Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training

A Thesis Proposal Submitted to the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

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Generation Z is the largest generation currently serving in the United States Armed Forces. This project sought to identify the generational trends and their influences in discipleship ministry in the context of the United States Marine Corps. The researcher further planned and instituted a unit Bible study at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. The project utilized a “Basic Bible Questionnaire,” a “Generational-Methodology Questionnaire,” and a five-week Bible study. The researcher utilized the Bible storying method as a means to short-term discipleship in Marine students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. The information gained from this study can be used in any ministry setting that works with members of Generation Z.

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## Contents

### Chapter 1: Introduction

- Ministry Context .......................................................................................... 1

### Chapter 2: Foundations

- Review of Literature ..................................................................................... 20
  - An Overview of Generation Z .................................................................... 20
  - Generational Issues and Trends ................................................................. 23
  - Technology .................................................................................................. 26
  - Discipleship ................................................................................................ 32
  - Gaps in Literature ....................................................................................... 34

- Theological Foundation .................................................................................. 35
  - The Great Commission .............................................................................. 35
  - Generational Discipleship ........................................................................... 39
  - Short-Term Discipleship ............................................................................ 43
  - Oral Tradition in Scripture ........................................................................ 47

- Theoretical Foundations ................................................................................ 49
  - Technology .................................................................................................. 49
  - Subject-Spotting Education ........................................................................ 50
  - Bible Storying ............................................................................................... 51
  - Mentorship .................................................................................................. 52
  - Blended Approach to Discipleship .............................................................. 53

### Chapter 3: Methodology

- Intervention Design ....................................................................................... 54
  - Soliciting for Research Volunteers ............................................................ 54
Intervention Logistics ................................................................. 56
Data Collection ........................................................................... 59
Bible Study ................................................................................. 62
Data Analysis ............................................................................. 71
Open Questions .......................................................................... 72
Scaling Questions ...................................................................... 72
Data Triangulation ..................................................................... 74

Chapter 4: Questionnaire and Data ............................................ 75
Pre-Study Questionnaire ......................................................... 75
  Trends ................................................................................... 75
  Slippage ............................................................................... 77
  Silence ............................................................................... 78
  Scaling Questions ............................................................... 79
Post-Study Questionnaire ......................................................... 82
  Trends ............................................................................... 82
  Slippage ............................................................................ 84
  Silence ............................................................................... 84
  Scaling Questions ............................................................... 85
Comparison of Data ................................................................. 89
  Growth ............................................................................... 89
  Decline ............................................................................. 91
  Observations .................................................................... 94
Generational and Methodological Data .................................. 96
  Trends ............................................................................. 97
  Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study ................................ 98

Chapter 5: Conclusion ................................................................. 100
Lessons Learned During Study .............................................. 100
Larger Application of Study ................................................... 104
Further Areas of Research ...................................................... 106

Appendix A – Permission Memorandum to the Commanding Officer,
  Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River ............. 110

Appendix B – Permission Memorandum to the Command Chaplain,
  Marine Air Station New River ................................................ 111

Appendix C – Exemption Letter from Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board .... 112
Appendix D – CITI Training Certificate
   (Liberty University Social Behavioral Research Basic Course) .................. 113

Appendix E – Letter of Support from Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters,
   U.S. Navy ....................................................................................................... 115

Appendix F – Commanding Officer’s Endorsement to Letter of Support .................. 116

Appendix G – Letter of Support from Commanding General,
   Marine Corps Installations – East .................................................................. 117

Appendix H – Approval Letter from Marine Corps’ Human Research Protection Program ..... 118

Appendix I – Informed Consent ......................................................................... 121

Appendix J – Recruitment Plan and Script ............................................................ 123

Appendix K – Basic Bible Questionnaire .............................................................. 124

Appendix L – Generational and Methodology Questionnaire ............................... 128

Appendix M – Bible Study Promotion Flyers ....................................................... 134

Bibliography ...................................................................................................... 135

VITA .................................................................................................................. 140
Figures

Figure 1: CNATT Students by Birth Year ................................................................. 6
Figure 2: CNATT Students by Rank ............................................................. 6
Figure 3: CNATT Students by Religious Preference ........................................ 7
Figure 4: CNATT Students by Ethnicity ............................................................ 7
Figure 5: Pre-study Questionnaire Scaling Question Results ............................. 81
Figure 6: Post-study Questionnaire Scaling Question Results .......................... 89
Figure 7: Scaling Question Results Comparison ................................................ 92
Tables

Table 1: List of Introductory Videos .................................................................................................................. 64
Table 2: Lessons and Scripture References. ........................................................................................................ 70
Table 3. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 22 (percentages)...................................................... 79
Table 4. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 8 (percentages)......................................................... 79
Table 5. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)......................................................... 80
Table 6. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 24 (percentages)......................................................... 80
Table 7. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 14 (percentages)......................................................... 80
Table 8. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)......................................................... 81
Table 9. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)......................................................... 83
Table 10. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)....................................................... 86
Table 11. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 11 (percentages)....................................................... 86
Table 12. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)....................................................... 86
Table 13. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)....................................................... 87
Table 14. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 25 (percentages)....................................................... 87
Table 15. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)....................................................... 88
Table 16. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 19 (percentages)....................................................... 88
Table 17. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 15 (percentages)....................................................... 88
Table 18. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)....................................................... 93
Table 19. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 17 (percentages)....................................................... 94
Table 20. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)....................................................... 94
Chapter 1:

