ “Mission Statement” Calvary Baptist Church, accessed on May 7, 2019, <http://www.cbnyc.org/files/uploads/OurMission2019.pdf>.

⁸ “Mission Statement” Calvary Baptist Church.

⁹ Ibid.

you can be sure that one is lurking somewhere off in the distance.”¹⁰ Also, the church’s internal documents and database show that the church has seen consistent growth throughout its history. Even up until a decade ago, church membership varied between 800-1000 people. This should also be alarming. Financial transparency is evident through the financial statements that are available to the congregation. Having nearly forty million dollars in its investments and other savings shows shrewdness, but also is perceived as a lack of confidence in the provision of Christ. Some believers in the congregation perceive the financial security as a blessing and appreciate the planning for the future, but others in the congregation perceive it as sitting on money and missing the opportunity right front of the church to engage the ever-perishing people who need Jesus the Messiah. Both sides love the Lord and the ministry to which the church is called but continue to defend their positions with Scripture. The variance in these opinions is evidenced in the regular congregational meetings where members have a chance to speak to the congregation publicly. Payne states, “the definition, function, and vitality of the local church do not come from financial resources, sophisticated structures, and organization, numbers of people, or even a great preacher. Rather, the essence of the church comes from the citizens of the kingdom, indwelled and empowered by God, living according to a kingdom ethic that clearly establishes their relationship with God, each other, and the world.”¹¹

CBC is doctrinally a very strong church that preaches the gospel message without any compromise. This is also reflected through its covenant of membership. The members of CBC acknowledge all the covenant articles at the same time when they are taken into the membership

¹⁰ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21 Century Model For Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013), Introduction.

¹¹ J. D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys, and Hows of Global Church Planting* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 40.

of CBC and renew their commitment to the covenant of membership every year. A copy of the covenant of membership is available in the appendix, along with a copy of the articles of faith that the church collectively agrees to and professes. The articles of faith also determined the theology and philosophy of ministry at CBC and set the tune for its core values. In a way, an individual response in the covenant of membership becomes a collective response through the articles of faith.

Leadership and Function

CBC believes and practices the plurality of leadership that is elected by the congregation, with the exception of associate and assistant pastors who are hired by a collective vote and agreement of the Board of Elders, the Board of Deacons, and the Senior Pastor. The bylaws and ministry philosophy of the church describe the role and function of the leadership. The church leadership is to practice biblical servant leadership with the intent to recruit and train servant leaders in the congregation and the larger Christian community (Mt. 20:28; Jn. 13:1-17; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Spiritual oversight is provided by the Board of Elders that is elected by the congregation, and the elders elect a Chairperson of the Board who appoints the chairs of individual committees to oversee different ministries of the church. The pastoral leadership is hired to provide professional oversight and run day to day activities to carry out the mission of the church. The Board of Deacons essentially serve as the trustees of the church and handle all finance-related matters, including the hiring and firing of the pastoral staff on the recommendation of the elders. The role of women in leadership is limited to assisting the elders and serving on various official life committees. The philosophy of ministry of CBC states, “the spiritual oversight responsibilities of this body of believers rest with a Council of Elders. The appointment of “elders” (plurality) was the method used by the New Testament church for establishing

leadership, instead of a one-minister (autocratic) lead approach. Leadership constantly strives to display transparency to the body as it relates to their daily walk with the Lord.”¹² Also, the CBC leadership “recognizes that the church is not just the staff nor the Council of Elders. The elders keep the body on track with its mission. The staff equips and empowers the members of the congregation for works of ministry. The congregation reaches out in ministry to a lost world.”¹³

Ministries

The ministries of the church are geared towards accommodating different groups, usually based on their age or gender. The family ministry focuses on children and youth; it requires several dozen volunteers every Sunday to run nurseries and children’s Sunday school classes. It has a full-time pastor and a part-time admin assistant. The young adult ministry focuses on college and career individuals and has small committees, each with a unique focus such as outreach, small groups, hospitality, etc. It also has a part-time pastoral staff, and they have their own service on Sundays. The Congregational Care and Connect ministry focuses on small groups and discipleship. It has a full-time pastor with a shared full-time admin staff. A vibrant small group ministry in a church should result in the multiplication of disciples, healthy leadership, and new church plants. Therefore, this research will look closely at the current small group ministry to identify its weaknesses and strengths. The Women’s ministry focuses on educating, discipling, and connecting with women. It has a part-time staff person with dozens of extremely committed women devoting several hours a week in volunteering.

The Mission and Outreach ministry is a two-fold ministry. One aspect focuses on in-reach, which means God brings people to CBC facilities, and CBC pushes forward everything to

¹² “Philosophy of Ministry” Calvary Baptist Church, accessed on May 7, 2019, <http://www.cbcnyc.org/files/uploads/OurMission2019.pdf>.

¹³ Ibid.

ensure that they hear the gospel through their actions and words. The other aspect focuses on outreach, which means members of the congregation go out and proclaim the gospel locally, nationally, and globally (in part, they do that through their partnership with 64 missionaries and like-minded organizations). However, the majority of the congregation may not be missional in their everyday life. The term missional connotes the state of being in which followers of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), are moved to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) to expand God's kingdom on earth. Being missional is to understand one's spiritual gifts, personality, and passions because understanding these three is the first step in knowing one's unique calling.¹⁴ Being missional is being incarnational in showing the love and care of Jesus Christ by living outwardly and deeper into the culture,¹⁵ which should result in producing believers who will preach the gospel not only in a certain region but throughout the world.¹⁶ Though the term "missional" focuses on the kingdom of God, the personal responsibility of Christians and their personal understanding of themselves, God's heart, the culture of the targeted community, the contextualization of the gospel according to the needs of the community, and their personal desires, passions, and conviction is paramount to understanding how God might desire to use their life in "His Kingdom-expanding plans."¹⁷ Wherever they went, Paul and others proclaimed the gospel in their words and actions.

¹⁴ Jeff Christopherson, *Kingdom First: Starting Churches that Shape Movements* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2015), ch.11.

¹⁵ Im Daniel and Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Church: Your Guide to Starting Churches that Multiply*, 2nd ed., (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), ch. 6.

¹⁶ J. D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 25.

¹⁷ Christopherson, *Kingdom First*, ch.11.

Congregation

CBC's "congregation represents more than 20 countries of origin and more than a dozen native languages. This is a family of laborers, professionals, educators, researchers, technicians, and actors - each with a desire to learn about Jesus Christ. This is a place to call home and learn the principles found in God's Word, the Bible."¹⁸ The Mission Statement of the church reflects its desire to cultivate and celebrate its congregation's ethnic, racial, social-economic, generational, and cultural diversity within its unity in Jesus Christ (Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:5-11, 40-47; Gal. 3:26-29; Rev. 5:9-10). The congregation is extremely diverse and well educated. The leadership reflects such diversity; however, for some reason, the executive positions (decision making power) in the pastoral staff, the Board of Deacons, and the Board of the Elders remain in the hands of white American men. These godly and qualified leaders acknowledge the diversity of CBC and lovingly uphold practices that enable the church to abstain from any racial stigma. Although the church represents the diversity of New York City's five boroughs, unfortunately, CBC lacks equal representation from its neighborhood. Rarely does someone from billionaire's row come to CBC.

Current Involvement in Church Planting

Calvary has financially supported several church plants over the last four years. Internal documents reveal that CBC funded church plants in Dubai, Albania, Detroit, and New Jersey. Calvary believes that "church planting is the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and forming kingdom communities among every nation, tribe, people, and tongue to glorify God in time and

¹⁸ "About," Calvary Baptist Church, accessed May 7, 2019, <http://www.cbcnyc.org/history>.

eternity!”¹⁹ Therefore, the church is heavily involved in global missions.²⁰ Beyond financial investment, Calvary does not have any church planting experience.

Earley and Wheeler state, “The word church simply means a gathering of 'called out ones.' Christians are called out of the world and called to a Savior who calls them to a mission. The church is a fulfillment of the kingdom; the kingdom is a fulfillment of the mission of God.”²¹ CBC needs to evaluate its practices and function for revitalization and growth; for “The church exists to spread the gospel and develop the believer to the point where they become the missionaries of the movement.”²² Tim Sensing states, “defining the problem and purpose statement means narrowing the topic.”²³ In an attempt to narrow the topic, the following is the proposed problem and purpose statement.

Problem Presented

CBC’s strong pulpit ministry and its investment in local and global outreach through partner missionaries and missions organizations is evidence of its commitment to the proclamation of the gospel, however, the problem is, as an established church CBC has not planted any other church because of the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches. This is not a formal position rather an underlying assumption of leaders and members. Daniel and Stetzer argue that “for many, the idea of one large church is more attractive

¹⁹ Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2010), 3.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Dave Earley and David Wheeler, *Evangelism Is. . . : How to Share Jesus with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2010), 42.

²² Ibid., 42-43.

²³ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011), 16.

than multiple churches. Large churches have the resources and programs to be full-service congregations.”²⁴

In North America, there seems to be a growing movement that favors the large church—the attractional church model. One of the leading attractional churches in the United States is led by Andy Stanley, who insists, “we are unapologetically attractional.”²⁵ He defends the attractional model by stating, “we grade ourselves on how attractive we are to our target audience. Now, before you go getting all theological on me and writing us off as a dog-and-pony show, take note: We are a church. Our goal isn’t to create an event unchurched people love to attend. We are creating churches.”²⁶ Wilson agrees that “Attractional is certainly attractive,”²⁷ but he claims, “The dominant message in so much attractional preaching is that Jesus has come to make life easier or better for us, that his teachings can help us in pursuit of our aspirations. So, the attractional church sometimes struggles to talk about sin.”²⁸

The proponents of the attractional model disavow such allegations and claim to have a very clear focus on the gospel message along with the seekers and explorers. Stanley considers the old way of “doing church” ineffective and argues that such churches do not welcome the lost because they believe that “the church is for church people.”²⁹ He goes on to say, “churches designed for saved people are full of hypocrites.”³⁰ In his attempt to convince the opposition, he

²⁴ Daniel and Stetzer, *Planting Missional Church*, 7.

²⁵ Andy Stanley, *Deep & Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 17.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

²⁷ Jared Wilson, *The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto against the Status Quo* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 27.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁹ Stanley, *Deep & Wide*, 84.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

raises two questions: what is the church, and who is it for?³¹ He further clarifies that “Many times, when a person complains about the so-called ‘attractional church,’ people understandably assume that the person is arguing for a ‘traditional church.’”³²

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMin thesis is to assess the health of CBC and evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches. CBC exhibits character traits of a traditional church, attractional church, and missional church. Therefore, though the church has seen consistent growth throughout its history, now the church is experiencing a plateau. Perhaps this plateau is caused by a lack of desire to birth new churches in order to experience growth, perhaps this is caused by an unhealthy perception of its leadership that one large church is more attractive than multiple churches. Whatever the reason might be, the health of a church determines its growth. Indisputably, “what the leaders model, the members do. This is a healthy entity principle that cannot be overlooked or ignored. Every healthy church fruitful in Christ’s work has leaders who are modeling a life lived in the love and service of the Savior’s Great Commandment and Great Commission.”³³

There is a need to conduct a research study to better understand the health of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City to discover models or practices that might help Calvary Baptist Church to engage New York City and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ more effectively.

³¹ Stanley, *Deep & Wide*, 55.

³² *Ibid.*, 17.

³³ Rod Earls, “The Biblical Leadership Model” (class paper, EVCP 820 Leading a Healthy Church, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, May 8, 2019), 19.

Basic Assumptions

First, this researcher assumes that since the Great Commission is the single most important task given to the local church by Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:16-20), each individual is personally responsible to engage in evangelization and disciple-making. The second assumption is that CBC' mission and vision statement clearly articulates the Great Commission, and the church's core values highlight the importance of evangelization and missions, therefore the assumption is that the leadership of CBC (both the elders and the pastoral staff) desires to move the congregation to become missional in their everyday life through preaching, teaching, internal policies, programs, activities, disciple-making process, and church ministry strategies. The third assumption is that the church and church leaders want the church to grow both in number as well as spiritually. Therefore, the fourth assumption is that this Action Research will provide a process or a context through which all the stakeholders will work together to "clarify their problems and formulate new ways of envisioning their situations. In doing so, each participant's taken-for-granted cultural viewpoint is challenged and modified so that new systems of meaning emerge that can be incorporated in the texts—rules, regulations, practices, procedures, and policies—that govern our professional and community experience."³⁴ This will bring CBC leadership "closer to the reality of other people's experience and, in the process, increase the potential for creating truly effective services and programs that will enhance the lives of the people"³⁵ that CBC serves both those inside as well as the outside of the church.

³⁴ Ernest Stringer, *Action Research*, 4th ed., (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 54.

³⁵ Ibid.

Definitions

This thesis project will use the following definition throughout unless and otherwise defined differently:

Established Church: A church that is self-sufficient to run full programs to accommodate all kinds of needs without any denominational support from the outside.

Mission: The word mission refers to all that God is doing to bring the nations to himself.³⁶

Missions: The word missions relates to the mission and refers to the pursuit of sharing and showing the gospel to all corners of the earth.³⁷

Missional: Missional means adopting the posture of a missionary, joining Jesus, being on mission, learning, and adapting to the surrounding culture while remaining biblically sound.³⁸

Multiplication of Disciples: A process by which more disciples are produced.

Reproducing Disciples: A disciple that produces other disciples.

Success and Church Growth: Success and Church growth are interchangeably used in the document, and they refer to numerical growth, whether through conversion or transfer growth.

Transfer Growth: This term is referring to numerical growth that happens when churching, already Christian people move their membership or attendance from one church to another.

Leadership: For the purpose of this research, the leadership is broadly defined as any person in the congregation who has an influence on the congregation or is a decision-maker. Narrowly, it describes the members of the official life at Calvary Baptist Church.

³⁶ Daniel and Stetzer, 1.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are several limitations and delimitations that this researcher acknowledges. In this section of this DMin thesis project, the first subsection lists the limitations, and the second subsection indicates the delimitation:

Limitations

First, as the Pastor of Missions and Outreach, this researcher's personal desire to see every person in his congregation involved in missions and evangelism can possibly limit his ability to understanding the current spiritual status of the church, for he equates spiritual growth with missional involvement by which each believer is responsible for carrying out the Great Commission. In his personal Christian philosophy, evangelism and missions is an outward expression of one's faith in Christ and what Christ accomplished in each person's life through the redeeming work on the cross.

Second, his background as a Pakistani who was forbidden from evangelizing others by law in Pakistan and has suffered persecution for his faith may have some prejudice against those who have freedom of speech but are not willing to engage in evangelization.

Third, with an evangelistic background and 12 years as a missionary, this researcher may have a limited understanding of the pace by which an average person engages in evangelization; therefore, the researcher might have unrealistic expectations from the participants involved in this project as well as the results.

Finally, as a pastor and leader in his church, the researcher might influence the participants, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to participate in the research.

Delimitations

This researcher is imposing the following constraints on the research project to ensure that the research is conducted with complete honesty and fairness. The highest quality of this research is contingent upon the following delimitations:

First, the sample group will be taken out of the official life of the church. The official life for 2019 is available on the church website. The congregation elects the official life. Each individual on the official life is considered a leader serving in a certain role to carry out one of many duties to run the church ministry. Each believer is a member and has proven to be worthy of the honor of serving on the leadership of Calvary Baptist Church in their respective ministry areas. No regular attendee or new member will be used in this study.

Second, a secondary researcher who is also a well-respected member of the congregation, an elected member on the official life, and was also elected Chairperson of the Council of Missions, will be the co-investigator. This is done to retrieve the best possible data through the most honest response possible.

Third, the primary researcher's involvement in the research process as far as direct contact with the participants is restricted.

Fourth, the secondary researcher is restricted from sharing any information about the participants.

Thesis Statement

If the congregation is fully informed on the topic of church planting after the assessment, then they will be willing to support another church plant from the mother church.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Although the problem is both researchable and significant for this researcher's ministry, this problem also exists everywhere in the United States of America. Since many churches are dealing with growth issues, there are many books, journal articles, and data on church planting, church growth, and related topics. Experts predict that nearly 4,000 churches will close every year in America, and well over 3,500 people will leave churches every single day, which is causing many researchers to investigate the cause/s for the decline. David M. Odom states, "there is a danger of churches being lulled to sleep and becoming plateaued or in a declining state," and offers "several reasons why churches stop growing and possible solutions to turn a non-growing church into a growing church."³⁹

Review of Literature

First, this review of literature is conducted to gain a broad familiarity with the primary source, and also some exposure to the issues associated with the general topic of this research.⁴⁰ This will enable this researcher to see the big picture in the tertiary sources before getting lost in the endless details of the secondary literature, which will keep the focus on the primary sources.⁴¹

Therefore, this researcher is asking the following three questions in the primary sources:

³⁹ David M. Odom, "Turning Plateaued and Decline Churches Around" (DMin diss., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001), Abstract.

⁴⁰ Kibbe, *From Topic to Thesis*, p.55.

⁴¹ Ibid.

1. Which portions are clearly relevant to the topic this researcher already has in place (however broad they may be)?
2. What issues within those portions strike this researcher as particularly interesting?
3. What are some possible arguments this researcher could make?⁴²

Second, in order to accurately evaluate the stated Statement of the Problem, an examination of CBC's current church model and the leadership style necessitates a thorough understanding of the preferred church models and the leadership style exercised in the United States for church growth. The challenge that almost every church faces today is not the lack of models to shop from, rather the excess of models for both church growth and leadership that are creating anxiety and confusion. Craig and Wilson state, "Until recently there were relatively few well-developed models and methods for planting churches. Now so many strategies and methods abound that it can be difficult to assess which might be the most appropriate for any given situation."⁴³

Success and Church Growth

Multiple pieces of research indicate that the church in North America is declining, "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."⁴⁴ Therefore, churches in North America are seeking ways to grow. They are attempting to copy what is perceived as successful models from churches that seem to be able to attract people.

⁴² Kibbe, *From Topic to Thesis*, p.49.

⁴³ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 127.

⁴⁴ Thom S. Rainer, "Hope For Dying Churches," LifeWay: Facts & Trends, January 16, 2018, accessed June 18, 2019, <https://factsandtrends.net/2018/01/16/hope-for-dying-churches/>.

Bailey suggests that church growth is a matter of spiritual formation and “At its heart, spiritual formation is not about being a lone wanderer and experience spiritual growth in a vacuum,”⁴⁵ rather he states, “It involves developing Christlike personal spiritual growth while simultaneously influencing and being influenced by others who may be on the same spiritual growth journey.”⁴⁶ According to Craig and Wilson “The growth itself is clearly the mysterious work of God, although humans have a responsibility to sow the seed (Mark 4:26–29),”⁴⁷ therefore, they suggest that church growth has to be organic, “...we emphasize the need to plant churches that have multiplication potential in their DNA, that stress organic rather than organizational values, that favor centrifugal rather than centripetal growth (outward sending rather than inward retaining), and that use reproducible structures and ministries.”⁴⁸

If the church growth is an organic process, then “The birth, growth, and health of the C/church involve people relating to the Lord and one another according to biblical parameters.”⁴⁹ This requires a change on a personal level—the spiritual formation in which the “Obedience—and not the size of the congregation or the wealth and abilities of the members—is the measure of church health.”⁵⁰ Elkington states, “It is this missional, post-Christendom, organic view of the church that informs and gives rise to the model for growth.”⁵¹ He indicates that “The function of the church is multifaceted, but all synthesizing into the one key purpose of mission. The church

⁴⁵ Anthony Wayne Bailey, “Spiritual Formation: A Model to Strengthen the Mission, Operation, and Commitment of African American Churches” (Dmin diss., Liberty University School of Divinity, Lynchburg, Virginia, 2016), 9.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁷ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 42.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁹ Payne, 50.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁵¹ Robert Lionel Elkington, “A Missional Church Model,” *SAGE Open* 1, no.3 (2011): 4, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244011428086>.

is a living organism on mission for God. All that the church does should accomplish the missional purpose of ‘bringing many sons to glory’ (Hebrews 2:5-10).”⁵² According to Wilson, “the truth is that we were products of the Church Growth Movement—we read the books, attended the conferences, adopted the strategies, and revered the gurus. ‘Success’ came to mean numbers (although we wouldn’t have admitted it), so a functional pragmatism seeped into our leadership ethos.”⁵³

Getz states, “When measuring a church, we must look for the degree to which believers have a true understanding of who the Lord Jesus Christ really is”⁵⁴ He argues, “Churches are measured in many ways today. Some look at good Bible teaching or evangelistic preaching. Others look at numerical growth, building projects, well-orchestrated services, contemporary music, or a seeker-sensitive environment. Still, others measure a church by its potpourri of activities, mission outreach, organizational efficiency, or even its management style.”⁵⁵ He does not dismiss these measurements and states, “All of these things are noteworthy, and most are even important, but they aren’t what Paul and other New Testament writers thanked God for in their letters to New Testament churches. Rather, they were thankful for the degree of faith, hope, and love that existed in those churches.”⁵⁶ Payne agrees with Wilson on the subject of ‘success’ that it is a harmful approach and proposes, “the problem with this theological method of church

⁵² Robert Lionel Elkington, “A Missional Church Model,” 3.

⁵³ Jared Wilson, *The Prodigal Church*, 197.

⁵⁴ Gene A. Getz, *The Measure of a Healthy Church: How God Defines Greatness in a Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 187.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

planting is that 'successful' models become the standard for understanding the church, usually without questioning the health of the church established.”⁵⁷

However, Coleman holds the church leaders responsible for the lack of growth and states, “All too many times one has been brought to the place of service only to be discharged with no further training or inspiration. The result is that the activity becomes localized in a feverish round of excitement. There is no growth,”⁵⁸ he further states, “The potential ability resident in the worker is not developed, and before long, a promising leader is spoiled for want of supervision. Success is lost on the eve of victory. What once looked so good eventually becomes a stumbling stone to the best.”⁵⁹ Earley and Dempsey assert, “The slow process of raising multiplying leaders is the fastest way to fulfill the Great Commission.”⁶⁰ Malphurs indicates, “The problem is that very few churches measure spiritual progress. Some may measure their offerings and their attendance, and that is helpful and good. But most churches do not measure the growth of their congregation toward spiritual maturity, which is so very important to every ministry.”⁶¹ The following section explores the subject of church models as it relates to a healthy church, a healthy leadership, and a multiplication of reproducing disciples.

Church Models

Payne defines what a method or model is and advises what components should be considered when following a particular method or model, “A method is a way of doing something—a plan, a system, an approach. Applied to church planting, it is the system we use to

⁵⁷ Payne, 32.

⁵⁸ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 81.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is. . . : How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2013), 118.

⁶¹ Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, ch. 9.

plant churches. Models are the expressions of the church that come into existence by the use of particular methods. Church planters must understand that their ecclesiology will influence the methods they use and the resulting models.”⁶² He advises, “the methods used to plant churches should be reproducible by the people themselves. If church-planting teams use complicated methods based on sophisticated training or Western culture, then the likelihood decreases for the gospel spreading from person to person and churches multiplying throughout a land.”⁶³

Stanley states, “the model defines the church and thus, more than anything, determines the status quo. This is how we do it here. This is who we are. Over time, churches fall in love with their models. But models are meant to be a means to an end. Models are created to support the mission of the church,”⁶⁴ and the truth is, Stanley points out that, “for most churches, sustaining the current model is the mission of the church...Ministry models that don’t support the mission of the church eventually impede the mission or become the mission.”⁶⁵

He claims that “One of the primary reasons churches are empty is because church leaders love their models more than they love people.”⁶⁶ Christopherson agrees with Stanley on not becoming lovers of any model because “Those who have serially planted in multiple contexts have discovered that rigidly clinging to our favorite model usually brings depreciating results.”⁶⁷ Payne states that the lack of theological education causes church planters to adopt a model that is not fitting for their context because “In order to make any significant advancement for the

⁶² Payne, 35.

⁶³ Ibid., 32.

⁶⁴ Stanley, ch.13.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Christopherson, *Kingdom First*, Introduction.

kingdom, church planters must have a solid theological basis for their church-planting methods and strategies.”⁶⁸ However, Christopherson argues, “Models generally originate from the heart of a planter by the guidance of the Holy Spirit for a specific context.”⁶⁹ Therefore, while Payne recommends, “As church-planting teams sift the various models, they can then take those elements that will work well in their contexts and make the appropriate applications. The result will be the development and use of culturally relevant church-planting methods,”⁷⁰

Christopherson states, “At its base, a church-planting model is simply an image of a concept that is used to help a church planter know, understand, and simulate a contextual application of that concept. What many have reacted against is not the concept of a model but the lack of contextual application of the model.”⁷¹ Payne argues that “North American and European missionaries often applied the methods of the West to the cultures of the East, rather than using biblically informed, contextually relevant methods.”⁷²

Christopherson removes the focus from the models themselves and put it on the individuals who adopt such models, he states, “Models are seen by some as merely formulaic methodology, devoid of any guiding spiritual impulse, that leads a planter to a “just add water” approach to his assignment,”⁷³ and he adds, “For many the term connotes an image of a conference, a significant fee, a hefty notebook, a series of similar testimonies from satisfied

⁶⁸ Payne, 25.

⁶⁹ Christopherson, ch.10.

⁷⁰ Payne, 32.

⁷¹ Christopherson, ch.10

⁷² Payne, 27.

⁷³ Christopherson, ch.10.

customers, and a significant disclaimer that was rarely believed or applied: ‘The ideas presented in this conference are from this pastor’s experiences.’”⁷⁴

Christopherson also argues that the unsuccessfulness of any model in another context is due to changes from the unique context where it was originally successful; he states, “Usually, by the time the model receives some notoriety, it is already several years old and wouldn’t currently work as well as it did, even for the original planter and context. Skilled church planters will learn to hold their models loosely and have the leadership agility to adjust and adapt their strategies as the context requires.”⁷⁵ Wilson agrees with Christopherson on the shortcomings of a formulaic approach when he argues that “There is a beauty in all of this diversity. It is legalism when we place a burden on another local church body to look more like our own than Christ’s.”⁷⁶

Understanding of the Various Church Models

Several popular church models are being utilized in North America today to experience church growth. None of the models are without strengths and weaknesses. The following outline is a concise description of some of these models, followed by their strengths and weaknesses.

1. The Pauline church planting model focuses on the book of Acts and follows Paul’s footsteps to plant churches.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Christopherson, ch.10.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Wilson, 22.

⁷⁷ Ott and Wilson, 3.

2. Missional or incarnational churches desire to show the love and care of Jesus Christ by living outward and deeper into the culture. In this model, church planting is a way of life rather than a strategy.⁷⁸
3. The simple or house church model essentially focuses on limited group size. It prioritizes face-to-face relationships to connect every church member.⁷⁹
4. The multiethnic or monoethnic model advocates for a multiethnic or monoethnic group approach.⁸⁰
5. The multisite model is defined as “one church that has two or more locations with shared leadership, budget, vision, and board.”⁸¹
6. The traditional model “tends to be program-driven, and single pastor (or senior pastor) led.”⁸²
The Sunday morning worship service is the focus.
7. Cell model “consists of several small groups that frequently meet as individual cells...Each cell is interdependent with the other cells.”⁸³
8. The house model is similar to the cell model, but also has a pastor and is autonomous.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Daniel and Stetzer, ch. 6.

⁷⁹ Ibid., ch. 7.

⁸⁰ Ibid., ch. 8.

⁸¹ Ibid., ch. 9, 133.

⁸² Payne, 315.

⁸³ Ibid., 316.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 317.

9. The purpose-driven or attractional model⁸⁵ is organized “around five biblical purposes: worship, evangelism, ministry, fellowship, and discipleship.”⁸⁶

Perceived Strengths of the Various Models

The following are the perceived strengths of the various models:

1. The Pauline church planting model depends on the proclamation of the gospel. In this model, mission means not only to preach the gospel but also to plant churches that would multiply. The planting of reproducing churches will preach the gospel not only in a region but throughout the world.⁸⁷
2. Missional or incarnational churches are all about living out Christ, and “Through their building relationships and doing ministry, a church emerges.”⁸⁸
3. The simple or house church model connects church members with each other. It is more organic, less institutional; it has more simplicity, less structure; there is more community, less acquaintances; there are more ministers, less minister to since everyone is doing ministry; there is more participation, less passivity.⁸⁹
4. The multiethnic or monoethnic model removes cultural and ethical issues.
5. The multisite model is “straightforward, practical, and fairly comprehensive.”⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Daniel and Stetzer, 323.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 318.

⁸⁷ Daniel and Stetzer, 25.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁸⁹ Payne, ch. 3.

⁹⁰ Bobby Jamieson, “Book Review: Multi-Site Churches, by Scott McConnell” *IX 9Marks*, March, 3, 2010, <https://www.9marks.org/review/multi-site-churches/>.

6. The traditional model provides structure and stability and involves more people in decision making.
7. The cell model can survive even during severe persecution. It is also extremely cost-effective.
8. A house model is a small group that promotes relationships but also has the feel of a traditional church.
9. The purpose-driven or attractional model welcomes unbelievers and disciples them.

Perceived Weaknesses of the Various Models

The following are the perceived weaknesses of the various models:

1. The Pauline church planting model most often will require a church planter. Paul was single and completely committed. “In the Pauline correspondence, we do not find the formulation of an explicit mission strategy or methodology,” so it is hard to replicate the model.⁹¹
2. Missional or incarnational churches do not have a clear vision, “Rather than starting with a prescribed vision of what the church will look like (most good church planters spell this out in a vision prospectus or fund-raising proposal), proponents of this new way of planting churches let their incarnation of Christ drive the mission in their community and beyond.”⁹²
3. The simple or house church model is limited to small congregations.
4. The multiethnic or monoethnic model is too narrowly focused and divides the church racially.

⁹¹ Ott and Wilson, 25.

⁹² Daniel and Stetzer, 83.

5. The multisite model runs the risk of glorifying a celebrity pastor. A whole ministry built around one pastor can suffer when the pastor leaves or dies.
6. The traditional model can make the Sunday service the focus of a church.
7. The cell model can suffer from a lack of leadership.
8. The house model could create a sense of being an exclusive club.
9. The purpose-driven or attractional model can create a place with thousands of disconnected believers.

Leadership

In the United States, there are several leadership models that are being used in secular as well as Christian organizations. All models have their own strengths and weaknesses. In the Christian arena, there is not any unanimously approved or an agreed-upon leadership model. In the secular world as well, there is no one universal leadership style that trumps the rest. Usually, leadership falls in one of these models: the authentic leadership model, situational leadership model, servant leadership model, and charismatic leadership model. The Bible neither provides an explicit definition of biblical leadership nor “a specific template for the exact right way to do governance for your church.”⁹³ However, the Bible lists a set of values and attributes that form the concept of the biblical leadership model. This section explores the subject of leadership as it relates to a healthy church, a healthy leadership, church models, and multiplication of reproducing disciples.

⁹³ Gene A. Getz, *Elders and Leaders: God's Plan for Leading the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2003), 12.

The Biblical Leadership Model

The biblical leadership model does not offer a blanket style of leadership, rather it acknowledges the uniqueness of each person (Psalm 139:13-14) that is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) with God-given talents, abilities, and spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6) for His own “good pleasure” (Philippian 2:13). The first book of the Bible, Genesis shows that humans were created by God to reign, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis, 1:26, ESV), and the last book of the Bible, Revelation shows, “Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6, ESV).

In the Old Testament, at least four types of leaders are mentioned: prophets (1 Kings 19:16), priests (Exodus 28:41), kings (1 Samuel 15:1), and judges (Judges 2:16-19). Empowered by the Spirit of God, the Old Testament leaders served in both religious as well as political roles. In the New Testament, apostles, prophets, teachers, (1 Corinthians 12:28-30), elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7), and deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) serve as church leaders. In the biblical leadership model, through the Holy Spirit, God confirms leaders and determines their role and responsibilities (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17; Titus 1:9; Heb. 13:17) through the Scriptures. In the biblical leadership model, true authority rests in the hands of God, who alone is supreme above all (1 Peter 5:11-13; Matthew 28:18), and leaders exercise God’s authority in humility. In the biblical leadership model, one’s qualifications are not determined by education, socio-economic status, and physical stature, but rather by one’s character for “the Lord does not

look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7, NIV).

The New Testament does not prescribe a specific model of leadership, but there seems to be a clear indication of plurality in leadership.⁹⁴ It is also clear from the Scriptures that the apostles and their assistants did not appoint more than one elder just for the sake of promoting plurality in leadership, rather “they appointed only if they were qualified to serve in this position.”⁹⁵ According to the Scriptures and the ecclesiological practices of the apostles, God is more interested in the qualification for a biblical leader (Titus 1:5-9) than any leadership model that one perceives to be a biblical leadership model, including the plurality in leadership model.

The New Testament addresses the biblical leaders as elders (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,6,22,23; 20:17; 21:18; James 5:14; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:19-20; Titus 1:7), overseers (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Peter 5:1-2), shepherds (Acts 20:28), and in one verse as leaders (Hebrews 13:17). Functionally, elders, overseers, and shepherds are pastors. Therefore, the paid pastors are also biblical elders, overseers, and shepherds. In Titus 1:7 *episkopos* means overseer which Paul uses interchangeably with elder in Titus 1:5. Hereinafter, this paper will use “elders/overseers” to reference elders and overseers. Noticeably, the Bible does not negate the contemporary practices of the church in the West that follows one or more combinations of leadership models such as the church council, congregationalism, deacon board, elder board, and staff-led models to govern a local congregation. In the New Testament, there are glimpses of some of the aspects of the above-mentioned leadership models. In the churches in Jerusalem, Antioch and Ephesus were under the leadership of elders/overseers, but in the churches in Crete,

⁹⁴ Getz, *Elders and Leaders*, 209.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Titus was the only elder/overseer who was watching over elders/overseers in several different locations, and those elders/overseers served as sub-councils of elders or boards of elders in their locations. As a general principle, “Elders/overseers are free to develop approaches that will enable them to function effectively as managers/shepherds in their own cultures. Furthermore, as the church grows numerically, so should the group of elders/overseers in order to manage effectively.”⁹⁶

Characteristics of Healthy Leadership

The characteristics of the biblical leadership model promoted in the New Testament are the same as in the Old Testament. God is looking for godly men of godly character with a contrite heart (Psalm 51:17), for “God is not interested in your ‘spiritual life.’ God is just interested in your life. He intends to redeem it.”⁹⁷ First, a man of character is humble enough to acknowledge his shortfalls and plans. However, when he is fallen, he is mature enough to confess his sins before God and His people (Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 6:5; Luke 5:8; Luke 18:23; 1 Timothy 1:15). Second, he is teachable (Galatians 5:22-23) and seeks wisdom from God (1 King 3:9), other men of God (Joshua 1), and other resources such as books, articles, and ongoing training to stay rooted in the Word of God. Third, he is a man of integrity and does not hold grudges (Genesis 44; 50:20). Fourth, he is a man with a servant's heart (1 Timothy 3:2; Romans 12:10,13; 1 Peter 4:8-9). Fifth, he is about to teach himself, his family, and others, thus keeping himself, his family, and his congregation in order (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:23-25; 1 Timothy 3:4). Sixth, he is able to practice self-control by eating and consuming food and drinks

⁹⁶ Getz, 209.

⁹⁷ John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted Participant's Guide: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 15.

moderately, by keeping is cool and not giving in to sinful anger (John 2:13-17; Ephesians 4:26; 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; Proverbs 23:20-21, 29-30; 1 Corinthians 6:12). Seventh, he is morally pure. That is, he is a husband of one woman, and if he is not married then he has kept himself sexually pure by not engaging in extra material relationships (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6; 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11, 19-20; 7::2-5; Romans 1:24; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:19). These seven characteristics in a leader can contribute significantly to developing a healthy church by simply reproducing disciples that reproduce disciples with the same qualities.

Biblical Leadership and Contribution to a Healthy Church

Elders/overseers can contribute to a healthy church by upholding the Scriptural mandate for biblical leaders; that they serve out of humility, a good reputation, and maturity. The Scriptural mandate is shown as an example, such as Titus and Timothy; as well as a set of ecclesiological instructions in the Pauline epistles, such as 1 Timothy and Titus for the benefit of the local churches in the world with the freedom to contextualize the leadership style according to the need of the local congregation. In the Old Testament and the New Testament, the biblical leaders' qualifications are less "about skills, abilities, or even spiritual gifts,"⁹⁸ and more about their qualities of life such as, "high moral and ethical behavior, right attitudes, pure motives, proper goals, positive habits, and quality relationships."⁹⁹ This equates to being above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2) and having a good reputation with all people inside and outside the church (1 Timothy 3:7). If a leader truly believes in the authority of the Scriptures, then "truths from the

⁹⁸ Gene A. Getz, *The Measure of a Healthy Church: How God Defines Greatness in a Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016), 155.

⁹⁹Ibid.

Bible should primarily drive the way one thinks, articulates, and lives,”¹⁰⁰ which means “Christian spirituality should be rooted in God’s Word that serves as the basis for living that is truly spiritual.”¹⁰¹ The Scriptures place heavy emphasis on characters because “Leaders can have a lot of Bible knowledge and be immature spiritually. Unfortunately, such leaders can easily intimidate others and be controlling—often while being motivated by pride.”¹⁰² By exhibiting godly characteristics (1 Timothy 3:1–12; Titus 1:5–9) that the Scriptures instruct (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and exemplify in heroes of faith (Hebrew 11:2-3), biblical leadership can create a culture of healthy church leadership that can cultivate a healthy church.

Church Health

In the United States, there seems to be a common misconception that now, through the internet and digital access to resources that are spreading across the world, the number of people who attend a church service equates to the success of a church. There are several issues with such a measurement and using this mindset to determine the health of a church. First and foremost, every church has its DNA and expression of the kingdom of God. Second, the legal and political climate of the host culture may not allow the church to proclaim the gospel openly or even to congregate. Third, depending on the contextualization of the term church and the leadership style that non-western Christians may observe, the church may look completely different from the pre-conceived idea of a church that emerges from the Western predominantly Christian worldview. This means at least one thing: that the success of a church determined by the size of the congregation is not equal to how God measures the successfulness of a church.

¹⁰⁰ P. Adam McClendon, *Paul’s Spirituality in Galatians: A Critique of Contemporary Christian Spiritualities* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 5.

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Getz, *The Measure of a Healthy Church*, 153.

The Spirit of God is moving in cultures where the church is prohibited legally from meeting in groups bigger than three to four people, restricted legally from evangelizing the communities around them, and yet the Holy Spirit is bringing people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. These new converts are finding fellowship with God and other believers in their cultural context in what is known as the “unground church,” whether it is happening in China, Iran, Saudi Arabia or somewhere else, the size of a local church as the measurement for a healthy church is the last thing on their mind as they continue to grow in numbers by the power of the Holy Spirit. This section explores the subject of a healthy church as it relates to healthy leadership, church models, and multiplication of reproducing disciples.

What Does a Healthy Church Look Like?

In American culture, churches are a multi-trillion-dollar industry; they are consistently building bigger structures that include all kinds of amenities with well-paid staff and operational budgets that could feed billions of people in third world countries. The bigger the size of a congregation, the more space, resources, and services it requires. Currently, several debates are going on surrounding the idea of what determines the health and growth of a church. For example, the debate between proponents of the attractional and missional models. Andy Stanley favors the attractional model with a very clear focus on the seekers and explorers. He considers the old way of “doing church” ineffective and insists that such churches do not welcome the lost because they believe that “the church is for church people.”¹⁰³ He goes on to say, “churches designed for saved people are full of hypocrites.”¹⁰⁴ He raises two questions: what is the church,

¹⁰³ Stanley, 84.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 74.

and who is it for?¹⁰⁵ His position regarding the attractional church model is clear when he admits, “we are unapologetically attractional. In our search for common ground with unchurched people, we've discovered that, like us, they are consumers. So, we leverage their consumer instincts.”

Wilson is definitively uncomfortable with the idea of consumer-based ministry philosophy, and he thinks that “the evangelical church in the West is particularly susceptible to two primary ideologies that derive many of its ways of doing church today, and I think the attractional model is fundamentally built on these functional ideologies. These ideologies are pragmatism and consumerism.”¹⁰⁶ Patrick John Hannon argues, “yes, all people must consume to live. Humans use things. However, seeing the use of things as the path to the best life possible is antithetical to the missional narrative of God. The church in North America has not been immune to this narrative of consumerism.”¹⁰⁷

In other parts of the world, the church is the body of Christ that shares, suffers, and sacrifices for the Lord and each other. This is the picture of the church in Acts. In the American church, there is a disconnect between churches across denominational lines and within churches where the leadership is disconnected from the congregation, and then there is also a disconnect within the congregation itself. Intentionally creating programs to remove that disconnect is a healthy practice, but it can never be the substitute for a genuine desire to be in communion with God and each other. Acts 2:41-42 presents an image that is not usually seen in the American church. It says, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there

¹⁰⁵ Stanley, 55.

¹⁰⁶ Wilson, 49.

¹⁰⁷ Patrick John Hannon, “Missional Spirituality: Practices for Developing Missional Disciples Among Emerging Adult University Students” (DMin diss., Anderson University School of Theology, 2011), 15.

were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (NASB).

Unfortunately, in American culture today, most often, a local church is all about the Sunday service rather than everyday life. The church leadership (elders, overseers, and shepherds) and church members think alike. The paid staff (pastors, elders, overseers, and shepherds) work tirelessly to make the Sunday service experience the best experience that visitors and members can have. The congregation also makes sure they do not miss the Sunday service. Therefore, all of the efforts and resources are usually utilized to make that one morning the highlight of the week. This creates a misconception about what healthy leadership is, and what a healthy church is.

Getz writes, “Though ‘numerical growth’ and ‘spiritual growth’ were certainly not mutually exclusive, there was a major foundational criteria [sic] for discerning spiritual growth in these churches that clearly emerges from the biblical record.”¹⁰⁸ He supports his idea of church health by arguing that “the majority of churches in the New Testament world paled in size when compared with the churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus. Most of them were not located in large population centers, and those that were, remained small communities of faith simply because of some very specific cultural reasons.”¹⁰⁹ He concludes, “It’s clear from the New Testament story that numbers and quantitative growth never became a means for measuring success for New Testament churches, even in those that were relatively large.”¹¹⁰ In the biblical church model, the church is not divided into sects, models, and denominations, but is rather a

¹⁰⁸ Getz, *Healthy Church*, 16.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

unified body of Christ. The biblical church exists to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Daniel insists that the difference between the missional and the attractional models is church building. In the missional model, “the church has left the building,”¹¹¹ and in the attractional model, the building remains the primary hub for the proclamation of the gospel; therefore, “if you build it, they will come.”¹¹² In defense of the attractional approach, Hornsby emphasizes that their “church never loses sight of the souls that Christ died for, and attempts to reach cultures that the church has neglected in the past.”¹¹³

Characteristics of a Healthy Church

Healthy churches focus on God’s kingdom, His Will for them, and the world. They believe in the inerrancy of the Scriptures and uphold the orthodoxy of the Christian faith as they come together to pray daily, break bread daily, worship the resurrected Christ daily, and proclaim the gospel daily. Morrison writes, “instead of programs and worship services aimed at attracting and extracting potential members from the community and into congregational life, the missional church emphasizes the need to equip believers to be sent out into the world.”¹¹⁴ Paul teaches that the primary function of the local church is “to equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:12, ESV). Therefore, the missional model looks at the world as the missions field, and the job of the local church is to go into the world “and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19, ESV).

¹¹¹ Rolland Daniels, *The Church in the Middle: Stepping Outside the Building to Reach the World of Tomorrow* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 2014), 4.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Billy Hornsby, *The Attractional Church: Growth Through a Refreshing, Relational, and Relevant Church Experience* (New York: Faith Words, 2011), chap. 1, Kindle.

¹¹⁴ Bradley T. Morrison, “Already-Mission: Expanding Congregational Mission,” *SAGE Open* 42, no. 3 (2014): 272, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/0091829613507023>.

The following is a list of a few characteristics of a healthy church.

- They are committed to meeting daily. A healthy church looks more like a group of people irrespective of the size of the group, for Jesus foretold that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He is present among them (Matthew 18:20). They live for the communion with God personally on an individual level as well as with one another. The health of a church is a matter of quality rather than quantity. Getz's suggestion is when "evaluating our churches spirituality—regardless of size—and helping us produce communities of faith that reflect the life of the Lord Jesus Christ."¹¹⁵
- They are committed to following the Great Commission of Christ. First and foremost, healthy churches are missional in their ecclesiology. This means every believer is missional. Missional is a state of being in which followers of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4), are moved to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) to expand God's kingdom on earth.
- They are committed to growing in Christ: They focus on becoming imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2) by growing deeper in the Word of God. Growing in Christ is to understand one's spiritual gifts, personality, and passions, which is the first step in knowing one's unique calling.¹¹⁶
- They are committed to becoming kingdom focused and incarnational. They become incarnational in showing the love and care of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives; this should result in producing believers who will preach the gospel not only in a certain

¹¹⁵ Getz, *Healthy Church*, 11.

¹¹⁶ Jeff Christopherson, *Kingdom First*, ch.11.

region but throughout the world.¹¹⁷ The focus on the kingdom of God increases the personal responsibility of Christians and their understanding of themselves, God’s heart, the culture of the targeted community, and the contextualization of the gospel according to the needs of the community. This means, “As culture changes and new realities emerge, the church must reimagine what it means to be missional and contextualize the message and experience among others.”¹¹⁸ In this process, their desire to grow, their passion to become imitators of Christ, and conviction to take the gospel to others is paramount to understanding how God might desire to use their life in “His Kingdom-expanding plans.”¹¹⁹

- They are committed to a transformative life: The more they desire Christ, and the more they resemble the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), resulting in a renewing of the mind and a transformation of lives (Romans 12:2). Mark Lau Branson argues, “when the people do the work of engaging texts and context. Because of the very nature of God and God’s Word, a congregation’s life of study and prayerful listening will make them attentive to the world around them.”¹²⁰

Multiplication of Disciples

If it is true that without healthy leadership, a healthy church is not possible, then with healthy leadership, a church must be a healthy church. This section will attempt to discover a direct correlation between healthy leadership and a healthy church that results in the

¹¹⁷ Payne, 25.

¹¹⁸ Timothy Dally, “Mentoring Missional Church Planting” (DMin diss., Theological School of Drew University, 2007), 9.

¹¹⁹ Christopherson, *Kingdom First*, ch.11.

¹²⁰ Mark Lau Branson, “Forming Church, Forming Mission,” *International Review of Mission* 92, no.365 (2009): 159, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6631.2003.tb00391.x>.

multiplication of disciples. If the goal of the church is to serve as God's light in the world, sent by the Risen Savior, then perhaps it is essential to change the measurement of success, and hence redefine the purpose of the church.¹²¹ This section explores the subject of discipleship as it relates to healthy leadership, a healthy church, and the multiplication of reproducing disciples.

What is a Disciple?

Many excellent definitions are devoted to the concept of discipleship, and several variations of definition for a disciple come from its literal meaning of a student, a follower, a learner, and someone who follows the teaching of someone else. So, a Christian disciple is essentially a follower, a student, and an adherent of the teachings of Jesus Christ. The term "Christians" itself finds its roots as being a follower or disciples of Jesus Christ. Acts 11:26 says that it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians; in its original context, it was meant to be an insult. At least four attributes come out of the historical context of Christians and the word disciple in the New Testament:

- A disciple of Jesus Christ is always seeking Christ's name to be recognized above all names. Christ is the focus of a disciple of Jesus Christ, and Christ becomes the lover of his soul (Matthew 22:37; Hebrew 12:1-2; Colossians 1:18; Philippians 1:21).
- A disciple of Jesus Christ is persecuted for Christ's namesake because he follows Christ and lives for Christ and sharing His gospel (Philippians 1:21; Matthew 28:16-20; 5:1; 1 Peter 3:13-17).

¹²¹ Robert Lionel Elkington, "A Missional Church Model," *SAGE Open* 1, no.3 (2011): 3, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244011428086>.

- A disciple of Jesus Christ receives recognition for being Christian from Christ, and the world because of his effective and faithful witness of Christ (Matthew 7:22-24; Acts 11:16).
- A disciple of Jesus Christ is obedient to the Word of God. He loves God and others (1 John 4:19; John 13:26).

Correlation Between Leadership and Church

Biblical leadership and a healthy church work together to foster an environment in which every believer is conforming to the image of Christ. Their doctrine is rooted in the Scriptures, and they practice an incarnational lifestyle as they live out the gospel. Their intentionality about connecting with God and with each other and those who have yet to come to Christ regularly permeates Christ's love and presence. They are reproducing disciple-makers who are transforming lives by expanding His kingdom on earth. They are global in the missional view of God and celebrate diversity by allowing all ethnic groups to serve in leadership roles as long as they meet the biblical qualifications mentioned above. Biblical leadership is spiritually, emotionally, psychosocially, and physically healthy. They acknowledge, "the ultimate source of all blessing is God himself. The channel may be human, and so even the everyday conversation of Christians may become a means of grace to others."¹²²

Biblical leadership inspires the church to be biblical in its ecclesiological life. Slinger argues, "the health of the local church's inner life shapes the corporate aspect of the mission of

¹²² A. Skevington. Wood, "Ephesians" in *Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, vol. 11, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J.D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 65.

the church because united and holy congregations accurately display the Gospel to the world.”¹²³

The church showcases the gospel through every one of its members. This means every possible convert is a reproducing disciple and a possible biblical leader who is a vine and not a trellis. Every child of God on the Great Commission is supposed to be a vine.¹²⁴ Every believer should be a disciple of Jesus, who is making disciples who are trained to make disciples of Christ. This beautiful rhythm of becoming a reproducing disciple of Jesus Christ produces biblical leaders who lead healthy churches. However, churches with pastors (the paid elders/overseers) as the vine and the congregation as the trellis represent unhealthy churches with unhealthy leadership; they can never carry out the Great Commission effectively. They build bigger buildings and develop discipleship plans, but their churches die for their lack of vision. Healthy churches with healthy leadership focus on a few things: the Word of God, the people of God, and training. Another way to look at the correlation between a healthy church and healthy leadership and vice versa is by examining their conviction, “their knowledge of God and understanding of the Bible;”¹²⁵ character, “the godly character and life that accords with sound doctrine;”¹²⁶ and competency, “the ability to prayerfully speak God’s Word to others in a variety of ways.”¹²⁷

Since they are not busy building buildings, they build people and invest in training believers who

¹²³ Joseph Matthew Slinger, “Attractional Church: The Impact of the Inner Life of a Local Church on Corporate Mission in North America” (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, North Carolina, 2017), 1.

¹²⁴ Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything* (Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2009), Back cover, All Christian ministry is a mixture of trellis and vine. There is vine work: the prayerful preaching and teaching of the word of God to see people converted and grow to maturity as disciples of Christ. Vine work is the Great Commission. And there is trellis work: creating and maintaining the physical and organizational structures and programs that support vine work and its growth.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 78.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

become disciples of Christ who are not only part of the vine, but also vine workers and disciple-makers who speak the word of truth to each other and those outside.¹²⁸

Another correlation is the focus on the gospel. Healthy leadership keeps the focus on the gospel in every aspect of their personal, family, and ecclesiological lives. This behavior transmits into the life of the church, and a church becomes a healthy church which results again in members who have a focus on the gospel. They live by the gospel. Their understanding of the Scriptures, especially the Great Commission, and the verses pertaining to ecclesiology (2 Tim 2:2; Col 3:16; 1 Cor 12:29; Jas 3:1; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Tim 3:8-13; 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Con 3:5-9; Matt 28:19; 1 Pet 3:15; Eph 4:11) shifts the focus of the church. They bring every argument and every explanation back to the gospel. The gospel goes forth by the power of the Holy Spirit, and when the Word of God is spoken, the proclamation of the gospel makes the kingdom of God possible on earth as it is in heaven. The sources behind the proclamation of the gospel can easily be traced back to “*proclaiming* (speaking the word) and *praying* (calling upon God to pour out his Spirit to make the word effective in people’s hearts).”¹²⁹

Another correlation is the responsibility and role of every believer in the church. A healthy leadership invests time in studying the Scriptures to discover and articulate the role and responsibility of every Christian in the local body of Jesus Christ. This leads to the transformation of individual lives and the proclamation of the gospel through praying for the pouring out of God’s Spirit to make the word effective in people’s hearts.¹³⁰ This correlation between healthy leadership and a healthy church is again defined by the number of vine workers.

¹²⁸ Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything*, 122-123.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

If there are a few vine workers, that indicates a disconnect between the leadership and the church and possibly exposes the ill area of a previously perceived healthy leadership and a healthy church. However, if the result of the defined roles and responsibilities of the believers ends in becoming disciples of Jesus Christ who make disciple-making disciples and also practice what the leadership exemplifies in the proclamation of the gospel and praying for the pouring out of God's Spirit, then the church is as healthy as its leadership.

Another correlation between a healthy church and healthy leadership is its simple approach to church ministry to make disciples of Jesus Christ. There is no need for any complex ministry philosophy that generates a series of programs and activities or that which rely on gimmicks, rather the approach is quite simple: believe the Scriptures, live by the Scriptures and proclaim the Scriptures.

Another correlation between a healthy church and healthy leadership that results in the multiplication of disciples is a healthy view of lay leaders. The church and its leadership emphasize on trained laity and devote its resources to advancing that mindset. The opposing mindset argues that paid believers that are serving as pastors (elders/overseers) are to be trained to do the ministry and the rest of the believers make sure that they are paying the pastors (elders/overseers) to continue the work of the Lord, and only when necessary provide service. However, "the goal of all Christian ministry, in all its forms, is disciple-making" Paul teaches this principle in Ephesians 4:12-16, that the job of a pastor is to equip the saints for the work of ministry, and when the saints are trained and equipped they will carry out the Great Commission and will make disciples who will make more disciples.

Biblical Foundation for Strategic Evangelism

This section of the literature review explores a strategic local church evangelism plan that is based on a biblical and historical foundation and can mobilize a local church to engage in evangelism locally and globally. The assumption here is that an effective evangelism approach should result in conversions, multiplication of disciples, and more church plants. This process begins with healthy leadership too. Every local church has its context, culture, and demographics that inform its vision, mission, and core value. However, the church mandate, regardless of its geographic location, remains the same:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 (Matthew 28:16-20, ESV).

While still on earth, Christ articulates the mission of the church and designs a strategic plan to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15) through the power of the Holy Spirit, which the disciples were to wait upon (Acts 1:8). In this regard, all local bodies form their systems and practices to carry out the Great Commission by exercising the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40)—the church as a whole is the expression of Christ Himself. The mission and strategy both are critical for individual disciples as well as the local church body and the church as a whole. Malphurs rightly argues that the mission informs where the church is going; therefore, “the mission always comes first—it is found at the front end of the strategy.”¹³¹ It is the strategy that determines the path to get there, but “the strategy is only as good as the mission that

¹³¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21 Century Model For Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013), ch.4.

directs it.”¹³² Jesus informs the church of its mission and determines that He will build His church (Matthew 16:18) through the disciple-making process. Christopherson asserts, “if the church of Jesus Christ is God’s primary vehicle to advance His Kingdom, it might be wise to gain a better understanding of what the Kingdom of God is, what it prefers, and how to rightly behave as loyal citizens.”¹³³ He argues further, “If the church were the goal, then sustaining that church would logically be the priority of the highest order. But if the Kingdom of God were the goal, then the Kingdom-building instrument would gladly self-sacrifice for the eternal prize.”¹³⁴ Malphurs adds, “God has sovereignly chosen to work through strategic thinking and acting to accomplish His divine will on earth. Accordingly, churches must be careful of those who advise them to ignore any planning and simply “let go and let God.” On the other hand, we must not trust our strategies and ignore the role of the Holy Spirit in the process.”¹³⁵ He asserts:

God determines the church’s mission. Our triune God is by nature a missionary God. He has sent the Son (John 3:17), the Son has sent the Holy Spirit (John 16:7), and the Son has sent us (John 20:21). The mission first and foremost is God’s mission, and we are to join him in mission. The question is, What does God say the church’s mission is? The answer is the Great Commission... The Great Commission proactively involves the church in making and maturing disciples at home and abroad. This was the church’s mission in the first century and continues to be its mission in the twenty-first century. Making disciples involves the church in proactively pursuing lost people (the “go” in Matt. 28:19), evangelizing them (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–48; Acts 1:8), and helping these new Christians to mature (Matt. 28:19–20), to become like Christ. The church is to accomplish this both at home and abroad (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). Finally, the church’s mission is incarnational more than invitational. It involves the church going out into and ministering to the community, not waiting for the community to come to it.¹³⁶

¹³² Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, ch.4.

¹³³ Christopherson, ch.1.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Malphurs, ch 1.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, ch 4.

Evangelism for His Kingdom

Evangelism is first and foremost for God's kingdom, and this should be the prime purpose of a church community and every follower of Jesus Christ. Christians must seek His kingdom first (Matthew 6:33). The perception that effective evangelism is one that is increasing the number of a local church is not only erroneous but also unbiblical. Stitzinger argues, "the gauge of a church's evangelistic effectiveness is obedience on a personal level. The gospel commission is a call for individual disciples to engage individual sinners. The response of sinners is the work of the Spirit, not the result of our actions. Instead of gauging effectiveness by the response, gauge it by faithfulness to Christ's commission and accuracy of the message."¹³⁷ This begins when individuals who believe in Christ develop the kingdom first mindset whether they are laypeople, pastors or church planters. Christopherson discusses the idea of the kingdom first mindset and asserts that leaders have their personalities and passions that shape their churches, and only leaders with the view of the kingdom first can communicate grace and truth in a way that expands beyond just the primary recipients of grace and truth.¹³⁸ The individual responsibility to the world is essential to the witness of the church to the lost.

Perhaps, the decline of Christianity in North America is not due to the lack of proclamation of the gospel by churches, or the lack of resources that enable the church to reach the lost; rather it is due to the lack of personal responsibility of believers to take the gospel message to their household, workplace, and marketplace. It is because "too often we can be guilty of being gospel hoarders and simultaneously spiritually malnourished"¹³⁹ Too often

¹³⁷ Dan DeWitt, ed., *A Guide to Evangelism* (Louisville: SBTS Press, 2013), 10.

¹³⁸ Christopherson, under "In the Kingdom of God, Grace Extends beyond the Graced."

¹³⁹ Ibid.

believers who are seasoned Christians are intimidated by the thought of evangelism and believe that they do not have the gift of evangelism. Such individuals utilize the Scriptures such as 1 Cor. 12:4-5 and Eph.4:11-12 to defend their position, disregarding the biblical mandate of preaching the gospel because every follower of Christ is an ambassador of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20), representing the kingdom of God and the lordship of Christ. In this kingdom mindset the proclamation of the gospel is the primary source to convert for two reasons: 1). “the power of God’s Word to bring lost people to Christ...,”¹⁴⁰ and 2). “God has promised to use Scripture to dissect the thoughts and intentions of the heart and thereby to change our lives (Heb 4:12), not entertainment or emotional and content-less appeals.”¹⁴¹

The individual responsibility to carry out the mission of God, which is the proclamation of the gospel, is the outward expression of a disciple of Jesus. The lost people do not know that they are lost; therefore, they will not come inside a church to hear the Word of God. Consequently, when a local church proclaims the gospel mostly through the preaching method, it is to encourage believers to live a life that is worthy of a disciple, but it will not bear much fruit if it is not vocalized by the hearers outside the four walls of the church. The world is the mission field, but within the mission field, each individual has a personal mission field. Stitzinger insists, “God, in His sovereign grace, chose to place you in the context of those particular unbelievers. This is your mission field.”¹⁴² He invites every believer to answer a question, “who are the unbelievers you’re engaging with the Gospel?”¹⁴³ He asserts, “It’s not enough to talk about them,

¹⁴⁰ Christopherson, 19.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 38.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

you must talk with them, using the natural points of connection in your life to advance the Gospel conversation.”¹⁴⁴

It should be a privilege for the ambassadors of Christ to represent the kingdom of God everywhere to everyone. Therefore, unless the leadership of this student’s church puts the kingdom first, no evangelistic plan will grow the church, and the church will not reach the lost. It is because “most foundationally, lost people do not willingly glorify God or submit to the lordship of Christ. The glory of God and the lordship of Christ are the two consuming passions of Scripture’s authors. God created the world to display his glory (Ps. 19), and in his resurrection Christ was declared with power to be both Son of God and Lord of the universe (Acts 2:36; Rom 1:3-4).”¹⁴⁵ The evangelism to proclaim the kingdom of God is prevalent in healthy churches where pastors and the congregation are engaging God, each other, and the lost regularly. Malphurs refers to such believers as “fully functioning followers”¹⁴⁶ of Jesus Christ and provides four characteristics for them:

1. Conversion—they are converted and know Christ as Savior.
2. Community—they value and are part of a biblically functioning community (small group).
3. Commitment—they have made the deepest commitments of their lives to Christ.
4. Contribution—they are contributing to Christ’s kingdom and the church by serving people, supporting the church, and sharing their faith (the three Ss).¹⁴⁷

Fully functioning followers make fully functioning churches, where every believer is responsible for evangelizing others for the kingdom God. Marshall and Payne in *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything* discusses that churches with pastors as the

¹⁴⁴ Christopherson, 38.

¹⁴⁵ DeWitt, ed., *A Guide to Evangelism*, 16.

¹⁴⁶ Malphurs, *Strategic Planning*, ch.9.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

vine and the congregation as the trellis can never carry out the Great Commission effectively. In order to lead a healthy church, the focus should be on people.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, “growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ”¹⁴⁹ is the sign of a healthy church. They argue for the disciple-making process that results in the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). They dismiss the notion that the Great Commission is only for missionaries overseas or the apostles and make a case that it should be the top priority of every church and every Christian disciple.¹⁵⁰ With the help of the metaphor of the vine and trellis, they demonstrate that all believers should be the vine, which indicates spiritual growth through daily communion with the Lord by reading His word and remaining in prayer. They also argue against the trellis, which represents Christians who are just busy doing things and taking care of business. Unfortunately, in the United States, pastors are the only ones who do the vine work, and the rest of the believers do what they can to “maintain the trellis, not least by giving money.”¹⁵¹

Evangelism for His Church

Evangelism is not only for the lost, but it is also for the saved. The exercise of daily engagement in the proclamation of the gospel to the lost teaches the church to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to move hearts and change minds. Ultimately, the believer’s limited ability to convince a lost person to pursue Christ, the savior, will not bear fruit without the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. According to Acts 1:8, there is a direct relationship between the filling of believers with the Spirit of God and participating in the Great Commission. This sober reminder makes evangelism for His church more appealing because, on the one hand, inwardly it develops

¹⁴⁸ Marshall and Payne, *Trellis and the Vine*, 19.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

an attitude of submission, prayer, and obedience while experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, it offers hope, light, and forgiveness to those that are elected by God to come to Christ. The Great Commission informs the church that Jesus' plan for the salvation of the world was through the labor of disciples, "Jesus intended for the disciples to produce his likeness in and through the church being gathered out of the world. Thus, his ministry in the Spirit would be duplicated many folds by his ministry in the lives of his disciples."¹⁵²

Regretfully, "most of the evangelistic efforts of the church begin with the multitudes under the assumption that the church is qualified to preserve what good is done. The result is our spectacular emphasis on numbers of converts, candidates for baptism, and more members for the church, with little or no genuine concern, manifested toward the establishment of these souls in the love and power of God, let alone the preservation and continuation of the work."¹⁵³ The big idea here is that God's plan to grow the church is not through human efforts to preserve what good is done, rather "through them and others like them it would continue to expand in an ever-enlarging circumference until the multitudes might know in a similar way the opportunity which they had known with the Master. By this strategy the conquest of the world was only a matter of time and their faithfulness to his plan."¹⁵⁴ This is exactly the mentality that the leadership of this student's church needs to adopt in order to bear fruit.

Evangelism for His Church removes the focus from human efforts and places the focus where it rightfully belongs, Christ—the foundation of the church. The church models that are

¹⁵² Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell Publishing, 2006), 86.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁵⁴ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 89.

used today in North America for church growth are in opposition to His Church plan and strategy because “for the past several centuries (over a millennium), the Western church has been operating primarily in an evangelistic/attractional mode reflective in the ‘church growth’ movement and the Constantinian model.”¹⁵⁵ Therefore, “many church-growth-movement proponents firmly believe that healthy, effective, and efficient churches are monoethnic because individuals do not have to deal with all of the issues that arise when ethnic lines are crossed.”¹⁵⁶ With such a mindset, the multisite church has become a movement with multiple models to choose from to accommodate the needs of the target audience. Many of the more well-known churches in North America have multi-site churches, and “multisite has joined a list of models and approaches that were once out of the mainstream and now are commonplace.”¹⁵⁷ As it is described earlier, essentially, a multisite church is “one church that has two or more locations with shared leadership, budget, vision, and board.”¹⁵⁸ These multisite churches use the “video venue model, regional campus model, teaching team model, partnership model, and low-risk model.”¹⁵⁹ Perhaps this student’s church needs to adopt the multisite church model as a strategy for evangelism. Before one forms an opinion about the multi-site church, it is imperative to remember what Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Matthew 18:20 ESV). If the church is a “regular gathering for teaching, singing, mutual encouragement, reading of Scripture, the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, and collection of

¹⁵⁵ Daniel and Stetzer, 86.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 105.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 113.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

offerings is a natural expression of being the people of God,”¹⁶⁰ then the multiple-site church has the promise of Jesus’s presence.

Evangelism for the Church is essentially the multiplication of disciples, leaders, and churches through kingdom growth.¹⁶¹ The early church heavily leaned on the expression that the church is a part of the kingdom of God,¹⁶² which is no longer followed in North America. Church planters in North America confess the Holy Spirit with their lips, but deny him with their practice;¹⁶³ they prefer to lean on models and strategies. The greatest challenge to the church planting effort in North America today is the unhealthy ecclesiology that focuses on cultural preferences and pragmatism¹⁶⁴ rather than biblical and healthy ecclesiology that contextualizes the targeted people group,¹⁶⁵ which results in reproduction, growth, and multiplication itself throughout the world.¹⁶⁶ Answering “What is the church? and What are the functions of the church?”¹⁶⁷ reveals the biblical mandate that a church planter is a missionary who is engaged in evangelism to gather new believers to form a local church,¹⁶⁸ and raises pastors and elders from within the congregation.¹⁶⁹ If the leadership of this student’s ministry context begins to think

¹⁶⁰ Daniel and Stetzer, 113.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 76.

¹⁶² Ibid., 9.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 62.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 21.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 35.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 18.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 70.

about church and its functions as an outlet to fulfill the biblical mandate to plant churches in New York City, it will result in evangelism to gather new believers to form new congregations.

Practical Incorporation

This researcher's ministry context is one of the most well-known churches in New York City. The church has been proclaiming the gospel for over one hundred and seventy years. There has never been a time in the history of Calvary Baptist Church that she has lost sight of her strategic location, and the Christian mandate to proclaim the gospel. However, the culture and traditions of Calvary Baptist Church are presenting the church with some serious challenges. If these challenges are not dealt with immediately, Calvary Baptist Church may become irrelevant in the neighborhood regardless of its commitment to the gospel. The congregation is diverse ethnically, socially, and economically. With beautiful diversity comes wonderful challenges. There are many preferences and priorities that continue to inhibit the growth of this congregation.

One of the greatest challenges is: how the leadership responds to these challenges and turns them into opportunities to grow together regardless of the obvious differences and become more like Christ (Philippians 2:5-11) and "the light of the world. A city set on a hill" (Matthew 5:14, ESV). Another challenge is problem-solving. The programs are geared towards problem-solving rather than growing believers. Calvary could benefit from switching from a reactive to a proactive ministry mindset.¹⁷⁰ Every small group and ministry is functioning towards doing what is perceived right only for that particular group. For example, the women's ministry focuses on women, the senior connect group on seniors, youth on youth, young adults on young

¹⁷⁰ Daniel and Stetzer, 22.

professionals, and so forth, and so on. The idea of disciple-makers reproducing disciples is stuck within the silos of specialized ministries. The collaboration on outreach, follow-up, growth, and training is almost nonexistent. A small group of volunteers is serving in every area of the church, and the rest of the members seem unengaged.

As noted earlier in Chapter 1, a vibrant small group ministry in a church should result in the multiplication of disciples, healthy leadership, and new church plants. A brief overview of the current list of small groups and connection groups reveals several weaknesses and strengths.

On one hand, the 2019 list demonstrates the interdepartmental trust and cooperation among ministries leaders (pastors) of the church to help their constituents to plug into a small group of their preference as opposed to a predetermined top to bottom approach where every small group follows the same book, outline, or topic regardless of their individual needs, internal challenges, and personal preferences. On the other hand, this approach creates a disconnect among the individual groups based on the very reason that they joined a group in the first place. The church suffers because the leadership cannot measure the effectiveness of the small group ministry since each small group functions as an independent entity with its own vision prescribed by its ministry leader. There seems to be a need for a cohesive vision for small groups for the overall growth of the church. There are always advantages and disadvantages of any approach, but perhaps the scattered vision for and disconnectedness of small groups is contributing to the plateaued status of the church. Therefore, whether the participants are from the women's ministry, family ministry, young adult ministry, or outreach and missions ministry, they should all follow one vision as prescribed and determined by the leadership of the church in conjunction with the vision of the Pastor of Small Groups and Connect ministries.

Here is the 2019 list of the small groups and connect groups:

- *Explore: the basics of Christianity.* Calvary is launching a seeker-based evangelistic course called Explore. The desire is to (re)introduce the basics of the Christian faith, to believers and skeptics alike, through casual talks and discussions around the dinner table. This is an opportunity to explore the purpose of life in a safe and knowledgeable environment. It meets weekly on Tuesday evenings from September 24 till November 12, 2020, at 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, with a free dinner served at 6 pm.
- *Sunday Mornings. Testing of Your Faith* is a Bible study for adults of all ages that gathers each Sunday at 9:30 am in Room 203. Under the leadership of Tony and Teresa Hewitt, this group is currently walking through a study called “All the Places to Go.”
- *Understanding the Gospel* is a class for both men and women and is taught by Fred Eisenmann on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am in Room 204. This group is currently studying Revelation.
- *Knowing God Through the Word* offers discussion and practical application of scripture on Sundays at 11 am in Room 203. This Fall, the group will be studying Max Lucado’s “Life Lessons: Book of James.”
- *The Meaning of Marriage* provides Bible Study and encouragement for engaged and married couples on Sundays at 11 am in the Vanguard Room.
- *Cross Roads* offers those age 18-29, a time of fellowship, prayer, and bible study. Under the leadership of Brunel Bienvenu, Cross Roads gathers each Sunday at 11:15 am in Room 416.
- *Standing in the Gap* is an opportunity for ladies to intercede in prayer for our families, communities, the Church, the nation, and the world. Join leader Vivette Hagues on Sundays at 12:45 pm in Room 203

- *Tuesday Mornings. Women's Early Bird Bible Study* gathers on Tuesday mornings from 7:30 - 8:30 am Under the leadership of Kathie Grimm, this women's group will gather in Room 416.
- *Women's Heart to Heart* is following a DVD Bible Study called "*Job*" by Lisa Harper. Under the leadership of Eileen Browne, 10 am in Room 503.
- *Wednesdays. Women of the Word* is a DVD Bible Study is under the leadership of Marilyn Lebowitz and gathers on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm in Room 503.
- *Women's Precept Upon Precept* Bible Study meets the first and third Wednesday of each month. Ladies will need a Bible (any translation), a 3-ring binder, and colored pencils. Under the leadership of Priscilla Hodges, this study of "Mark" is held at two convenient times: Wednesdays at 10:30 am in Room 502 and Wednesdays at 6 pm in Room 512.
- *30 Somethings Bible Study* is weekly at 7 pm in Room 416.
- *Women's Bible Study of Hebrews* is a Kay Arthur DVD Bible study of Hebrews each Friday at 11 am in the Fellowship Hall. Leaders Rose Martir and Marilyn Lebowitz will walk ladies through a discussion, followed by the DVD viewing, then a pot-luck lunch at noon. Childcare is provided upon request.
- *Monthly Gatherings, Women's and Men's Fellowship*, are hosted on the first Sunday of every month. Ladies gather in the Fellowship Hall from 1:15 - 2:15 pm, and the men in the Vanguard Room.

The current list offers a variety of small groups that should contribute to the growth of the church. Every individual should be able to find a place in the church by joining one of the small groups. Furthermore, with the exception of a few, most of these groups are led by lay leaders and do not directly involve the official leadership of the church.

Also, Calvary desperately needs an active-vine grower¹⁷¹ leadership style. Professional leaders provide oversight, and the ordinary congregants seem disconnected. Yes, each ministry department provides training for volunteers, but there is not a unified vision and clear strategy of how to train people to reproduce disciples, therefore every year Calvary runs into the problem of finding leaders for various boards and committees and usually falls short of enough qualified people to serve on the official life. This causes the church to recycle the same leaders in various roles with various responsibilities. There is a need to grow leaders. Among the leaders, more time is spent running the business side of the church organization than is spent on intentionally extended time with each other in non-scheduled fellowship. There is a clear need of revisiting the ministry philosophy that focuses on a few things for, “the growth of all Christians in conviction, character and competency, so that in love they might minister to others by prayerfully bringing the Word of God to them—whether to non-Christians in outreach, new Christians in follow-up, or all other Christians in daily growth.”¹⁷²

Ideally, Calvary Baptist Church should measure success by focusing on a disciple-making process that produces Christ-followers who are engaged in sharing the gospel in their daily life incarnationally as well as informationally. Getz’s recommendation to evaluate the church spiritually is already part of the discipleship process, but developing a community that reflects the life of Christ is only measurable through their interaction with the world. If this student’s community is engaged in reaching others, making disciples, and serving with the love of Christ, the outcome of this process should be the addition of new believers into the body of Christ. This makes a church a successful one. In John 15: 9-11 Jesus says:

¹⁷¹ Marshall and Payne, 24.

¹⁷² Daniel and Stetzer, 85.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full (ESV).

This command alone is sufficient to assess the health of Calvary Baptist Church and its leadership. Calvary Baptist Church must remember Payne's advice in Chapter 1 that "the definition, function, and vitality of the local church do not come from financial resources, sophisticated structures, and organization, numbers of people, or even a great preacher. Rather, the essence of the church comes from the citizens of the kingdom, indwelt and empowered by God, living according to a kingdom ethic that clearly establishes their relationship with God, each other, and the world."¹⁷³ Yes, the church has seen consistent growth throughout its history, but now it is experiencing a plateau.

Despite all this, Calvary Baptist Church still has a strong commitment to the proclamation of the gospel and missions. If "Church planting is the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and forming kingdom communities among every nation, tribe, people, and tongue to glorify God in time and eternity!"¹⁷⁴ then multiplication and "reproducibility goes beyond mere equipping."¹⁷⁵ The church has an obligation to the future generation to set the trajectory of the church in the right direction by investing and training the leadership of the church. Only healthy leadership can lead to a healthy church. Perhaps Calvary Baptist Church needs to shut down all programs and without firing any staff, invest in their personal growth for a season. Shutting

¹⁷³ Payne, 40.

¹⁷⁴ Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 3.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 65.

down all programs does not mean closing the doors, but rather focusing on three things: conviction, character, and competency. Perhaps Calvary Baptist Church should consider a new approach to kick start the vision. Perhaps Calvary Baptist Church needs “Incarnational missiology, which requires reorienting the entire church around the primarily outward-oriented function of mission and recontextualizing the church into different subcultures.”¹⁷⁶ Perhaps Calvary Baptist Church should consider developing a disciple-making road map as opposed to discipleship programs that operate “from” evangelism rather than “for” evangelism.¹⁷⁷

Theological Foundations

The theological foundations for this study primarily come from two passages in the Scriptures: Luke 13:6-9 and Colossian 4:2-6. Both portions of the Scriptures provide a theological basis to fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples and teaching them how to produce disciples that result in a healthy congregation and multiplication of disciples and new church plants. Both Scriptures place responsibility on individual believers to carry out the great commission because lost people do not know that they are lost; therefore, they will not come inside a church to hear the Word of God. A theological and exegetical understanding of Luke 13:6-9 and Colossian 4:2-6 shows that the decline of Christianity in North America is not due to a lack of the proclamation of the gospel by churches, rather it is due to the lack of personal responsibility of believers to take the gospel message to their household, workplace, and marketplace. Numerous reports indicate that the secret to church growth in Iran, China and the middle east is intercessory prayer and personal responsibility to share the gospel with others.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Alan Hirsch and Dave Ferguson, *On the Verge: A Journey into the Apostolic Future of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 23.

¹⁷⁷ Christopherson, Introduction.

¹⁷⁸ “Church Growth in Iran,” Elam: The Love of Christ for Iran and beyond, accessed November 22, 2019, <https://www.elam.com/page/rapid-church-growth-how-it-happening>.

Every Christian has an individual responsibility to carry out the mission of God, which is the proclamation of the gospel. Each individual has a personal mission field. God in His sovereignty chooses individuals and places them among unbelievers in their personal context so that they can be His witnesses in the world. The question that this section of the thesis raises is: are individual believers at Calvary Baptist Church engaging with the unbelievers in their context with the gospel?

The Parable of the Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)

In Luke 13:6-9, Jesus tells the parable:

A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down’” (ESV).

Most commentators agree that this parable is for the Jewish nation about their unfruitfulness and the danger of their being destroyed if the Jewish nation did not change its way before God by repenting and bearing fruit.¹⁷⁹ Adam Clarke’s Commentary deciphers the passage in the following manner:

- A person, $\tau\iota\varsigma$, God Almighty.
- Had a fig tree - the Jewish Church.
- Planted in his vineyard - established in the land of Judea.
- He came seeking fruit - he required that the Jewish people should walk in righteousness, in proportion to the spiritual culture he had bestowed on them.
- The vine-dresser - the Lord Jesus, for God hath committed all judgment to the Son, John 5:22.
- Cut it down - let the Roman sword be unsheathed against it.

¹⁷⁹ John Gill, “Commentary on Luke 13:6,” “The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible,” accessed November 19, 2019, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/luke-13.html>. 1999.

- Let it alone - Christ is represented as an intercessor for sinners, for whose sake the day of their probation is often lengthened, during which time he is constantly employed in doing everything that tends to promote their salvation.
- Thou shalt cut it down - a time will come, that those who have not turned at God's invitations and reproofs shall be cut off, and numbered with the transgressors.¹⁸⁰

This passage has the same implications for the Church as for the Jewish nation. There are three issues that this parable addresses: A planting issue in verse 6, a production issue in verse 7, and a provisioning issue in verse 8. Finally, verse 9 shows Christ's decision in obedience to His Father that if there is still no fruit, then God will cut the plant down.

1. Planting Issue (v. 6): Whether one believes in God or not, all people are privileged to be planted by God in His vineyard which is this world that He created. Interestingly, almost all of the recorded parables in the Gospels have a clear ending with an application for the hearers, but this parable does not have that typical ending with a moral lesson. This parable ends with an assumption that the master allows another year, but the text neither acknowledges nor rejects the request of the vinedresser. This makes the parable an open-ended plea to the father on behalf of the "suckers" who fail to produce fruit. The term suckers in botany is used for a plant "growing not from a seed but a meristem of the root at the base or a certain distance from a tree or shrub." Jonathan Landsman, an expert in botany and the former City Planner for the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, says, "Suckers are usually considered undesirable—you want the plant, but you don't want its suckers because they sap the plant's energy." He also states that "most trees and shrubs are capable of suckering, but when healthy, they don't sucker often."

¹⁸⁰ Adam Clarke, "Commentary on Luke 13:6," "The Adam Clarke Commentary," accessed November 19, 2019, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/luke-13.html>. 1832.

Spiritual suckers are the same way; some of them will never respond because they do not stem from the same seed; they were never part of the body of Christ in the first place. They do not belong there because:

- a. They are harmful to the body of Christ. Like the suckers that cause malnutrition for other trees and their eventual death, similarly, the unfruitful Christians are eating the nutrients that are for the body of Christ. These sneaky, deceiving, conniving individuals have gone into the community of believers to destroy and cause confusion. Jesus says in Matthew 7:16, “We can recognize them by their fruit” (ESV). They claim to be Christians, but their lives remain untouched, unchanged, and unnoticed by the world. They are making churches barren, and they stand in the way of others who stumble because of them. They are interested only in their agendas, and care less about the Church.
- b. They hold their own emblem of faith. They fabricate a fictional reality that is sometimes dependent on them and at other times depending on their circumstances to seek their own desires, and they dare to call it faith. They have faith in themselves and their abilities to follow the spiritual plan that they have come up with by their own power. Earls suggests, “This is why the way a church receives people into membership is so important: does the church know the person is a child of God and how do they know this by what they practice in matriculating people into membership?”¹⁸¹

2. Production Issue (v. 7): This is not only the expectation of God that Christian should produce fruit, it is also His right to demand fruit, and if those who claim to be Christians and fail to

¹⁸¹ Rod Earls, “Complete Chapters 1 and 2 with Bibliography” (class paper, DMIN 840 Thesis Project Writing Stage 1, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, July 21, 2019), 58.

produce the expected fruit they will surely be cut down and thrown into the fire regardless of their opinion of God. Therefore, every professing believer needs to remember that:

- a. No one cannot produce the fruit on their own. Many times, mistakenly, many Christians think that this is the list from Galatians 5: 22-23, where Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness” (ESV). In verse 7, God, the father, does not come to seek this list that Paul mentions. Even though that too cannot be attained by man’s righteousness because that list is the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a saved person’s life. The prerequisites for the fruit of the Spirit is salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, which means the person needs to be saved first. The fruit that God the father comes to seek is the *Christlikeness* because Christ always wants to fulfill His father’s will. God’s will is that every tree must bear fruit and if it does not, it should be cut down. The Son is acting according to the will of His father. This is why in verse 9 it is almost as if the Son is saying “Father thy will be done.” Either they will bear fruit, or they will perish. Jesus in this parable says that the only way that one can bear fruit and escape God’s judgment is by abiding in Him alone, and He in them (John 15:5-8). When believers are in Him, and He is in them, then these Christians become more like Christ which is the desire of God the father and should be the desire of every believer in Christ. Paul advises, “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...” (Romans 8:29, ESV).
- b. Every believer has an old nature: The example of a fig tree is very intentional and goes hand in hand with the three-year period. It has to do with the nature of a fig tree. Some fig trees bear fruit three times a year, but some bear fruit once in three years. In

the second kind, the fruit may appear the first year, but it needs three years to ripen, and if it does not then it is expected to be cut down.

Jesus' audience was familiar with the intended symbolism behind it. They understood that a fruitful fig tree is symbolic of the blessing and prosperity of God's people, but a fruitless or barren fig tree represents the spiritual bareness and deadness of Israel.

Jesus uses the same symbolism in Matthew 21:19, "And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again!' And the fig tree withered at once" (ESV). This shows the power of Christ as the righteous judge, where symbolically He executes His judgment on those deceiving, conniving, blood-sucking, bogus believers right before His disciples. In Christ, all believers receive a new nature, but their old nature fights against the new nature.

3. Provision Issue (v. 8): Christians are privileged to be provided and cared for by Christ according to the will of His Father so that they may bear fruit. This means believers in Christ have done nothing to earn it therefore they do not deserve it. The vinedresser in the parable is God the Son who cares for and looks after the fig trees. That means:
 - a. Christians are the recipients of God's grace. In this dialogue between God and His son about Christians believers, Christians are not the contributors or participants but rather the recipients of grace, mercy, and love from God and His Son. The period of three years is also significant in the context of this parable. It has been three years since Christ began to preach to the same audience; they are far from being saved because of their pride in lineage, the law, and the works.

- b. Christians remain under God's judgment without Christ. Christ is pronouncing judgment and offering repentance at the same time. He puts a clock on it with a clear expectation that every person that claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ must bear fruit following their repentance and not just offer empty words of repentance. Jesus is nearing the time that the Roman authorities will execute him on the demand of Jewish leadership. Jesus does not have more time on earth; therefore, He speaks of an imminency that it is no longer that they will be judged, rather the judgment is declared right then and He offers them two options: "Repent or Perish." Luke 13:5 indicates that "...but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5, ESV).
- c. Christ is the emblem of our faith. In this parable, Jesus is watching over the vineyard and working on these trees for some time. The question is, why does Jesus ask for another year; has He not been working on the lifeless, and fruitless trees already? The answer is yes He has, but extra time is needed because "He is not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9). He knows the Father's will that they must bear fruit or perish. Some of the Christians believers need individual care. They are falling ill and are on the verge of giving in. Though He watches over the whole flock, when one is unhealthy or is lost, Jesus leaves the 99 behind and goes after the lost one. He wants to revive the sick and unhealthy. In this manner, grace is extended to us all, but there is a time limit on it. This does not mean that grace is limited in its effectiveness, or what it accomplishes for and in a believer's life, rather it means that unless believers forsake all and cling to Christ alone through faith, there is no hope for them. The idea

is that before the clock runs out, each person that claims to be a Christian has fruit as evidence of their faith.

In this text, the urgency of time for repentance should be critical because the Father's wrath is being held back only temporarily and only because the Son is pleading for every moment, and every day, and every year, which gives professing Christians one more chance to repent and bear fruit. Luke 3:9 states, "Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (ESV).

However, when individuals repent and abide in Christ and Christ in them, then they become co-laborers in God's vineyard, then they begin to understand that their confidence in their religious profession and observances are not enough to guarantee salvation that ushers them into the kingdom of God. However, the moment they begin the work that God expects, the first of which is to become more like Christ, they experience true joy, peace, along with the rest of the fruits of the Spirit.

Unless there is the fruit of genuine salvation evidenced in their lives, they should not delude themselves that their fabricated and self-proclaimed spirituality can deceive God. Unless they abide in Christ and subsequently bear the fruit of Him abiding in us, they will not enter into His kingdom, and their ending will not be different from those who never believed.

However, the good news is this; Christ offers them another year and another opportunity to make a change in their lives; come to Him in humility and confess their sins and remain in Him by having regular communion with Him and His people in the church.

Incarnational Gospel (Colossians 4:2-6)

The second text as the theological foundation is Paul's plea to engage in personal evangelism. In Colossians 4:2-6, Paul writes:

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person (ESV).

While in prison for the sake of the gospel, Paul is writing this letter in a cultural and political setting that is antithetical to Christian values. He instructs other Christians to walk in wisdom to avoid unnecessary persecution. In this context, Christians were being persecuted and even executed for their faith. His main point to his immediate audience was that they use the time they have on earth wisely to proclaim the gospel through speech and action.

This researcher grew up in such a culture in Pakistan where evangelization is forbidden by law, where a death sentence may be warranted through rigorous blasphemy laws that are often exploited to persecute and publicly execute Christians for simply professing the name of Jesus. He understands why Christians have to walk in wisdom. New York City is becoming more hostile to the Christian faith by the hour. It is completely acceptable to be anything and anyone in NYC except Christian. What the researcher escaped from is taking root in the United States of America. In his current ministry context, he believes that each believer needs to engage their customized mission field at their doorsteps.

One can draw two main points from Colossians 4:2-6:

1. Christians need to readjust their focus. This is the climactic scene Paul has been working towards. Up to this point, Paul's focus has been on the Great Commandment that deals with one's relationship with God and each other. In this text though, as Paul begins to close his letter, his focus shifts from inward to outward. Paul argues that it is not about those who are inside the church, it is about those who are outside because once every believer was among the outsiders lost in their sin and darkness without Christ. He instructs the church on how to

be a witness to the outsiders. The expectation here is that the fulfillment of the Great Commandment that instructs us to love our God with all our heart, mind and soul and love each other should result in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, which mandates that Christians go out, and as they go out they make disciples of Jesus in all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit and teach them everything that Christ has taught them for Christ is with them until the end of time.

The mystery that Paul speaks about is an incarnational gospel. Which means, Christians do not only listen, understand and believe the gospel, which are essential steps to become a follower of Jesus Christ, rather they become the embodiment of the gospel, which is the good news to the World that salvation has been made free, declaring that everyone can be forgiven of their transgressions and inherit the kingdom of God by repenting and trusting in Christ Jesus alone for the salvation of their souls.

Paul's major argument in this letter and his life was that if professing Christians truly believe in the transforming power of the gospel that changes lives, then their neighborhoods should be saturated with the gospel. Their churches and houses should be a city on a hill. For Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" (ESV). Their colleagues and loved ones should see the hope of Christ in them. They should not be hidden in crowds walking in the same direction that leads to eternal destruction. They should speak up. They should cry out for the lost. They should be a beacon of hope.

However, the churches across the USA are experiencing the opposite. The church is becoming irrelevant in American society, especially in New York City. Young people who are brought up in Christian households are finding hope in something or someone outside the church. Perhaps, Christians have fallen into an erroneous mindset that is prevalent in the

West, that faith is a private matter. The Christian faith was never meant to be a private matter.

2. No one is exempt from evangelizing others. Evangelization means sharing one's faith with others, and it is not meant to be an optional activity as Christians. Everything that believers in Jesus learn from the Lord in private they must exercise in public. In this text, Paul divides the Christian community into two groups. Group one, in verses 2–4, is involved in indirect evangelism to proclaim the gospel. Group two, in verse 5-6, is involved in direct evangelism.
 - a) The first group functions similarly to an aerial strike across enemy lines to clear the field for ground troops. The ground troops here illustrate the second group that engages in direct evangelism. Both are essential for the success of the operation. Both groups have a new life in Christ with a higher purpose. If a professing Christian does not fall into either group, then there is a need for immediate repentance.
 - b) The method that Paul introduces for indirect evangelism is through an ongoing prayer ministry. Without this, direct evangelism will not work. For direct evangelism, Paul does not give any particular method other than instructing Christian believers to live their faith out in speech and action while praying without ceasing. By examining four words or terms that Paul uses in this text, one can know that every believer is responsible for engaging in evangelism and the fruit from God. This indicates man's responsibility to proclaim the gospel, and God's sovereignty to convict hearts, and also man's responsibility to confess his or her sin as a result of that conviction.
 - a) The Greek word for continued steadfast prayer in v. 2 is *proskartereo* (προσκαρτερέω). *Proskartereo* appears ten times in the NT. *Pros* means "interactively with," which shows

that it is a two-way conversation. It is mutual and reciprocal. *Karterro* means “show steadfast strength” which is derived from *Kratos*, meaning “prevailing strength.”

Together it would mean: to consistently show strength which prevails despite difficulties or to endure by remaining firm. Another way to understand this word would be “to continue to do something with intense effort with the possible implication of despite difficulties.”¹⁸² The Scriptures say: continue, keep pressing on despite difficulties. Keep dialing, and God will respond in His determined timing. Christians believers must not stop; they must not give up. Christian believers must remember that in God’s time their loved ones who are still lost will respond to God’s timing.

- b) The “walking in wisdom toward outsiders” in verse 5 refers to direct evangelism, which is dependent on *proskartereo* (προσκατερέω) which opens the door for the proclamation of the gospel. In verse 3, Paul writes, “At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word,” next he says, “to declare the mystery of Christ.” Indirect evangelism not only opens the door for the proclamation of the gospel but also reveals the mystery of Christ to the proclaimer as well as the hearer.
- c) Paul teaches the believer to live in a constant state of prayer. In verse 4, Paul says, “pray... that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.” Here “it” refers to the mystery of Christ that has been revealed to him on the road to Damascus when Christ Himself revealed to him the mystery of the gospel. So, here, Paul is asking for prayer that the mystery of Christ, which is the gospel message for every lost soul, to be revealed to others when he shares it with them. The NIV translation says, “Pray that I may proclaim

¹⁸² “Προσκατερέω (Proskartereó) -- to Attend Constantly,” Strong's Greek: 4342. Accessed November 22, 2019, <https://biblehub.com/greek/4342.htm>.

it clearly, as I should.” The Greek verb *phaneroo* (φανερῶω) is translated in the NIV as “proclaim” which means “make it manifest.” Only God may reveal the truth to lost people. Only God can open their eyes, ears, and hearts to the gospel message. Christians are only obligated to share the gospel with others, but the faith to respond comes from above. Thus, the need for prayer for both the speaker and the hearer.

- d) Finally, in verse 5, Paul writes “making the best use of the time.” In Greek the word that is used here is *Kairos* (καιρός), which means to communicate a point of time in contrast to duration. Here it means God’s time, the opportunity that God brings forth to share the gospel with someone.

Both texts used for the theological foundation of this study indicate that fruit is the necessary evidence of one’s state of being saved, although Christians believers are only responsible for responding in obedience by receiving Christ and then to share the gospel with others. God in His sovereignty brings forth the fruit in His determined time. Every individual at CBC is responsible for sharing the gospel in their personal contexts to make disciples.

Theoretical Foundations

In light of the text discussed in the theological foundations, the theoretical foundations for this research are deeply rooted in this researcher’s personal lived experiences, his role as an evangelist and missions pastor in his church, along with what he has witnessed in the last 21 years of ministry in the United States and around the world. The year was 2004. The US-led NATO forces were facing terrible losses at the hands of the Taliban still hiding in Afghanistan, and there he was going through Afghanistan to share the gospel with the Afghan people. He had no mission organization and no funding. The only support he had was the prayers from a handful of devoted believers in Pakistan.

However, all this began a year earlier in 2003 when, in Athens, Greece, an Afghan stranger had hugged the researcher and reported that he had come to Christ through the message that the researcher had shared at his refugee camp in the northern part of Greece. The Afghan man also introduced the researcher to an Iranian man with whom he had shared regarding what he had heard from the researcher. Thus, the Iranian man was following the Lord Jesus as well. Together they had been sharing about Christ with other Persian speaking people in different refugee camps in Greece.

Somehow, this new convert, without any formal training or commissioning, was preaching the gospel to Afghans and Iranians. No one had taught him how to evangelize to others. He was excited about his new life and new hope in the Lord, and he was sharing it with others without fear or hesitation. When the researcher asked if they had been baptized, he discovered they did not know what baptism was. After they learned about baptism, they immediately wanted to be baptized. As such, the arrangements were made, and they were baptized the following Sunday. In the weekly Bible study that followed, only one of the new converts showed up. The researcher discovered that the missing man had been stabbed by a Muslim man who had seen their baptism. His baptism had made his private conversion public. He barely survived the attack. When the researcher met the wounded and barely surviving new convert who was still a refugee of little means to offer some monetary or medical help, the man's response was as surprising as his conversion. "Will you go to Afghanistan and preach the gospel to my people," he said. It was his plea for the salvation of his people that convicted this researcher's heart and sent him to Afghanistan to preach the gospel.

So, there he was in Afghanistan. The first two weeks there had been extraordinary. His passion for preaching the gospel and his confidence and faith in God was exhilarating. He was

experiencing this closeness to God that was hard to put into words, and then suddenly it was gone. His flesh began to overcome his spirit. Afghanistan was nothing like Greece or even Pakistan, and on that particular day, he had walked for hours on the dusty roadside in the scorching heat. The little money he had had been stolen from him. He was hungry. He was thirsty. He was angry. He had not had a shower for some time. His feet were bleeding from walking, and he was becoming more resentful by the hour. He sat under a tree outside a Mosque somewhere in the Kandahar province. He had a severe moment of self-pity. He began to complain to God and began to doubt his calling. He asked God if it was even His will and plan that he had come to Afghanistan. He began to tell God how he had followed Him to Afghanistan, that he was suffering for Him, and that He is nowhere to be found.

He felt alone. He needed God to speak to him, comfort him, pamper him and tell him that everything was going to be all right and to hear how proud He was of him, but God chose to remain silent. In such times, believers ought to do what Colossian 4:2-6 teaches, pray, and remain faithful. The researcher did and subsequently went on to proclaim the gospel in Iran. The researcher's journey had taught him that faithfulness does not mean that Christians cannot cry out or complain before God. It simply means Christian believers must trust in Him enough that even when He chooses to be silent, they know God remains faithful.

Back in 2003 in Greece, the researcher was given that opportunity by God at His determined time (καιρός) along with what he had to preach, which he faithfully proclaimed (φανερώω) to others to yield the surprising conversions and thus launched his missionary work and subsequently, his current pastoral ministry at Calvary Baptist Church.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The literature review shows that the church in the United States is declining, and the church leadership across America has yet to discover the best approach to attract people, more specifically the unsaved, unchurched, and the lost while maintaining a commitment to the gospel message, orthodoxy, and the doctrinal purity. There seems to be a gap between will and execution. The former is influenced and inspired by the Great Commission, the kingdom of God, the Mission of God, and even human responsibility under the sovereignty of God to reach the lost world, including unreached people groups, but the latter is subject to pragmatism. For a church as well as an individual, missions ought to be the whole point because the church exists to fulfill the Great Commission. However, when missions is limited to a department or just one of the ministries of a church, then the church has already lost the vision for which God has appointed it- to be the beacon of hope to the lost world.

The departmental efficiency in caring for the congregation through specialized ministries such as youth, women, men, college and career aged, seniors, homeless, married, and divorced individuals is admirable because it addresses the ecclesiological needs effectively. However, it also compartmentalizes the whole church by default. If the Mission of God is not carried out through teaching and fulfilling the Great Commission by the leadership of a church, its congregation as a whole, and on the individual level, such a church can never grow or realize a vision for a church plant. If the Mission of God through teaching and fulfilling the Great Commission is not kept at the forefront of everything that a church does, whether pulpit

preaching or small group teaching, then there is nothing that will propel a person or a church to become outwardly focused and bear fruit. The systems that generate an inward focus by nature are detrimental to the Mission of God, the Great Commission, and church growth. The multiplication of disciples is not a program that is geared towards building internal systems to see growth in numbers, but rather it is the basis of Christian living that causes internal and external growth. Internally, one experiences a deep, rich collaboration with the Spirit of God for the salvation of the whole world. Externally, one leads others to experience what he or she experiences internally, which is reproducing disciples who make disciples.

However, when a church has a narrow understanding of the Mission of God, the kingdom of God, and the Great Commission, a church may be engaged in missions work whether through supporting career missionaries, raising and sending missionaries from within a congregation, or through short term missions programs in which going, giving and praying are utilized to involve the congregation, yet such a church will struggle to grow. Calvary Baptist Church has a strong pulpit ministry, and its investment in local and global outreach through partner missionaries, missions organizations, and short term missions program is evidence of its commitment to the proclamation of the gospel and its commitment to the Great Commission to build His kingdom. However, as an established church, CBC has not planted any other church in its recent history because of the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches. CBC has funded several church plants as indicated in Chapter 1, but those church plants have not involved the entire congregation. The process of birthing a new church should touch the life of the mother church on a molecular level.

Intervention Design

CBC's traditional Baptist church approach to preaching, teaching, and running a church has kept the church pure of doctrinal discrepancies, especially when dealing with the liberal influence of New York City. The model of one church in one location under a single set of leaders (both elected and hired) has served the church well throughout its history. However, the more recent decrease in attendance and church membership demands an accurate evaluation and examination of CBC's current church model, its leadership style, missions involvement, doctrinal beliefs as they are preached and practiced by the congregation on an individual level, the understanding and practice of the Great Commandment and the Great Commissions as they help individuals to grow in order to seek church growth. CBC is maintaining and sustaining its current attendance and membership because of its location, history, and commitment to the proclamation of the gospel message.

Pulling a church out of a plateau and putting it on the road to growth requires an overall assessment of the church's health, particularly in the areas of how people are saved, disciplined, brought into membership and elevated to leadership roles, how they are trained, encouraged, and empowered to become witnesses of Christ and making reproducing disciples, how the Word of God is preached on Sunday and during other corporate worship services and integrated into everyday life, what functions and forms or structures are being implemented to care for the congregation and to what extent do the people in the church understand the difference between biblical functions and cultural forms.¹⁸³ The forms should change periodically in order to carry out biblical functions at different times and in different locations. This is also to access to "what

¹⁸³ Getz, ch.10.

extent are the leaders in the church free to develop new and creative forms and structures in order to carry out the unchanging biblical functions and principles outlined in the Scriptures?"¹⁸⁴

This research was done in three phases: recruitment, survey/questionnaire assessment, and a control group. A set of controls were placed in order to ensure the quality of the research and to minimize any pressure or influence by the researcher and the church leadership. The following is a description of the control group for the survey assessment, focus/control group, and the survey along with a description of the controls and sequences that were used to conduct the research and collect the data.

Control Group

The control group was taken out of the official life of the church. The official life for 2019 is available on the church website and is elected by the congregation. Each individual on the official life is considered to be a leader serving in a certain role to carry out one of many duties to run the church ministry. Each believer of the official life is a member and has been proven to be worthy of the honor of serving on the leadership of Calvary Baptist Church in their respective ministry areas. The bylaws of the church require the nominating committee of the church to propose their names only after confirming that the individuals are members of the church for at least six months and are in good standing; that is, they are committed to the membership qualifications and covenant provided in the appendix. In this research, no regular or new members were asked to participate.

Secondary Researcher/Co-investigator

A secondary researcher who is a well-respected member of the congregation, an elected member on the official life, and the elected Chairperson of the Council of Missions, was the co-

¹⁸⁴ Getz, ch.10.

investigator. This was done to retrieve the best possible data through the most honest responses possible. The secondary researcher was restricted from sharing any information about the participants with the primary researcher to maintain anonymity and to avoid any influence from the primary researcher. Therefore, the primary researcher's involvement in the research process as far as direct contact with the participants was purposely restricted.

Recruitment and Assessment

This was the first phase of the research and the data collection process. The role of the primary researcher was limited in this phase. This was done to minimize the potential pressure or influence that the researcher has as a church pastor and the pastor directly involved in the Council of Missions and the Serve Team. This was also done to ensure that participants are participating willingly/voluntarily without any conscious or subconscious pressure or obligation. Numerous elected leaders are serving on several different boards. The size of the official life was too large to conduct a comprehensive study. Therefore this researcher asked the members of the Council of Missions, an elected board/committee of fifteen church members, one elder, and a pastor to oversee the missions and outreach activities to complete *the Church Health Analysis by Gene A. Getz*. The researcher also reached out to the Chairperson of the Serve Team, an appointed committee by the Board of Elders and Deacons, which has four elders, one member of the Board of Deacons, one member of the Council of Missions and a pastor. The researcher also reached out to the head ushers and the Chairman of the Elder Board. A recruitment letter was sent to each potential participant/subject. A copy of the recruitment letter is available in Appendix E. The letter summarized the intervention design. It informed the participants/subjects that if they are on the official life of Calvary Baptist Church and are willing to participate, they are asked to do the following things:

- Complete a survey, the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire, by Gene A. Getz, taking up to 35 minutes. The survey was being sent and administrated by Jennie Work, the Chairperson of the Council of Missions, to keep their identity anonymous. She served as a buffer throughout the research to minimize any potential pressure or influence from the researcher.
- Participants were divided into two groups. If randomly selected for Group A, participants were required to attend an evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training, which may take 4-5 hours.
- If randomly selected for Group B, participants did not attend the training; however, they were asked to come up with their own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples and implement that strategy. The time commitment for Group B was completely up to each individual in that group.
- If in Group A, participants were required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on their progress by using a template I provided. In the template, there were specific questions that were answered as a part of a weekly progress report. Each of the five parts of the report should not have taken more than 5-10 minutes. If in Group B, participants were not required to send a weekly report on their progress.
- Whether in Group A or Group B, at the end of the 6th week, participants were required to write a detailed summary of their 6-week experience, which was sent to Jennie Work.
- It should have taken approximately 6-7 hours for the participants to complete the procedures listed. Participation was completely anonymous to the researcher, as all study communication went through Jennie, and she did not disclose the identities of the participants.

Participants who took part were asked to complete the attached survey and contact Jennie Work, the Chairperson of the Council of Missions to let her know that they were willing to be a

part of the study. Her email address is XXXXXX@gmail.com, and her phone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX.

A consent document was provided along with the recruitment letter. The consent document contained additional information about the research, but the participants were not required to sign and return it.

Consent Document

The consent document regurgitated some of the same information that the recruitment document had; this document is also available in the Appendix. The letter stated:

You are invited to be in a research study to assess the health of Calvary Baptist Church to discover models or practices that might help Calvary Baptist Church to engage New York City and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ more effectively and to discover an evangelistic approach that may help CBC to grow spiritually as well as in number. You were selected as a possible participant because you are on the official life (elected officer) of CBC and have been identified by CBC as one of the leaders to lead the church in your respective role as an elected member of the official life. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Dr. Alfonse Javed, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

The consent document provides brief background information that the purpose of this study is to assess the health of CBC and evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches in order to discover an evangelistic approach that may help CBC to grow spiritually as well as in number.

The document highlights the procedures stating if participants agree to be in this study, they would be asked to do the following things:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a survey, *the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz*. It may take up to 35 minutes.
2. Participants will be divided into two groups. If you are randomly selected for Group A, you will be required to attend an evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training, which may take 1 hour. If you are randomly selected for Group B, you will not attend the training; however, you will be asked to come up with your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples and implement that strategy. The time commitment for Group B is completely up to each individual in that group.
3. If you are in Group A, you will be required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on your progress by using a template I will provide. In the template, there are specific questions that you will answer as a part of your weekly progress report. Each of the five parts of the report should not take more than 5-10 minutes. If you are in Group B, you will not be required to send a weekly report on your progress.
4. Whether you are in Group A or Group B, at the end of the 6th week, you will be required to write a detailed summary of your 6-week experience, which you will send to Jennie Work.

The document states that the risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

The document states that the direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are that they will grow as believers and leaders as a result of the T4T training, and also, they will develop their own personal strategic evangelism discipleship plan. Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Regarding confidentiality, the document states that the records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

The other highlights of the consent form are:

- Participants will never interact with me directly. They will work with the second researcher who will never reveal the identities of the participants. None of the surveys or weekly reports will contain any identifiable markers such as your name, phone, email, or address.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Other highlights of the consent form were:

- Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, Calvary Baptist Church, the Council of Mission of CBC, or the Serve Team. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.
- How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the research assistant, Jennie Work, at her email address: XXXXXX@gmail.com

or phone number: XXX-XXX-XXXX. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

- **Contacts and Questions:** The researcher conducting this study is Dr. Alfonse Javed. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at 646-842-5654 and/or ajaved@cbcnyc.org. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Rod Earls, at rdearls@liberty.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

This section of the research project shows how the secondary researcher/co-investigator was trained to collect data and forward it to the primary researcher/investigator without sharing any personal information from the participants. Also, it described the data-gathering, action meetings, and how it was recorded and secured. The concept of triangulation was employed to enhance observations. This was done to cross-check the accuracy of the data. Other than the primary researcher/investigator, the secondary researcher/co-investigator was consulted on data gathered through assessment tools as an outside expert.

The researcher's role remained limited to receiving data from the secondary researcher/co-investigator throughout the research project. The recruitment document, the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz, and the T4T training videos and text were given to the Chairperson of the Council of Missions of Calvary Baptist Church, who distributed the items as mentioned earlier among the members of the Council of Missions and the

Serve Team and other official life members via email. A copy of the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz and the other items is available in the Appendix.

Training and Procedures

With such a critical role, the secondary researcher/co-investigator was asked to complete CITI courses on Research Ethics and Compliance Training. The secondary researcher was also trained in analyzing the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz and running Training for Trainers (T4T). Within each training, there was the element of triangulation. For example, the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz provided an assessment at the bottom of each section which the participants were to complete. The primary and secondary researchers double-checked the assessment and confirmed with each other to ensure that their totals matched with each other and also with the participants' total.

Some of the points discussed in the general training were:

- Besides serving as a buffer to ensure that the research is done without the researcher's personal involvement in the process of recruitment, the secondary researcher/co-investigator ensures that communication is carried out with the potential participants with complete transparency.
- She ensures that the results are reported accurately.
- She is the first layer to ensure that the potential participants remain anonymous. This includes both those who decide to be a part of the research and those who decline to be a part of the survey.
- She ensures that the researcher will never know who among the Council of Missions, the Serve Team, and other sub-groups of the official life participated in the research.

- Her email will state that it is a voluntary activity, and the names of the individuals who will fill out the survey will remain anonymous.
- She will indicate that Dr. Alfonse Javed, the Pastor of Missions and Outreach, is conducting this research for his doctoral project to better understand the health of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City to discover models or practices that might help Calvary Baptist Church to engage New York City and impact with world with the message of Jesus Christ more effectively. The purpose of this study is to assess the health of CBC and evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches.
- A copy of her email, consent form, recruitment document, and the survey are provided in the appendix of the research project.
- She communicates with the participants that they do not need to sign the consent form. Evidence of their acknowledgment and consent will be in their return of a completed survey.
- Since the survey will be returned to the chairperson of the Council of Missions via email, she may know which survey belongs to which member of the council. However, none of the surveys will have names or any other identifiable marks on them. Once the survey responses are downloaded onto her computer, no one will be able to tell what survey belongs to which participant; at this point, she will delete the senders' email with attachments.
- That she and the primary researcher will take the following steps to ensure the anonymity of the participants further:

- Once the chairperson has received all the data back, she will download them onto her computer's hard drive and send the downloaded files to the researcher via email. This step will ensure that the chairperson of the council will never expose the sender's email address at any point in her email communication with the researcher.
- The chairperson of the council will also ensure that the initial email is removed from her inbox as well as from the deleted files folder. This step will ensure that there are only two surviving copies of each survey with no identifiable marks, such as name, physical address, or email. One will be on her computer's hard drive and one in the email box of the researcher.
- Once the researcher confirms that he has successfully downloaded all the data that the chairperson of the council sent, the chairperson will delete all the copies from her hard drive.
- Upon the receipt of each survey response, the researcher will download the copy of all the data on to his computer's hard drive. His computer is password protected.
- The researcher will upload the only existing copies of the recoded data that by now have gone through various steps to ensure complete anonymity onto his personal google drive, which is also password protected.

SWOT

Based on the results of the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire, the data was analyzed, and a SWOT analysis was created.

- Analyzing the data: There are nine sections in the questionnaire based on the nine chapters of the book *The Measure of a Healthy Church* by Gene A. Getz. The highest and

lowest principle for each section was noted. A chart was created for each section (with the title), and the average rating for each section was listed.

- SWOT: This is an acronym meaning “Strengths,” “Weaknesses,” “Opportunities,” and “Threats.” Once the high and low for each section were noted according to the formula provided at the end of each section, a SWOT analysis using a 4-quadrant chart based on observations in light of the entire survey was conducted. There was only one SWOT analysis based on the entire survey, not each individual section. This chart provides provide bullets reflecting:
 - S: Based on the analysis of the survey results, what are the basic strengths regarding the ministry’s health? (These are internal.)
 - W: Based on the analysis of the survey results, what are the basic weaknesses regarding the ministry’s health? (These are internal.)
 - O: Examining the ministry’s internal culture and the external community in which that ministry operates, what opportunities exist to become healthier? (These are external opportunities that have not yet been explored.)
 - T: Examining the ministry’s internal culture and the external community in which that ministry operates, what threats exist to the health of the ministry? (These are external challenges to the ministry, sometimes beyond the ministries control.)

T4T

In the third phase, the researcher’s role remained limited to receiving, computing, and analyzing the data. The chairperson of the council of missions randomly selected individuals from phase 1 and placed them into Group A and Group B.

Group A was given a free copy of both the T4T manual and the video training, which is available in the appendix. The primary researcher created a link to a set of pre-recorded short T4T training videos that were sent to all the participants. Those who did not have access to the internet to watch the videos were given the option of videos on a USB pin or DVD.

Through the video, the researcher went through the T4T training with Group A. Each participant was encouraged to use the training in their neighborhood or apartment building. All participants in Group A were required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on their progress by using the template provided in the appendix. In the template, there was a specific question that each participant was asked to answer as a part of their weekly progress report. The whole report should not have taken more than 5-10 minutes. All participants received a reminder email to fill out their weekly report along with a word of encouragement. At the end of the 6th week, each participant in Group A was required to write a detailed summary of their 6-week experience, which they were to send to the secondary researcher.

The content of the video training was as follows:

VIDEO 1: Introduction and overview

Hello. I am Dr. Alfonse Javed, and I am a pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan. I have had the privilege of serving Christ for 20 years, 12 of which I served as a missionary in Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Greece, and the United States. I am also the co-founder of the Heart For Muslims Conference in New York City, a collaborative effort of some 35 ministries to reach Muslims with the gospel message.

In this video series, I will present T4T as an evangelistic disciple-making tool for the multiplication of disciples who have been reproducing disciples in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Muslim world, and the Americas. I believe essentially that every disciple is a disciple-maker.

In the last ten to fifteen years, this tool has been proven to be most effective in equipping disciples to carry out the Great Commission to plant churches and to make disciples who train and make disciples.

The material I will share is a modified version of the T4T manual accessible through T4Tonline.org. These videos are created as a resource to equip believers in my own church as well as the attendees of the Heart for Muslims Conference. This video resource is free.

- T4T stands for Training 4 Trainers because every disciple is expected to train others. Despite persecution, disease epidemics, and many spiritual attacks, the movement has continued its remarkable growth. By 2011, researchers report that nearly 2 million baptisms have taken place in less than a decade, and more than 150,000 churches have been started.
- T4T's goal is to multiply generations of trainers and churches.
- T4T calls disciples of Jesus to learn to live out their call to a) follow Jesus, and b) become fisher for men (Mark 1:17).
- T4T has two principles. If someone is lost, the principle is witness to them. If someone is saved, the principle is, offer to train them to make disciples. This is an all-inclusive process of training believers to witness to the lost and train new believers to form reproducing discipleship communities generation by generation.

There are four fundamental questions T4T uses to train trainers:

- What do I say?
- Who do I say it to?
- Why should I do this?
- What do I do if they say "yes"?

However, in this training video series, I will switch the order of the questions to the following:

- Why should I do this? (the Great Commission Matt.28:16-20; 2 Cor 5:17-21)
- Who do I say it to?
- What do I say? It has two parts
- What do I do if they say “yes”? (Salvation plan)

VIDEO 2: Why?

“Why should I do this?”

Three reasons:

1. Identity (2 Cor 5:17:21)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (ESV).

- New Creation/not old;
- Reconcilers/not counting others trespasses against us;
- Ambassador/not secret Christians.

2. Great Commandment/Human responsivity (Matt 22:36-40)

³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (ESV).

- Loving God with all/not some part of;
- Loving your neighbor/no just yourself;

- Obedient/not disobedient.

3. Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (ESV).

- Go/not come;
- Everyone/no just some;
- Make disciples/not just church members.

VIDEO 3: Who?

“Who do I tell my story to?”

The T4T training suggests listing 20 to 30 individuals that trainer know. However, I have substituted the list with the Oikos mapping to make it more visual. The biblical rationale behind this section is God’s sovereignty to save people and humanity’s responsibility to share the gospel message as well as to respond to the gospel message. Under God’s sovereignty, it starts with human’s responsibility to accept the gift of God, which is God’s salvation plan for the world through His son Jesus. It organically morphs into personal and individual responses to the gospel message by which a person engages in the lifelong disciple-making process. We take the following three steps to answer the ‘who’ question:

- OIKOS mapping /household relationships

2 Tim 2:2 says, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (ESV). Also, In John 17:20, Jesus said, “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word” (ESV). Jesus prayed for His disciples, us, and those who come to

know Jesus through our witness. Also, Jesus sets a model for us in how to engage in witnessing and disciple-making. He prayed and asked God the Father to multiply disciples. Now,

- Take a sheet of paper and draw a bubble in the middle and put your name in it.

Then you draw connected bubbles around yours. You should try to map everyone in your family or circle of relationships who need to know Jesus.

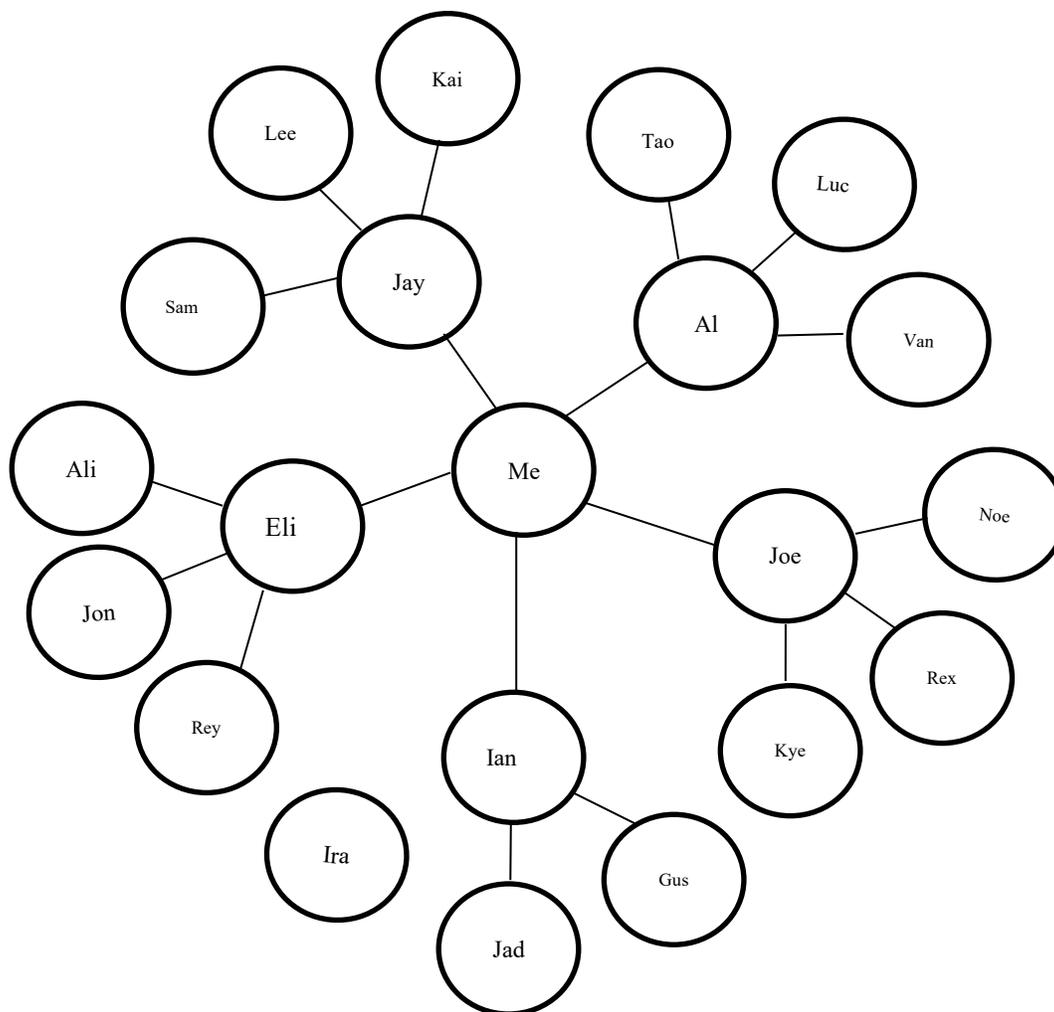
- Then draw the secondary relationships and connect them to the people you know.

And finally, draw an empty bubble at the end of every stream of relationships to encourage continued prayer and sharing through the "generations." Approximately 20-30 people.

- Human collaboration with God through prayer (Col.4:2-4)

²Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak” (ESV).

“Now, I want you to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you which 5 persons He wants you to tell your story to this week. Circle the names of those five persons.” In doing so you acknowledge your responsibility as a human to win your family and friends for the Lord in the biblical pattern, you are responsible to obey the Bible rather than man. Also, by praying you acknowledge God’s sovereignty over the souls that will respond to the gospel. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God places the names on their hearts that you need to circle. By inviting God into this process, you put the Holy Spirit in charge of directing your next steps rather than you or any man.



OIKOS mapping example

VIDEO 4: What?

“What do I say?”

Most Christian men and women ask “what do I say to a lost person that might lead them to faith in Christ?” The answer is, tell them your story. Your story is unique. The great thing about your story is that no one can refute it. It fits into your own culture perfectly, it doesn’t require any props, e.g., tracts or videos, and it can be started and stopped as circumstances demand, i.e. security concerns, etc.

- Turn over the sheet of paper on which you drew the OIKOS MAP and write your story with three parts: 1) Your life before Jesus, 2) How you met Jesus, and 3) Your life since Jesus. If you've been a Christian since childhood, you may want to adapt your story to a more recent experience of how Jesus brought wonderful change to your life.
- Try to remove or avoid religious vocabulary that your non-Christian friend might have trouble understanding.
- Remember to keep your story short, no more than 1-2 minutes in length.
- After you've written down your story, you need to practice it. Stand up and read it out loud! Read it to the ceiling, then read it to the floor. Close your eyes, and try to recite it out loud from memory. The room will be noisy. It is important to understand that you not only know what to say, but you have practiced it enough to be confident that you could say it briefly, clearly, and with conviction.
- Ask three Christian friends to listen to your story. Invite them to give you feedback on how to improve. See if you can do it better each time. If you are watching this video series as a group, then get into groups of three and practice telling your story. After each person finishes, the other two can help you improve by clarifying any confusing points and helping you remove any distracting habits. After you finish this exercise, we'll move on to the 2nd question.

The T4T manual offers tips for writing and telling a personal story or testimony. The following two questions are taken from the manual:

Question: What do I say if I've been a believer for a long time?

Answer: Trainees who have been believers for a long time sometimes struggle to come up with a personal story of life change. "I was only seven years old! I don't even remember my

life before Jesus” is a typical protest. Don’t worry. The changes Jesus makes in our lives are not limited to our initial salvation experience. Consider how Christ might have helped you overcome loneliness, a bad temper, or a lack of purpose.

Anticipate questions you are often asked by persons who need to hear your story, such as “What brings you to this country?” or “How do you like living in this city?” Either of these questions can lead to an opportunity to share your story, for example: “There was a time when I could not imagine leaving my home town, but then something happened that changed everything....” *What was that?* “I began praying for the world, and God began to impress on me how much He loves this country and its people. The next thing I knew, I felt that God was leading my family and me to come here and share His love with the people of this country.” A simple story such as that can help you begin your conversation about Jesus and identify persons who are seeking a connection to God.

Question: How do I persuade people to listen to the gospel?

Answer: After someone has listened to your story of how Jesus has changed your life, they have yet to hear and respond to the gospel. So this is the time to share it with them. If someone says, “No, I don’t think I want Jesus in my life,” You can reply, “That’s okay, let me just show you what I am studying.” Then begin to walk them through “Lesson One: Assurance of Salvation.” Sometimes, after they have actually heard what the Bible says about salvation, they will interrupt and say, “I do want that!”

Remember what Jesus taught us in the story of the lost sheep. The Good Shepherd left behind the 99 and went to find the one that was lost. When He found it, He did not say, “Hello, little sheep, would you like to follow me back to the fold?” No! The Good Shepherd grabbed the little sheep

and put it on His shoulder and carried it back to the sheepfold. We must be equally bold when we share our stories and share the gospel. Do not quickly take “no” for an answer.

The key disciple-making activities involve:

- Look for Persons of Peace – spiritually prepared people.
 - Presence – lovingly bring the presence of God to them
 - Power – cry out to God to miraculously reveal Himself to them
 - Proclamation – give a clear message of salvation (gospel + Call to Commitment)
- Witness to five people every week. Sow the gospel broadly to find Persons of Peace.
 - Get to the Point. (Don’t ask, just tell.)
 - Get them to Lostness.
 - Get to the gospel.
- Do whatever it takes to fill your weekly (or bi-weekly) schedule with as many training groups as possible.

After leading someone to faith in Jesus, include them in a T4T group.

Review of the T4T

1. I do not know how to share.
 - a. Short/interesting/testimony
 - b. 1-minute testimony is better than 30 minutes
2. I do not know who I share.
 - a. List the names of people that you know.
 - b. Choose 5 people from the list.

VIDEO 5-Another What?

“What makes you think I will do this?”

The answer is simple accountability. You are being requested to send a written report to your team leader every week and report on those with whom you shared your story. The following three parts (or thirds) are recommended and are considered integral to developing trainers for ongoing accountability.

First Third: (Looking Back)

“The goal of this time is to evaluate how the trainers did while apart, celebrate together, and encourage them that God can build a movement through them.”¹⁸⁵

- Pastoral Care
- Worship
- Loving Accountability
- Vision Casting

Second Third: (Looking Up)

“The goal of this time is to look up to God for a new direction by studying a new lesson or Bible study.”¹⁸⁶

- New Lesson (give enough Biblical content to obey and pass on) – Use SOS.

Say: What is the passage saying?

Obey: What should we obey from this passage?

Share: Who is someone we can share this message with?

Final Third: (Looking Ahead)

¹⁸⁵ Steve Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution: The Story Behind the World's Fastest Growing Church Planting Movement and How It Can Happen in Your Community!* (Monument, CO: WIGTake Resources, 2011), 126.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

“The goal of this time is to prepare the trainers to implement the things God has been teaching them – evangelism, discipleship, training others, starting a group, etc.”¹⁸⁷

- Practice the Lesson
- Set Goals and Pray for One Another

Four critical elements should be included in T4T:

- Loving Accountability
- Vision Casting
- Practice the Lesson
- Set Goals and Pray for One Another

VIDEO 6 -Another What?

“What do I do if they say “yes”?”

What if I do tell my friend my story, and what if he says, “Yes. I would like to have Jesus in my life.” What do I do if they say “yes” to Jesus?

You need to be prepared for this. You will share God’s plan of Salvation.

- Step #1. Open your palm (left or right) and say, “When God created this world, it was all beautiful, but we introduced evil and brokenness in this world because “We all have sinned against God”.
- Step#2. Close you’re the palm you had open, and make a fist and say, “Therefore, we all deserve God wrath and eternal death.”
- Step#3. Put the thumb up from your fist and say, “God loved the world so much that He sent His Son Jesus from heaven to earth to save us.”

¹⁸⁷ Steve Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*, 126.

- Step#4. Put the index finger up while holding your thumb up from your fist and say, “Christ paid for our sins and died on the Cross to save us from eternal death.”
- Step#5. Put the third finger up while keeping the index finger and thumb up from your fist and say, “Christ was buried, and rose again the third day to secure eternal life for those who believe in Him.”
- Step#5. Put the fourth finger up while keeping the thumb, other two fingers and thumb up from your fist and say, “Now in heaven, Christ intercedes on our behalf.”
- Step#6. Using your hand with all fingers pointing to heaven say, “He is coming to take those who believe in Him and who believe that He came from Heaven to earth to save the world, that he died on the cross for our sins and he was buried and rose again the third day. However, He is also coming to judge those who do not believe and reject God’s plan on salvation.”

The T4T official manual provides a set of lessons that can be used. An online link is available in the consent form as well as in the recruitment document.

The online videos are made available through Calvary Baptist Church’s website:

<http://www.cbcnyc.org/resources>, as well as through YouTube. The following live links take participants to the videos. Each video has a short quiz at the end, which must be passed with a score of 100% (quizzes can be taken multiple times and offer auto-answers).

Training 4 Trainers Part 1
Training 4 Trainers Part 2
Training 4 Trainers Part 3
Training 4 Trainers Part 4
Training 4 Trainers Part 5
Training 4 Trainers Part 6
Training 4 Trainers Part 7

Group B was not engaged in this training. They were not offered any training. However, they were asked to formulate their discipleship and evangelism plan and implement it. The only recommendation that was made to Group B was that their action plan should have the element of personal evangelism (sharing faith), discipleship, and training others to reproduce disciples. Only limited encouragement was provided. For example, they are Christians, and therefore they should share their faith with others. They were told that they would not be required to report weekly. They would self-manage their accountability. At the end of the 6th week, each participant in Group B was required to write a detailed summary of their 6-week experience, which they were required to send to the secondary researcher.

Each member of the groups was asked to send a summary of how they grew in Christ, indicating specific areas of growth and whether they were able to engage others in evangelism. No individual names were used throughout this data collection and reporting. Group A and Group B were the officially designated terms for both groups to assess their process. The results are reported in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

The Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz affirms CBC's commitment to a strong pulpit ministry that enriches the congregation with truths of the scriptures. CBC's vibrant mission focus that has enabled the church to support sixty-four missionaries, and countless independent projects through non-missionary related organizations are evidence of this strength. Furthermore, the following review in an online journal by an independent outside reviewer also highlights some of the areas that are addressed in the SWOT sections of this chapter:

Many Manhattan hotels boast of luxurious rooms, world-class dining facilities, and breathtaking views, but the Salisbury Hotel on West Fifty-Seventh Street offers something rather different: Calvary Baptist Church is on the hotel's ground floor. On the last Sunday in January, worshippers pressed quickly through the church's doors for Calvary's 11 am Traditional Worship Service. The warmth—of both the church interior and the congregants' greetings for one another—were a welcome change from the biting cold outside. The pews of Calvary Baptist filled with a mix of churchgoers young and old, of varied ethnic and, it appeared, economic backgrounds. As senior pastor David Epstein boasted in his sermon, “the wonderful diversity of this congregation . . . reflects what heaven will look like one day.”

Calvary traces its origin to Hope Chapel, an independent Baptist church founded in 1847. After a short stay on lower Broadway and a more extended stay on Twenty-Third Street, Calvary took up its current residence in 1931. Above the doors, within a delicately Gothic-styled archway, the words “We Preach Christ Crucified, Risen, and Coming Again” are hewn in stone; above that entrance, the sixteen-story, brick-and-stone hotel rises like the spire of a modern cathedral.

The interior of Calvary reflects Baptist beliefs in its lecture hall-style layout. The ambo stands front and center in the sanctuary; before it, a small altar holds only a Bible. This arrangement emphasizes the belief, set forth in Calvary's Articles of Faith, that the Bible is “the supreme standard and final authority for all conduct, faith, and doctrine.” A baptistery also stands at the front of the church; it is, again, in accordance with the

church's Articles of Faith, an immersion pool.¹⁸⁸

Meghan captures the interaction by the congregation during the sermon and at the end of the service. The journal in the article above reports the following rating:

- Physical Aesthetics of the Church: 6 (out of 10).
- Precision, Reverence, and Aesthetics of the Service: 5 (out of 10).
- Precision, Reverence, and Rhetoric of the Sermon: 7 (out of 10).
- Music: 6 (out of 10).

Data Collection

The secondary researcher (co-investigator) followed the procedures articulated in the methodology and retrieved the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire (CHAQ). Unmarked copies were sent to the primary researcher who computed and analyzed the data and sent it back to the secondary researcher to double-check for any errors or manipulations.

The first two phases of the research process were done on time. However, the third process took longer as a majority of the participants failed to complete the training on time. The following text was sent by the secondary researcher (co-investigator) in the 10th week of the data collection:

This week (in the 10th week), I would like to receive a final report from all the participants. The final report should be at least a one-page summary of your reflections. I just want to remind everyone that your agreement to participate in the attached consent form from the beginning of your participation is as follows:

If you agree to be in this study, you are to do the following things:

¹⁸⁸ Meghan Duke, "Sermon Review: Calvary Baptist Church (New York City)," *First Things*, February 2, 2010, <https://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2010/02/sermon-review-calvary-baptist-churchnew-york-city>.

1. Complete a survey, *the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz*.
2. Participants will be divided into two groups. If you are randomly selected for Group A, you will be required to attend an evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training, which may take 1 hour. If you are randomly selected for Group B, you will not attend the training; however, you will be asked to come up with your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples and implement that strategy. The time commitment for Group B is completely up to each individual in that group.
3. If you are in Group A, you will be required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on your progress by using a template provided. In the template, there are specific questions that you will answer as a part of your weekly progress report. Each of the five parts of the report should not take more than 5-10 minutes. If you are in Group B, you will not be required to send a weekly report on your progress.
4. Whether you are in Group A or Group B, at the end of the 6th week, you will be required to write a detailed summary of your 6-week experience, which you will send to me.

At this point, since we are way past our date of completion for this research, I will need a summary report from all of you asap.

The summary report of the participants from **Group A** can answer the following questions (these are suggested questions, the report should be purely your own reflection of the last eight weeks):

1. Did you complete the T4T evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training?

2. Were you able to send a short report once a week for five weeks on your progress by using the template you were provided with?
 - a. If yes, you will answer point no. 3, if not, then explain why you were not able to send the weekly progress report.
 - b. What would have helped?
3. Did you answer all the questions on the weekly progress report?
4. Were you able to implement the T4T evangelism/disciple-making/leadership training?
5. How did it change your life?
6. What were the outcomes?

Group B will answer the following questions (these are suggested questions, the report should be purely your own reflections on the last eight weeks):

1. Were you able to come up with your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples?
2. How much time did you devote towards developing and implementing your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples?
3. Were you able to implement that strategy?
 - a. If yes, then answer point no. 4, if not, then explain why you were not able to devote any time towards developing and implementing your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples.
 - b. Why you were not able to come up with your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples?

- c. What would have helped?
4. What was your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples?
5. What were the outcomes?

Please send me your summary report as soon as you can since the research time is over.

Thank you all for your participation, and may our Lord bless your efforts personally and our church.

Church Health Analysis Questionnaire (CHAQ) Results

In the literature review, Marshall and Payne indicated that the Great Commission, and the verses pertaining to ecclesiology (2 Tim 2:2; Col 3:16; 1 Cor 12:29; Jas 3:1; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Tim 3:8-13; 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Con 3:5-9; Matt 28:19; 1 Pet 3:15; Eph 4:11) present the idea that the gospel goes forth by the power of the Holy Spirit, and when the Word of God is spoken. They insisted that the proclamation of the gospel makes the kingdom of God possible on earth as it is in heaven. Calvary Baptist Church scored high in the service and sermon review by Meghan as well as the elected officials of the church (leadership) who chose to participate in the research project. It simply endorsed what the church already knows and has believed that, from its inception, that CBC always had a strong pulpit ministry. However, the sources behind the proclamation of the gospel, as indicated in the book, are “*proclaiming* (speaking the word) and *praying* (calling upon God to pour out his Spirit to make the word effective in people’s hearts).”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ Marshall and Payne, 41.

Summarization of the Getz's CHAQ

In this section of the chapter, a summary of the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz, which will be referred to as Getz' CHAQ, is presented along with graphs.

Chapters and Principles are given an abbreviated form: Ch.and P. (For example, Chapter 1; Principle 1 is referred to as Ch.1; P1.).

Twenty-three elected members/leaders (leaders according to the official life of 2019) of the congregation were invited to participate in this research project. Out of 23 selected, only six chose to participate in the research project.

The following are the participants' individual results by chapters:

Chapters		A	B	C	D	E	F	Average	Median
Chapter 1									
	Principle 1	2	2	4	3	3	3	2.83	3
	Principle 2	3	3	3	2	3	1	2.50	3
	Principle 3	4	3	4	4	3	4	3.67	4
	Principle 4	2	3	4	2	3	4	3.00	3
	Principle 5	3	3	4	2	4	4	3.33	3.5
Chapter 2									
	Principle 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00	5
	Principle 2	3	3	4	2	3	4	3.17	3
Chapter 3									
	Principle 1	3	4	5	4	5	4	4.17	4
	Principle 2	3	2	5	3	4	3	3.33	3
	Principle 3	3	2	5	3	4	3	3.33	3
	Principle 4	2	5	5	3	4	1	3.33	3.5
	Principle 5	4	3	4	2	4	1	3.00	3.5
	Principle 6	3	3	5	5	4	4	4.00	4
Chapter 4									
	Principle 1	4	1	1	3	2	3	2.33	2.5
	Principle 2	4	3	5	3	4	4	3.83	4

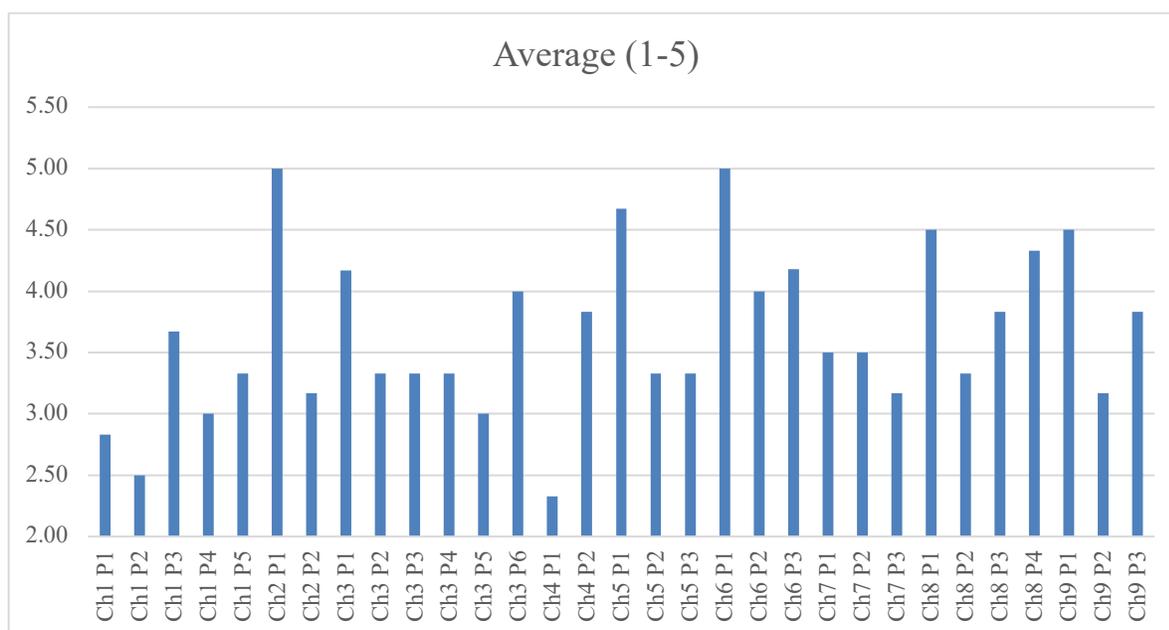
Participants' individual results by chapters: (Continued)

Chapters		A	B	C	D	E	F	Average	Median
Chapter 5									
	Principle 2	3	2	4	5	3	3	3.33	3
	Principle 3	2	2	4	3	5	4	3.33	3.5
Chapter 6									
	Principle 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00	5
	Principle 2	2	5	5	4	5	3	4.00	4.5
	Principle 3	3	4	5	4	5	4	4.17	4
Chapter 7									
	Principle 1	3	3	4	3	4	4	3.50	3.5
	Principle 2	2	3	5	3	4	4	3.50	3.5
	Principle 3	2	2	5	2	4	4	3.17	3
Chapter 8									
	Principle 1	4	3	5	5	5	5	4.50	5
	Principle 2	2	2	4	3	5	4	3.33	3.5
	Principle 3	3	3	5	4	5	3	3.83	3.5
	Principle 4	4	3	5	4	5	5	4.33	4.5
Chapter 9									
	Principle 1	4	4	4	5	5	5	4.50	4.5
	Principle 2	3	3	5	2	4	2	3.17	3
	Principle 3	4	3	5	4	3	4	3.83	4
	Principle 4	3	3	3	2	3	4	3.00	3
	Principle 5	3	3	4	2	5	5	3.67	3.5

The following table shows the average score in each chapter and principle:

Chapter & Principle	Average (1-5)
Ch1 P1	2.83
Ch1 P2	2.50
Ch1 P3	3.67
Ch1 P4	3.00
Ch1 P5	3.33
Ch2 P1	5.00
Ch2 P2	3.17
Ch3 P1	4.17
Ch3 P2	3.33
Ch3 P3	3.33
Ch3 P4	3.33
Ch3 P5	3.00
Ch3 P6	4.00
Ch4 P1	2.33
Ch4 P2	3.83
Ch5 P1	4.67
Ch5 P2	3.33
Ch5 P3	3.33
Ch6 P1	5.00
Ch6 P2	4.00
Ch6 P3	4.18
Ch7 P1	3.50
Ch7 P2	3.50
Ch7 P3	3.17
Ch8 P1	4.50
Ch8 P2	3.33
Ch8 P3	3.83
Ch8 P4	4.33
Ch9 P1	4.50
Ch9 P2	3.17
Ch9 P3	3.83

The following graph reflects the average score:



The basic findings of the research study reflected in the bar graph indicate that participants feel that Calvary is overall lowest in the area of “When measuring a church, we must measure functions, not forms or structures” (Ch.1; P.2). This indicates that the congregation is likely to confuse cultural forms with biblical functions in terms of absolutes. The lower indicated data point on the graph (Ch.4; P.1) is a positive notation, indicating that Calvary’s congregation tends away from focusing on their gifts at the expense of becoming like Christ.

The data set indicates that Calvary’s strengths are in non-negotiable doctrinal issues (Ch.2; P.1, Ch.6; P.1). Each of these indicates that the participants have full confidence that the people of Calvary both understand and believe in the deity of Jesus Christ as well as in the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is also portrayed in the next highest assessment (Ch.5; P.1), indicating that Calvary’s congregants understand and believe the basic doctrines of Christianity.

Each of the other data sets, which did not fall within the extreme high or low range, trended towards strength, indicating that even Calvary's moderate areas are stronger than they are weak. This is encouraging, as it means that Calvary may not have a variety of weaknesses on which it needs to focus, rather just a few mentioned above.

SWOT

Each strength is based on the teaching that the congregation receives from the pulpit. The sermons are biblically accurate and doctrinally sound; therefore, the congregants have a clear understanding of the message of the gospel that salvation is a free gift from God through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ on the Cross and it requires no work.

In the area of strengths, the Getz' CHAQ reported:

- Strong doctrinal understanding (Ch.5; P1).
- Comprehensive understanding of biblical discipleship (Ch.1; P4).
- Understand that Salvation is a free gift (Ch.3; P1).
- Live righteous and holy lives because they clearly understand and deeply appreciate God's grace in having saved them (Ch.3; P2).

The congregation also understands what biblical discipleship looks like, and how a Christian should live a righteous and holy life in gratitude to Christ for God's grace through which He blesses a person with the saving knowledge of Jesus. The problem that CBC faces is the practice of the knowledge and actively serving as ministers of the gospel. As a result of a strong, clear, biblical, and doctrinally sound pulpit ministry, CBC's congregants have much knowledge, but they are hoarding that knowledge. Earls argues, "This is a challenge in Christianity that is not overcome far too often, but God has a way to do it and wants it to be

discovered and received from His hand. It will require the Holy Spirit's power valued and sought for the Great Commission work needed."¹⁹⁰

They are neither sharing with others, nor connecting with each other. They have an inward focus with individualistic mindsets where they neither think about the people outside the church family nor do they think about connecting with the people inside the church. Thus, the SWOT analysis accurately reveals the following weaknesses:

- The degree to which the church is allowed to develop new and creative forms and structures in order to carry out the unchanging biblical functions and principle outline in the Spirit (Ch.9; P5).
- The degree to which the church is impacting the world and seeing people put their faith in the Spirit Jesus Christ for salvation (Ch.9; P3).
- The degree to which all believers are participating in building up the body of Christ in love by faithfully practicing the "one-another" injunctions (Ch.7; P3).
- The degree to which people are focusing on their spiritual gifts rather than on becoming more like Jesus Christ in all they do (Ch.4; P1).

The SWOT analysis shows that CBC's knowledge is not saturating the church and is not causing them to be witnesses of the Spirit by making disciples and baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them everything that Jesus has commanded. The surveys indicate that CBC knows the teachings of Jesus but is unable to practice them or teach them to others because they are failing in witnessing and disciple-making. The knowledge of the Spirit lacks experience and the transformative life that results in engaging

¹⁹⁰ Rod Earls, "Church Health Analysis Part 2" (class paper, EVCP 820 Church Health Analysis Part 2, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, April 4, 2019), 5.

in the work of the proclamation of the Spirit on an individual level (not only from the pulpit) and praying for the pouring out of God's Spirit to make the word effective in people's hearts.¹⁹¹ The pulpit ministry is great, but that is not the model that Jesus presents when He commands every believer to be a vine worker and make disciples by proclaiming the Spirit and praying for the pouring out of God's Spirit as the proclamation is being made. It is clear that even though CBC believes in congregational leadership and the plurality of leaders, the SWOT analysis shows that the congregation does not feel included, and on the contrary they experience restrictions when it comes to developing new and creative forms and structures in order to carry out the unchanging biblical functions and principles outlined in the Spirit (Ch.9; Principle 5). This presents a major challenge. Also, the congregation's knowledge of their responsibility to be engaged in the mission of the church is limited by both the focus on the pulpit ministry, and the restricted use of its creativity. This produces several threats:

- It limits the Holy Spirit from functioning in and through the whole body of Christ to advance the kingdom of God in New York City and around the world. It also promotes distrust due to the perceived control by a few on the top that happens to be the elected body of believers by the congregation to lead the church. This also puts restrictions on the practice of all the talents and gifts that God has given to the congregation individually to advance the kingdom of God.
- The leadership on top seems responsible for the inward focus of the church, which is producing inward-focused believers that deal with only their own lives. It is unintentional and probably is completely overlooked, but it is a threat to the health of the church.

¹⁹¹ Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine* (Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2009).

- The first two threats lead to the next threat. Another threat to the health of the church that the SWOT indicates is the individualistic nature of believers who are partially or completely disconnected from each other within the church as well as outside the church.
- Consequently, the SWOT shows that CBC members are more interested in methods and checklists (focused on works) than growing and becoming like Christ.

T4T

None of the participants completed Part 2 of the T4T, which required them to practice what they learned from the training. The T4T results were disappointing, but they did show something extremely important. The following results were compiled and checked by both the primary researcher and the secondary researcher (co-investigator). Both agree that the end cause of the plateau status of CBC is that its leadership is too busy doing the church rather than being the church.

Summarization of T4T

Four participants provided the summary report of their T4T after a 9-week process. Their reasons given for being unable to complete Part 2 of the research are as follows:

- They were busy at work and other commitments, like church, classes, or family.
- They had all the intentions to complete Part 2, but whenever they wanted to work on it, they fell asleep because of being overtired.
- They did not realize there was so much more work for Part 2 compared to Part 1.
- They felt they had committed to something that was way over their heads.
- They kept thinking they would have the time but never did.
- They thought the videos were a bit confusing.
- They did not agree with some of the strategies presented in the videos.

This can be broken down into the following:

1. The church leadership, which participated, is extremely busy with their day to day church responsibilities.
2. Between their careers, families, and church responsibilities, there is very little time to engage in personal evangelism and discipleship.
3. They all have the desire to make disciples and agree that every believer should be engaged in making disciples.
4. They all see disciple-making as a prime objective of believers and the church.
5. They acknowledge their lack of time.

The T4T did not achieve its desired outcome simply because the participants failed to implement the second half of the training where they were to share the T4T with believers and non-believers. Nevertheless, the participants acknowledged that they did have the desire to make evangelism and disciple-making a priority as Christians. Therefore, an ongoing attempt will be made to implement the T4T in small groups, especially the missions groups going on short term missions trips. The assumption here is that over a period of time the T4T's effectiveness will become evident, and it will begin to saturate the whole congregation.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The plan that this research proposed is measurable and reproducible. There is the potential for major improvements in CBC's health as a church only if CBC intentionally tackles threats without being overly cautious. There is nothing fatal at this point that could possibly hurt the church in the short run. However, if the threats are not taken seriously now, they will damage the church in the long run and possibly make the church ineffective in her ministry to the gospel in New York City and around the world. The following steps are taken from the SWOT to improve CBC's overall health:

- CBC's strengths allow CBC to stand against false teachings and false doctrines. If the church keeps up with the strong pulpit ministry while taking in the criticism provided by the congregation, they will build strong believers who could take the learned knowledge of the scriptures and fight against the false teachings and doctrines that are attacking the Church around the globe. This will be one of the ways that both the local body is engaged in missions, as well as the world is being impacted by the gospel, which will accomplish the mission of Calvary Baptist Church.
- The congregation has the head knowledge; now, they need to be encouraged to put that into practice. In order to do that effectively, church leadership needs to prayerfully assess the current pulpit ministry focus, as well as the overall ministry philosophy and programs. This honest and intelligent process should include the congregants who are not in leadership and also have never served in the leadership. This will ensure that outsider

viewpoints are considered. The leadership, along with a few non-leadership members should read Ephesians 4:12-16 very carefully:

To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love (ESV).

The results of this assessment bring forth the following points:

- The SWOT analysis shows that the congregation knows what salvation is exactly, but they are not able to share with others and practice it in their own lives. There is an opportunity to challenge and train them and bring them on board to be co-laborers along with the church leadership. The leadership needs to acknowledge this and act on the advice that, “the growth of all Christians in conviction, character, and competency, so that in love they might minister to others by prayerfully bringing the word of God to them—whether to non-Christians in outreach, new Christians in fellow-up, or all other Christians in daily growth.”¹⁹² The church should begin to use the pulpit ministry to train people to become more like Jesus and be engaged in personal evangelism regularly.
- There is an opportunity to teach and train the congregation to use the deep understanding of salvation message and willingness to live a righteous life full of grace towards others because of what Christ has done for them. Earls indicates, “If they can be given

¹⁹² Marshall and Payne, 85.

opportunities in small settings where they lavish this grace upon one another, it will be a natural motivation to want to share it with unsaved friends.”¹⁹³

These training-based teachings should be done for a longer period in order to see results. After each sermon, there should be a question and answer session in the small groups and Sunday school classes. These training-based teachings from the pulpit should accompany a printed guide that should be prepared in advance so that the congregation feels more involved as they follow what the preacher teaches from the pulpit. The ideal topics should include teaching on how to be less selfish every day in our spiritual walk, and more Christ-centered, selfless witnesses of Christ to the lost world. There should be a follow-up procedure to measure the results. The procedure should include a simple weekly report by the members of the church via text, phone call, e-mail, or verbal confirmation to a ministry leader that the member was able to share the gospel with someone. This report can be done within the small groups, mentor and mentee groups, Sunday school classes, and among accountability partners. No one should be exempt from this practice. Every pastor, elder, deacon, and member should report to somebody on the result of this training-based pulpit teaching. This will put the church on a good path to see God build a Phil. 2:1-5 culture which also includes lost people (in the others-mindedness).

The assumption that only healthy leadership adopts an effective evangelism approach that results in conversions, multiplication of disciples, and more church plants is accurate. However, this research shows that healthy leadership is a negative aspect. Since the leadership (those who participated in the research) were not able to give appropriate time, this shows reluctance on leadership’s part. Unless the leadership is healthy, growth is not possible.

¹⁹³ Rod Earls, “Church Health Analysis Part 2” (class paper, EVCP 820 Church Health Analysis Part 2, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, April 4, 2019), 8.

Purpose Statement

After assessing the health of CBC and evaluating the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches, it is clear that the focus is on maintaining the day to day ministry of the church. It is extremely valuable to maintain the day to day ministry of a church, but it has negative effects that lack vision for the future. It is clear from the assessments that CBC exhibits character traits of a traditional church, attractional church, and missional church, but she must determine what type of church she needs to be. The attractional church will always pull towards creating more programs, which may put a strain on the leadership and their time resources. The combination of the three models of the church will restrict the growth, confuse the congregation, and overstretch resources including manpower. A resolution to this problem will pave the path to birth new churches in order to experience growth. This means letting go of a measure of control and centralization, allowing the church to grow horizontally and to develop a desire to plant more churches organically.

Also, the research shows that the data validates the assumptions proposed in the earlier chapters. The following are some points that were validated by the research:

- That the leadership believes since the Great Commission is the single most important task given to the local church by Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:16-20), each individual is personally responsible to engage in evangelization and disciple-making.
- That CBC's mission and vision statement clearly articulate the Great Commission, and the church's core values highlight the importance of evangelization and missions.
- That the leadership of CBC wants the congregation to become missional in their everyday life, through preaching, teaching, internal policies, programs, activities, the disciple-making process, and church ministry strategies.

- That the church and leadership want the church to grow, both in number as well as spiritually.

Thesis Statement

The research proves the thesis statement partially. If the congregation is fully informed on the topic of church planting after the assessment, then they will be willing to support another church plant from the mother church. Though those who participated in the research represent a very small number of the congregation, they acknowledge the need to make disciples who can make disciples, which can result in new church plants, although they fail to materialize with their actions. If they do not have time to be a part of this process actively, their verbal approval may hold less weight.

The Insights that can be profitable for CBC are as follows:

- There is a need for a clear step by step approach for every person that comes to Calvary. On every level, there should be an entry point, growth point, transitional point, and leadership point. For example, a non-believer should be led through a pre-evangelistic small group to answer basic questions that non-believers have; the next step would be a class that offers teachings on basic Christian beliefs followed by something more substantial. A believer should be encouraged to be a part of an evangelistic training such as T4T to learn how to share their faith. A mature believer should be given semi-advanced training in theology and leadership.
- The church should consider a pause on all programs and place their focus on evangelism and discipleship.
- The church leadership needs to seriously consider taking a step back to look at the big picture of each of their commitments, considering whether they have over-committed

their time to the church, leaving no time for evangelism and discipleship in their daily life.

- The church should also consider a church plant. This option will allow the church to think critically and invest in training the congregation to be innovative disciple-makers.
- The bottom line is that the combination of multiple church models causes the need for a program-oriented ministry focus, which puts an unnecessary strain on resources, specifically time commitments and manpower.
- Calvary Baptist Church needs to reevaluate its over-reliance on the same group of people to accomplish the various needs of the church. Limited manpower and the limited time of this pool of people is a large factor in why disciple-making and growth have plateaued at Calvary.

The Insights that can be profitable for other ministries are as follows:

- Other ministries can learn from CBC that a strong pulpit ministry does not always result in disciple-making and fulfillment of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.
- Too much knowledge of the Word can cause pride of knowledge, narrow mindedness, and turn congregants into hoarders of the Word and gatekeepers of doctrine.
- People with accurate doctrinal beliefs and immense Bible knowledge can be lacking in witnessing and implementation of knowledge of the Bible.
- Rather than building a large church (congregation), it might be a good idea to focus on disciple-making with an outward focus that can result in the multiplication of several small churches with the same disciple-making/outward-focused DNA.

- Other churches that are going through decline or plateau perhaps are facing the same challenge as CBC.
- Perhaps they too practice a combination of multiple church models, which is causing the need for a program-oriented ministry focus, which is putting an unnecessary strain on resources, specifically time commitments and manpower.
- They also need to reevaluate their over-reliance on the same group of people (elected /hired leaders) to accomplish the various needs of their church.
- Limited manpower and the limited time of such a pool of people might be a large factor in why disciple-making and growth are restricted in those churches as well.

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Appendix A

Covenant of Membership

CBC is doctrinally a very strong church that preaches the gospel message without any compromise. This is also reflected through its covenant of membership. The members of CBC acknowledge all the articles of covenant at the same time when they are taken into the membership of CBC and renew their commitment to the covenant of membership every year. Each individual publicly in the church service announces:

- Realizing my guilt before God, I have confessed my sin to Him, and received the Lord Jesus Christ, who bore my sin on the Cross, as my personal Savior (Romans 3:19, 23; 5:8; and John 1:12).
- I acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord of all my life and seek to confess Him as such before others by the testimony both of life and lip (Romans 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15).
- I trust in the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in my heart, to keep me, guide me and lead me in the way of purity and holiness (John 14:26; 16:13; Romans 8:2-4; and Galatians 5:22-25).
- I accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and my final authority in all matters of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- I recognize my responsibility by tithes and offerings to extend the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad (Malachi 3:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7).

- I recognize my responsibility to pray regularly for the work of this Church, for its pastors, officers and members, that the witness of all concerned may be to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls (Ephesians 6:18,19; 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25).
- I recognize my responsibility to be regular in my attendance at the services of the Church, and at the Lord's Table (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 11:26).
- I have been baptized by immersion, in obedience to my Lord's command, thus signifying my union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 28:19- 20; Romans 6:4).
- I have read the Articles of Faith as contained in the By-Laws and am in complete agreement therewith (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7; Jude 3).¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ "Making Disciples," Calvary Baptist Church, accessed June 24, 2019, <http://www.cbcnyc.org/files/uploads/covenant-of-membership.pdf>.

Appendix B

Articles of Faith

The church collectively agrees and professes the articles of faith which also determine the theology and philosophy of ministry at CBC and set the tune for its core values. In a way, individual response in the covenant of membership becomes a collective response through the articles of faith. The nine articles of faith¹⁹⁵ of CBC are as follows:

1. We believe in one God, eternally existent as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

2. We believe that the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is God's inspired and infallible Word, and is the supreme standard and final authority for all conduct, faith, and doctrine.

3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His premillennial, personal return in power and glory.

4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but by willful transgression became sinful and is justly under the condemnation and wrath of Almighty God.

5. We believe that the only salvation from this guilt and condemnation is through faith in the righteousness and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this salvation is the free gift of God's love and grace.

6. We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit and that His ministry is to reveal Christ to men, to convict of sin, to regenerate repentant sinners and, by His presence and power, to sanctify the lives of the redeemed.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

7. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion; that baptism is only to be administered upon profession of faith in Christ, by immersion, thereby declaring our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; that communion is only for believers, is to be preceded by faithful self-examination, and is in remembrance of the Lord's death until He comes.

8. We believe that the New Testament Church is a body of believers, baptized by immersion, associated for worship, service, and the spreading of the gospel of the grace of God to all the world.

9. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust; the just, having been redeemed by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be with Him throughout eternity in glory; the unjust, having died impenitent and unreconciled to God, to eternal condemnation in Hell.

Appendix C

Instruction for Group A T4T Progress Report Instruction/Template

Each participant in Group A is asked to fill out the following weekly report to track their progress. This process serves as an accountability mechanism. The participants in this group will get a weekly email from the secondary researcher as a reminder and encouragement to keep pressing on. At the end of the 6th week each participant in this group is required to write a detailed summary of his/her 6-week experience and send it to the secondary researcher.

Week1

Total Time: _____

Content of the progress report: To whom did they tell their story this week, and who have they trained. Offer encouragement along with peer accountability. Here are some good accountability questions that you can ask:

- With whom have you shared your story? With whom have you shared God's plan of salvation? Who has believed?
- When are you training them to share their own story and to explain to others God's plan of salvation? Are you teaching them lessons #1, 2 and 3?
- Are you training them to train others? (2 Timothy 2:2) Are they doing this? Are the people whom they are training, training others?

Week2

Total Time: _____ (recommended time 30 minutes via phone, skype, or in-person)

Content of the progress report: to whom did they tell their story this week and who they have trained? Offer encouragement along with peer accountability. Here are some good accountability questions that you can ask:

- Are you having a daily time with God? How is that going?
- With whom have you shared your story? With whom have you shared God's plan of salvation? Who has believed?
- When are you training them to share their own story and to explain to others God's plan of salvation? Are you teaching them the 6 lessons?
- Are you training them to train others? (2 Timothy 2:2) Are they doing this? Are the people whom they are training, training others?

Week3

Total Time: _____ (recommended time 30 minutes via phone, skype, or in person)

Content of the progress report: to whom did they tell their story this week and who they have trained? Offer encouragement along with peer accountability. Here are some good accountability questions that you can ask:

- Are you having a daily time with God? How is that going?
- With whom have you shared your story? With whom have you shared God's plan of salvation? Who has believed?
- When are you training them to share their own story and to explain to others God's plan of salvation? Are you teaching them the 6 lessons?
- Are you training them to train others? (2 Timothy 2:2) Are they doing this? Are the people whom they are training, training others?

Week4

Total Time: _____ (recommended time 30 minutes via phone, skype, or in-person)

Content of the progress report: to whom did they tell their story this week and whom they have trained? Offer encouragement along with peer accountability. Here are some good accountability questions that you can ask:

- Are you having a daily time with God? How is that going?
- With whom have you shared your story? With whom have you shared God's plan of salvation? Who has believed?
- When are you training them to share their own story and to explain to others God's plan of salvation? Are you teaching them the 6 lessons?
- Are you training them to train others? (2 Timothy 2:2) Are they doing this? Are the people whom they are training, training others?

Week 5

Total Time: _____ (recommended time 30 minutes via phone, skype, or in-person)

Content of the progress report: to whom did they tell their story this week and whom they have trained? Offer encouragement along with peer accountability. Here are some good accountability questions that you can ask:

- Are you having a daily time with God? How is that going?
- With whom have you shared your story? With whom have you shared God's plan of salvation? Who has believed?

- When are you training them to share their own story and to explain to others God's plan of salvation? Are you teaching them the 6 lessons?
- Are you training them to train others? (2 Timothy 2:2) Are they doing this? Are the people whom they are training others?
- Are you having any problems in training, training others?

Appendix D

Instruction for Group B for Action Plan

Group B is asked to formulate their own discipleship and evangelism plan and implement it. The only recommendation that is made to Group B is that their action plan should have the element of personal evangelism (sharing faith), discipleship, and training others to reproduce disciples. Very limited encouragement will be provided. They are Christians, and therefore they should share their faith with others. They will not be given any training. They will not be required to report weekly. They will self-manage their accountability. At the end of the 6th week each participant is be required to write a detailed summary of your 6-week experience and send it to the secondary researcher.

Appendix E

Recruitment Document

July 7th, 2019

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research to better understand the health of our church to discover models or practices that might help Calvary Baptist Church to engage New York City and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ more effectively. The purpose of this study is to assess the health of CBC and evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches in order to discover an evangelistic approach that may help CBC to grow spiritually as well as in numbers, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

If you are on the official life (elected officer) of Calvary Baptist Church and are willing to participate, you will be asked to do the following things:

- Complete a survey, the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz. It may take up to 35 minutes. The survey will be sent to you and administrated by Jennie Work, the Chairperson of the Council of Missions, to keep your identity anonymous to me. She will serve as a buffer between you and me throughout this research to minimize any potential pressure or influence by me.
- Participants will be divided into two groups. If you are randomly selected for Group A, you will be required to attend an evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training, which may take 1 hour. If you are randomly selected for Group B, you will not attend the training; however, you will be asked to come up with your own personal

evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples and implement that strategy. The time commitment for Group B is completely up to each individual in that group.

- If you are in Group A, you will be required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on your progress by using a template I will provide. In the template, there are specific questions that you will answer as a part of your weekly progress report. Each of the five parts of the report should not take more than 5-10 minutes. If you are in Group B, you will not be required to send a weekly report on your progress.
- Whether you are in Group A or Group B, at the end of the 6th week, you will be required to write a detailed summary on your 6-week experience, which you will send to Jennie Work.
- It should take approximately 6-7 hours for you to complete the procedures listed. Your participation will be completely anonymous to me as all study communication will go through Jennie, and she will not disclose participant identities.

To participate, contact Jennie Work, the Chairperson of the Council of Missions and let her know that you are willing to be a part of the study. Also, complete the survey that will be sent by her. Her email address is xxxxxxxxxxxx, and her phone number is xxx-xxx-xxxx.

A consent document is provided as the first page attached to this letter. The consent document contains additional information about my research, but you do not need to sign and return it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Alfonse Javed
Pastor of Missions and Outreach
Calvary Baptist Church
123 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Appendix F

Consent Form

Assessing the Health of an Established Urban Church to Develop a Strategic Plan for Growth.

Alfonse Javed
Liberty University
School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study to assess the health of Calvary Baptist Church to discover models or practices that might help Calvary Baptist Church to engage New York City and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ more effectively and to discover an evangelistic approach that may help CBC to grow spiritually as well as in number. You were selected as a possible participant because you are on the official life (elected officer) of CBC and have been identified by CBC as one of the leaders to lead the church in your respective role as an elected member of the official life. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Dr. Alfonse Javed, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to assess the health of CBC and evaluate the perception that one large church is more effective than multiple churches in order to discover an evangelistic approach that may help CBC to grow spiritually as well as in number.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a survey, *the Church Health Analysis Questionnaire* by Gene A. Getz. It may take up to 35 minutes.
2. Participants will be divided into two groups. If you are randomly selected for Group A, you will be required to attend an evangelism/disciple-making/leadership video training,

which may take 1 hour. If you are randomly selected for Group B, you will not attend the training; however, you will be asked to come up with your own personal evangelism/disciple-making/leadership strategy to make disciples and implement that strategy. The time commitment for Group B is completely up to each individual in that group.

3. If you are in Group A, you will be required to send a short report once a week for five weeks on your progress by using a template I will provide. In the template, there are specific questions that you will answer as a part of your weekly progress report. Each of the five parts of the report should not take more than 5-10 minutes. If you are in Group B, you will not be required to send a weekly report on your progress.
4. Whether you are in Group A or Group B, at the end of the 6th week, you will be required to write a detailed summary of your 6-week experience, which you will send to Jennie Work.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study include the possibility of growing as believers and leaders as a result of the training and personal strategic evangelism discipleship plan.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and research assistant will have access to the records.

- Participants will never interact with me directly. They will work with a research assistant who will never reveal the identities of the participants. None of the surveys or weekly reports will contain any identifiable markers such as your name, phone, email, or address.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, Calvary Baptist Church, the Council of Mission of CBC, or the Serve Team. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the research assistant, Jennie Work, at her email address: [xxxx](#) or phone number: xxx-xxx-xxxx. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Dr. Alfonse Javed. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at xxx-xxx-xxxx and/or xxxx. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Rod Earls, at rdearls@liberty.edu.

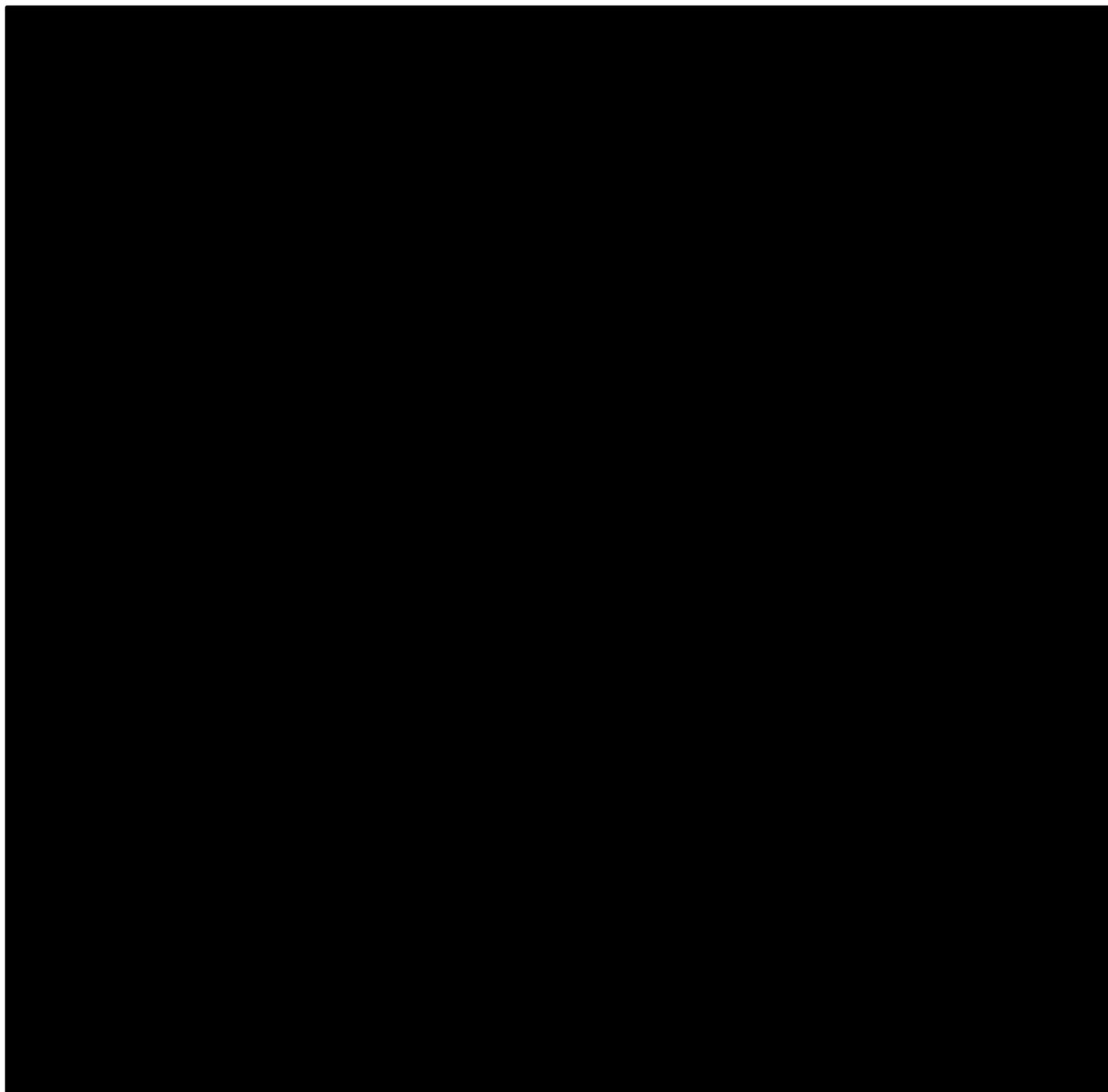
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

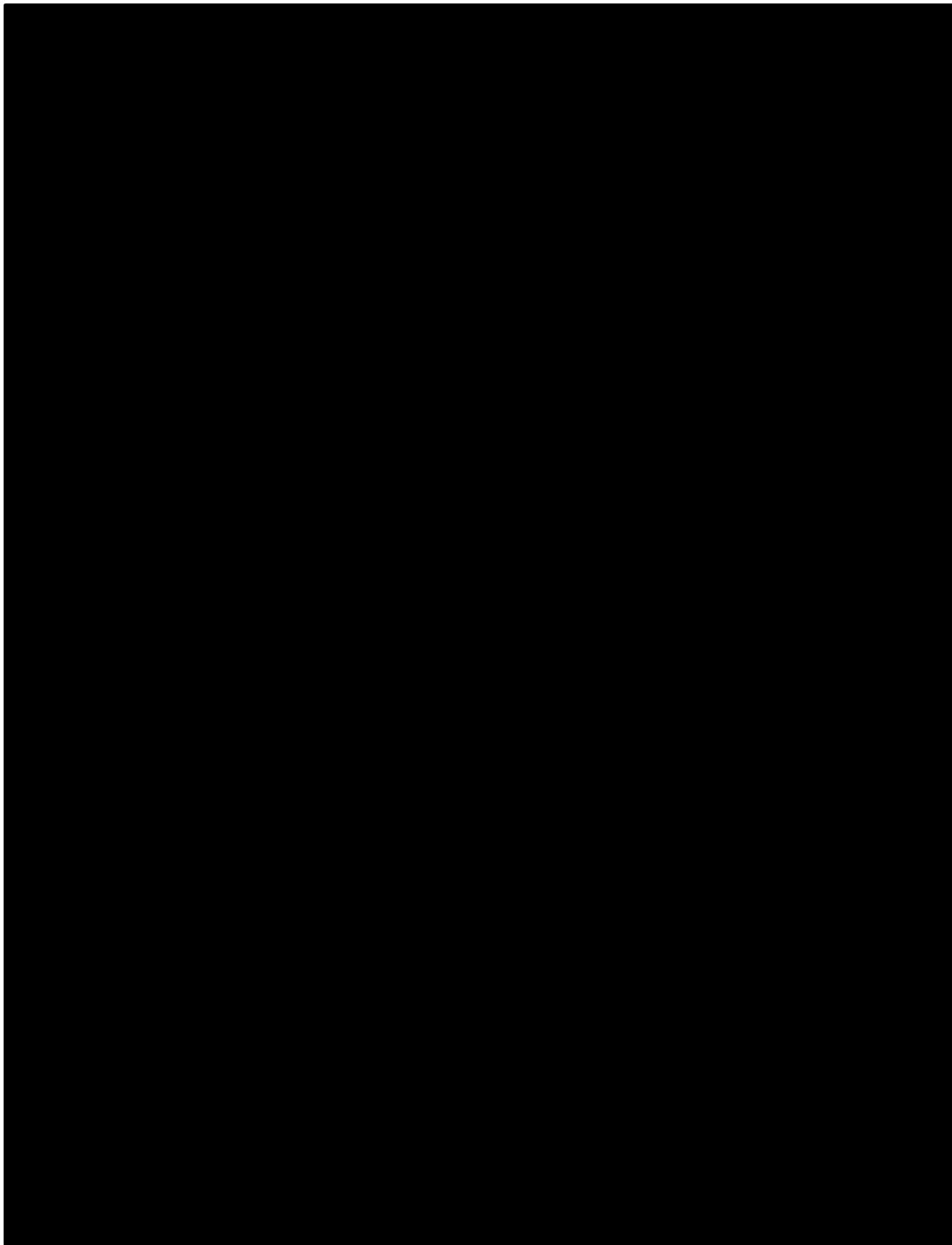
Appendix G

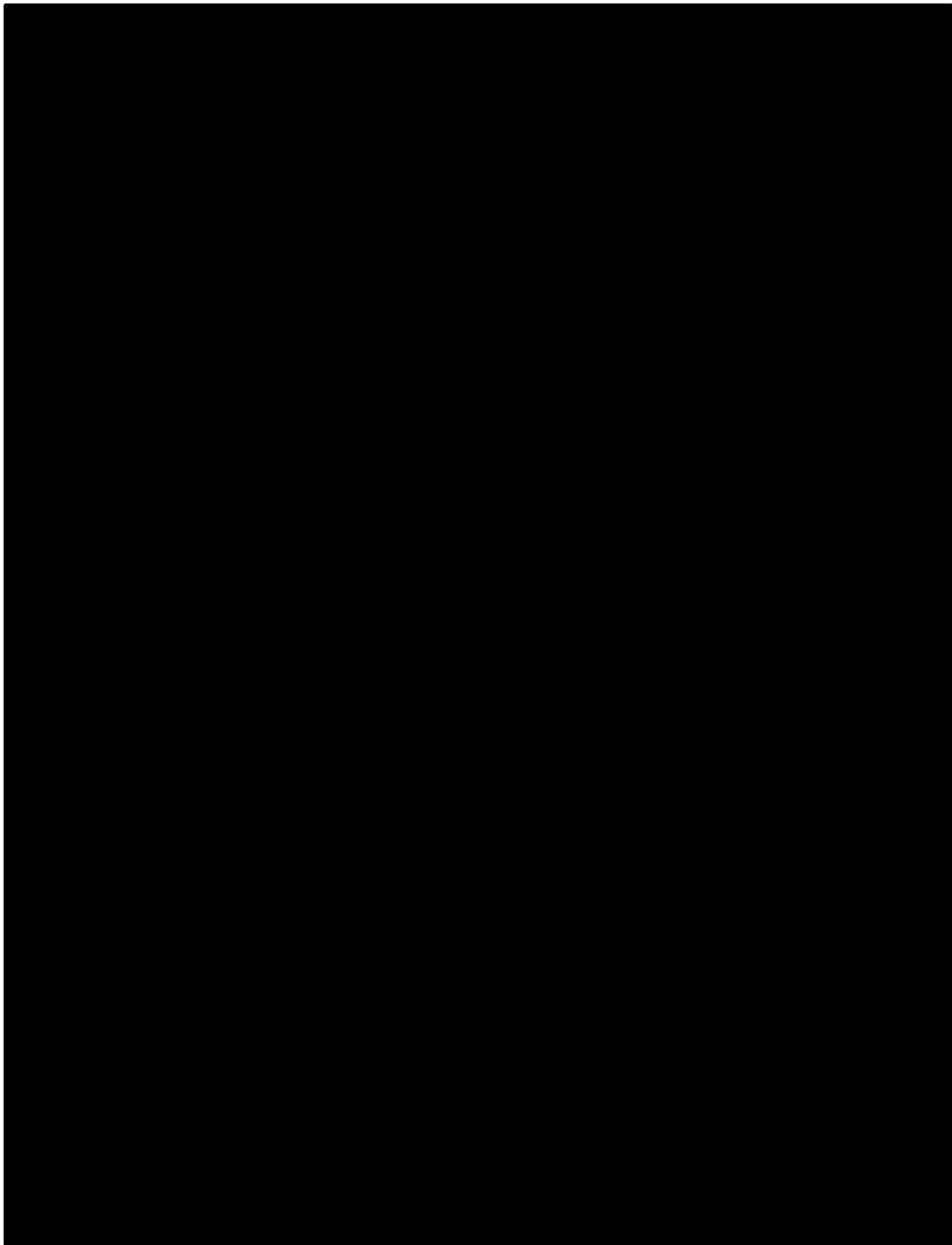
Church Health Analysis Questionnaire by Gene A. Getz

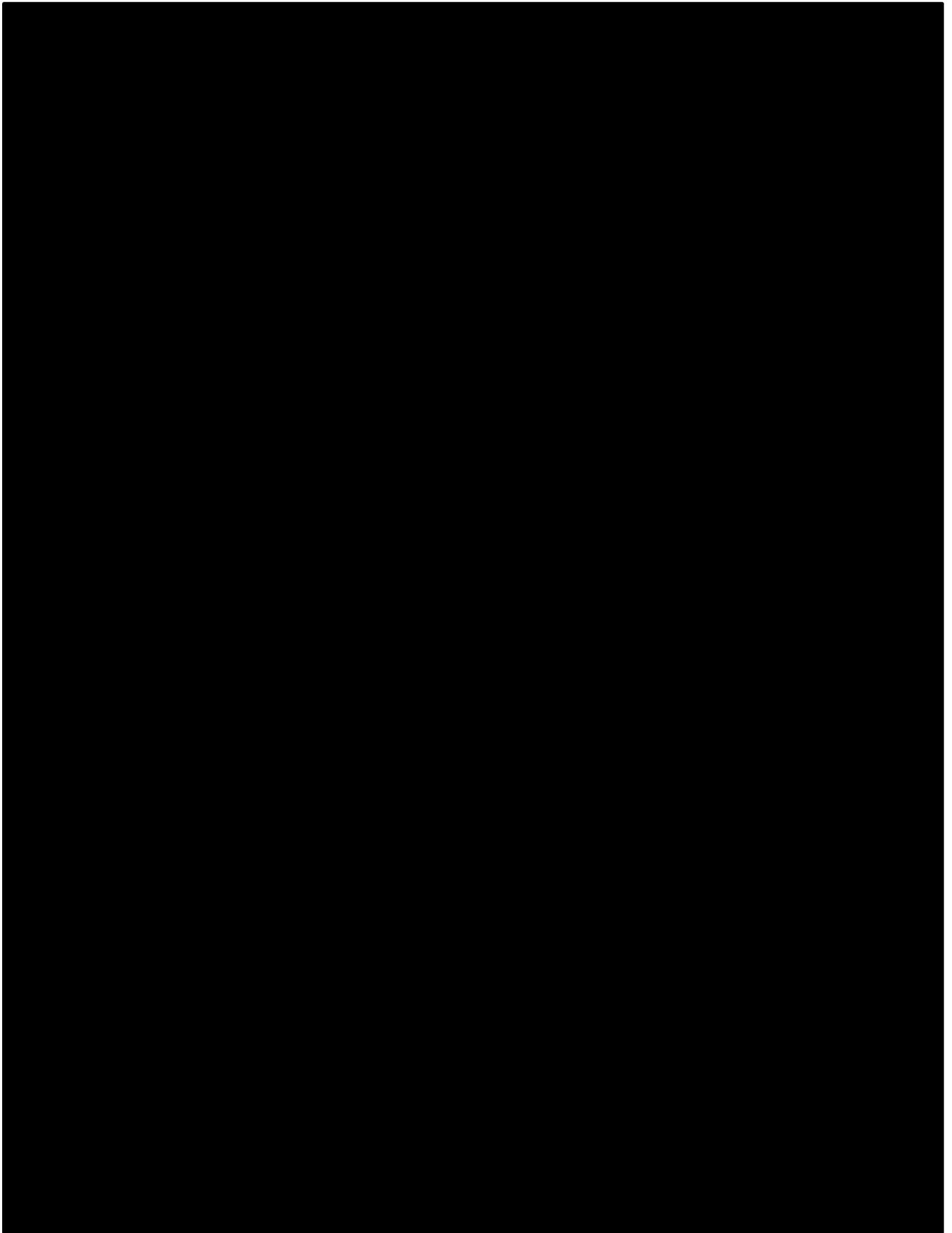
Analysis survey was taken from Gene A. Getz, *The Measure of a Healthy Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 188–197.

Chapter 1: God's Mystery Revealed
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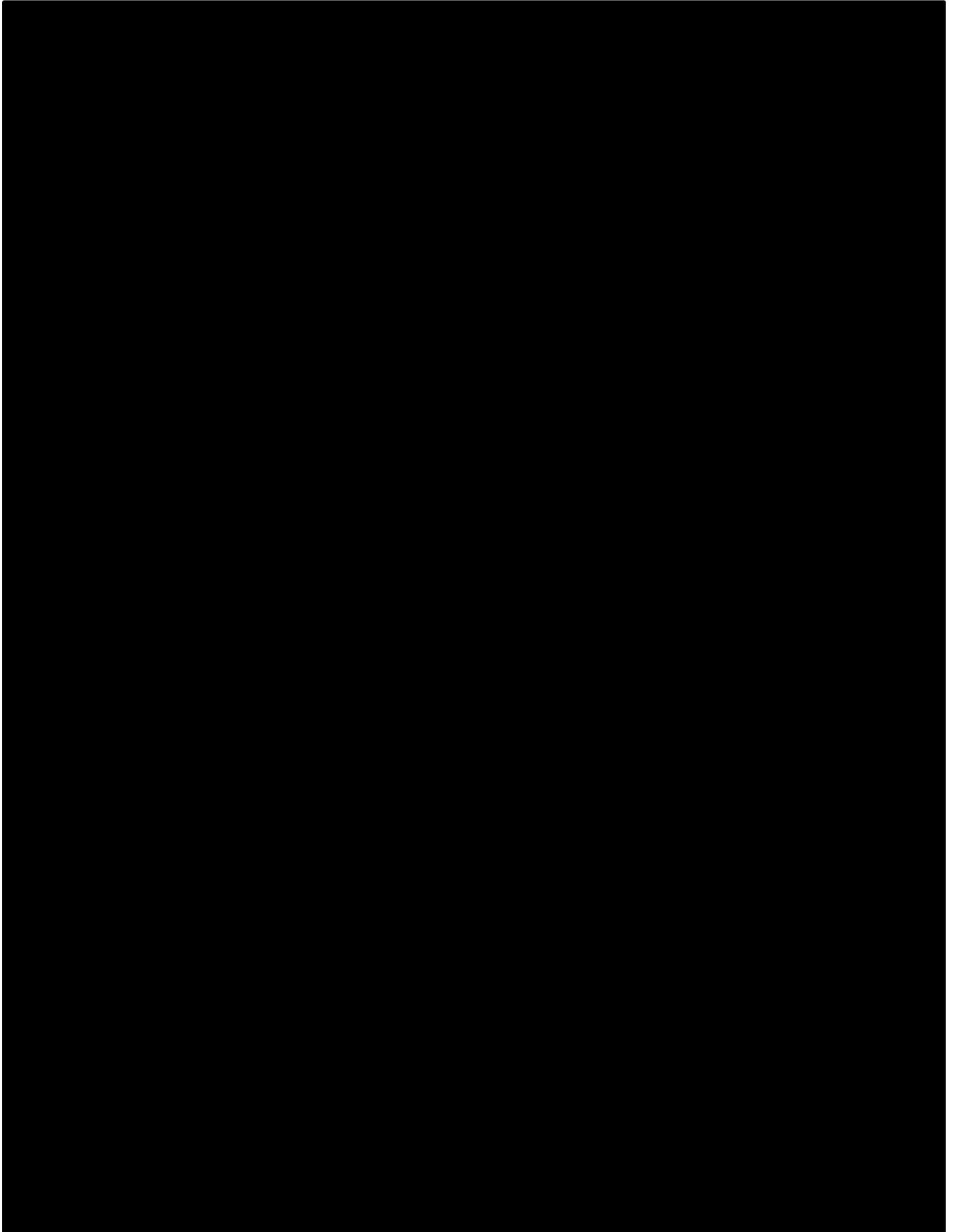


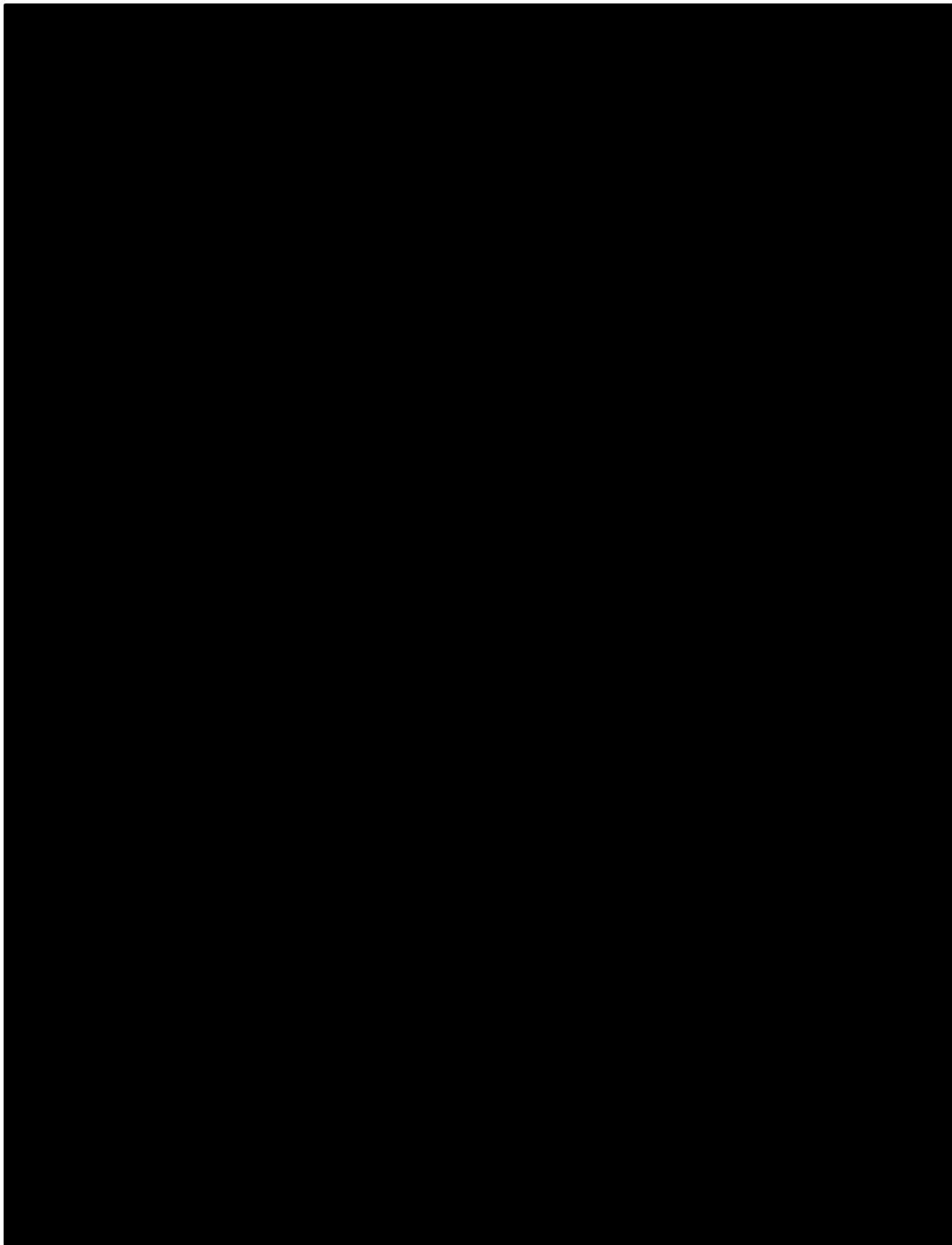


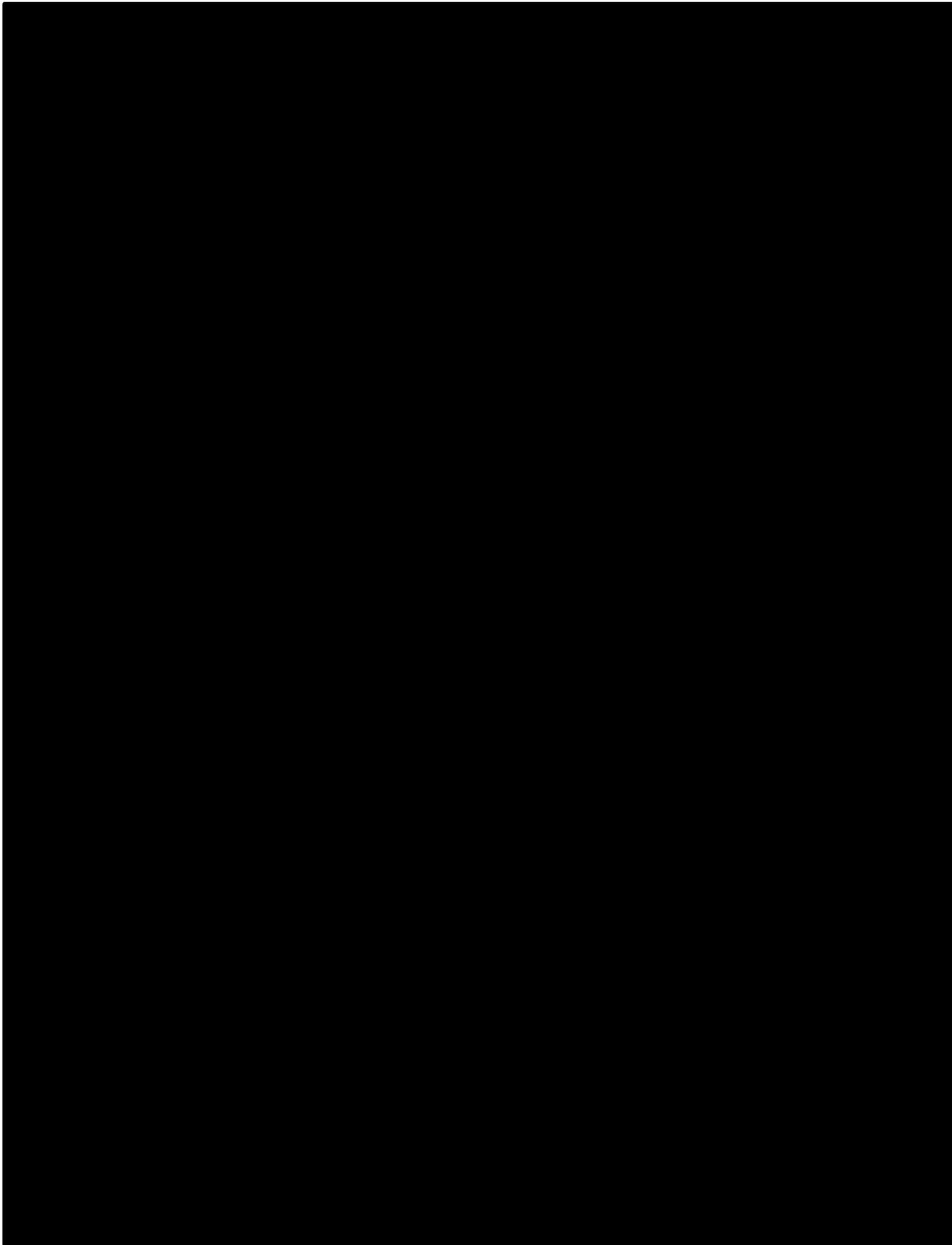


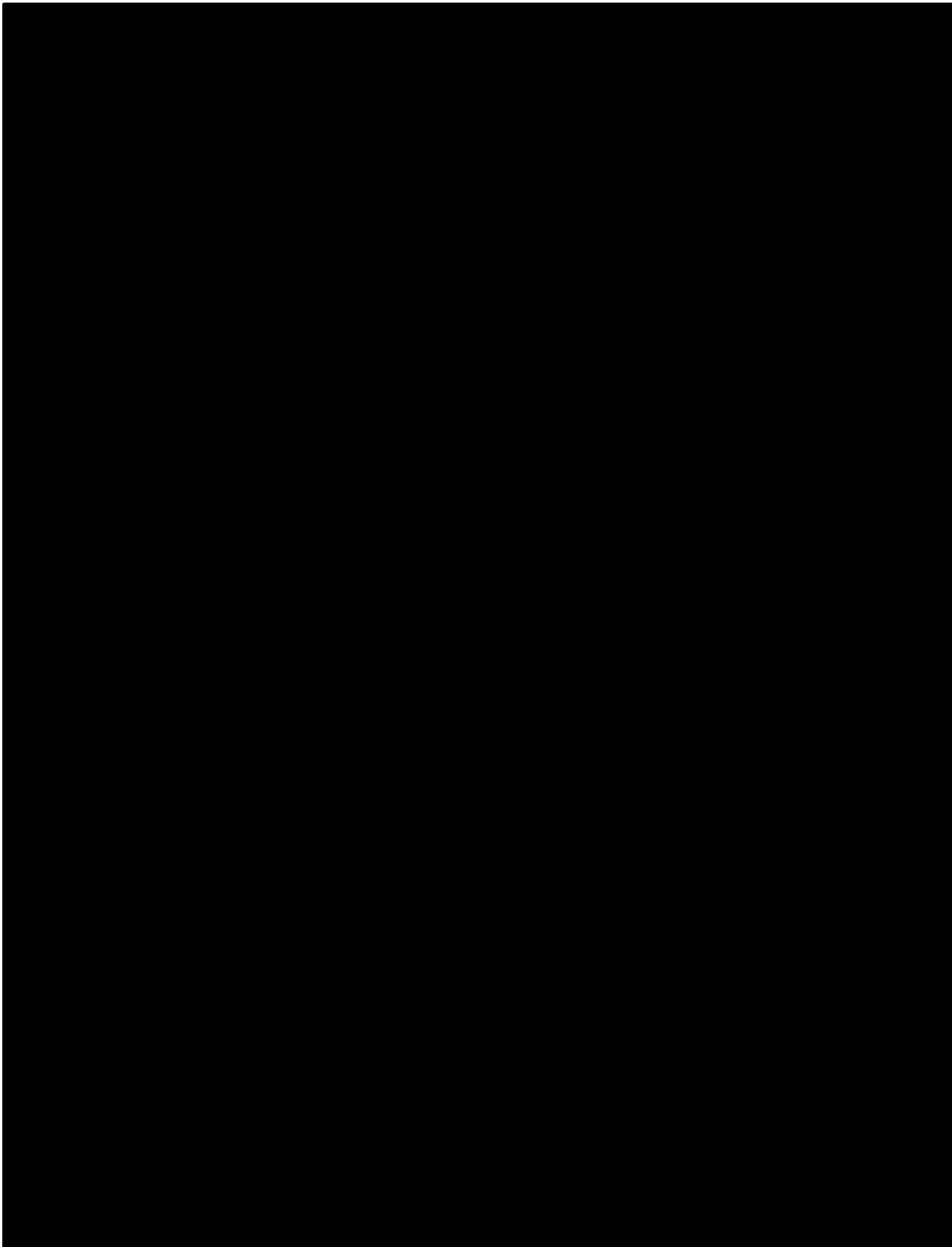


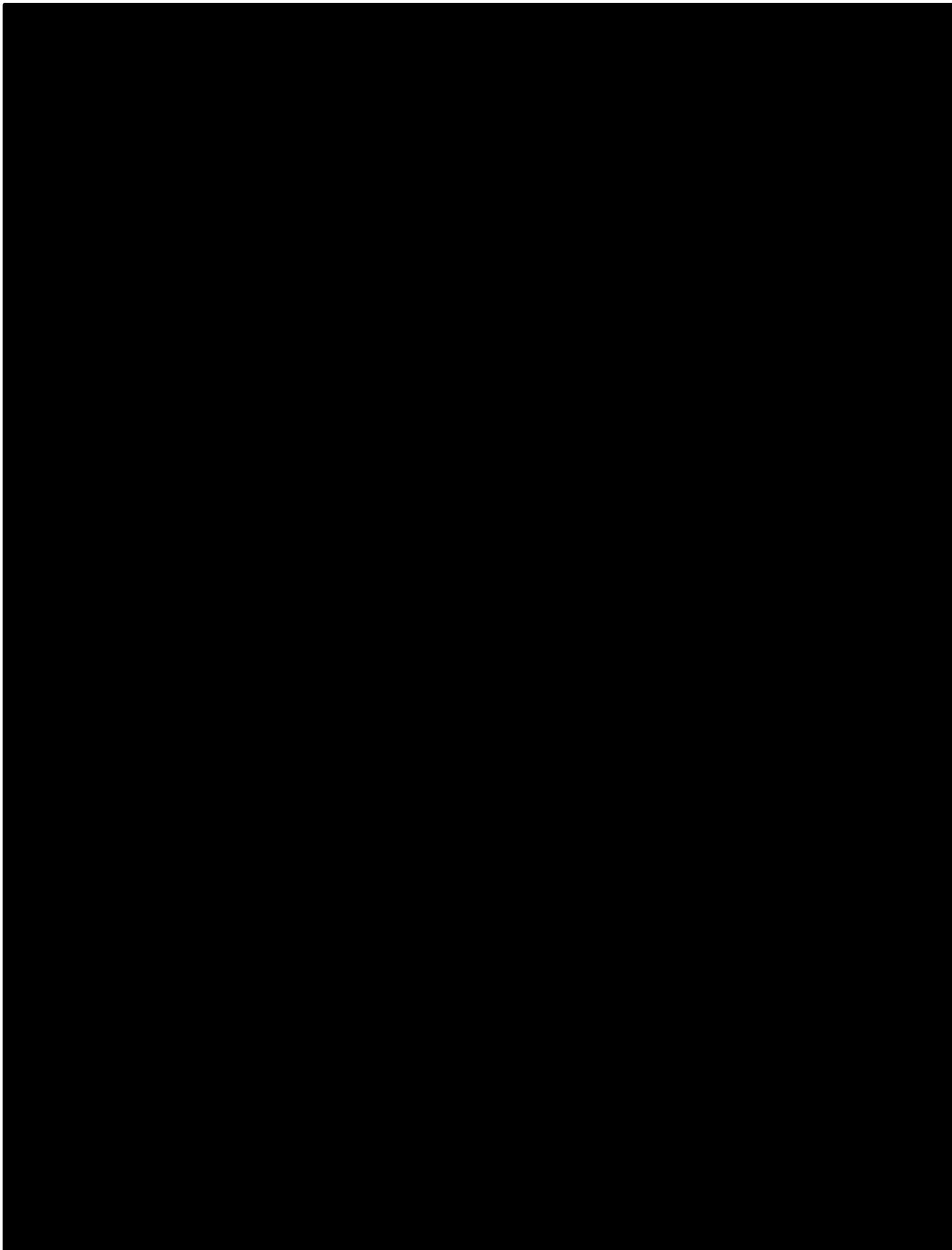
Chapter 4: A Divine Trilogy
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Chapter 9: Measuring Corporate Worship
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