Introduction

Christians have been called to be disciples of Jesus and to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matt. 28:19). Francis Chan stated that “a disciple is a follower, but only if one takes the term follower literally.” A disciple of Jesus is one who follows Christ throughout life. All who seek to follow Jesus actively should grow in their Christian walk and have opportunities to grow in their faith as disciples of Jesus, even those in the military. Military members have a constitutional right to exercise their religious beliefs within the pluralistic environment they serve (U.S. Constitution, amend. 1, sec. 1). A pluralistic environment is a setting in which there are numerous faith groups and ones that claim no faith. Therefore, adequate Christian discipleship should be available to all military members who profess a belief in Christ. The men and women in the military need the opportunity to be discipled within their context, especially ones that have limited or no access to off-base ministries. There are numerous examples in which a service member would be unable to attend a church or congregation of their choice, such as deployments, duty, or training structures and schedules. All service members are entitled to the free exercise of religion.

Moreover, the chaplains should provide religious ministry for those of like faith or facilitate for those for whom he cannot provide. The provision of Christian religious ministry in

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1 Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New American Standard Bible (Anaheim: Lockman Foundation, 1998).

the military should include Christian growth and discipleship ministry. However, this is not always the case; sometimes, the discipleship ministry is limited. Christian discipleship ministry can be limited based on setting, structure, or availability. Service members in a training environment may have limited discipleship due to schedules, while members deployed could struggle to have adequate discipleship to the condition in which they are deployed. Chaplains from a faith group that does not emphasize Christian discipleship and religious instruction may struggle to provide or facilitate for this ministry. Finally, the availability of a chaplain or lay leader may be limited in some circumstances.

Ministry Context

Marine Corps Air Station New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina, is the home of all helicopter and tilt-rotor aircraft for the Second Marine Aircraft Wing. The air station headquarters reports to Marine Corps Installations East on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, located on the opposite side of the New River. The air station is the location of two Marine Aircraft Groups, eighteen operational squadrons, five support units, headquarters, and the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. The two chaplains assigned to the air station also serve as unit chaplains to seven commands aboard the installation, one of which is the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. Navy chaplains are ecclesiastically endorsed by their specific faith group to “develop and maintain competencies to effectively deliver religious ministry: provide faith group-specific ministry consistent with the manner and form of the chaplain’s religious organization, facilitate to meet the religious needs of those of other religious organizations, care for all, and advise those served.”

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3 U.S. Department of the Navy, *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7E*, Assistant Secretary of the Navy - Manpower and Reserve Affairs (Washington, DC, 2019), Enclosure 2, Pages 9-10.
“develop the Command Religious Program to meet identified religious ministry requirements and manage all religious ministry in the command.” This researcher is endorsed by the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The chaplains provide for the pastoral ministries and religious services of the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training, even though their primary duty is to the Marine Corps Air Station. The Navy chaplains assigned to Marine Corps Air Station New River serve at the installation chapel and as the unit chaplains for Marine Corps Air Station New River Headquarters, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron New River, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Marine Unit New River, Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron Twenty-Two Detachment, the 362nd Air Force Training Squadron, the Second Marine Aircraft Wing Aviation Training System Detachment, and Marine Air Control Squadron 2 Detachment B.

Navy Chaplains are ministers who provide religious ministry in the context of the United States Sea Services, which include the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines. These chaplains are responsible for providing or facilitating the religious needs of service members, including those of faith and the ones that claim no faith at all. Whit Woodard explained, “Chaplains, of necessity, minister in a pluralistic environment to people of all faiths or no faith. It is said to be a Ministry of Presence, because they bring a godly influence to the so-called secular arena – a reminder of the providence and provision of God.”

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The Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River is a part of the more extensive Naval Education and Training Command. There are multiple Centers of Naval Aviation Technical Training units throughout the Navy and Marine Corps. However, this project will focus solely on the Marine Corps unit located at Marine Corps Air Station New River, North Carolina.

The Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River is a unit in the United States Marine Corps that teaches and manages 41 courses of instruction that include thirteen military occupational specialties in aviation maintenance. The mission of this unit is “to develop, deliver, and support aviation technical training necessary to meet validated Fleet requirements through a continuum of professional and personal growth for Sailors and Marines.” This command is made up of both permanent staff and students learning the skills of the job. While the researcher serves as chaplain for both the staff and students, this thesis will focus on ministry to the student population of this command.

The students at this school are junior-enlisted Marines that are relatively new to the Marine Corps. These individuals have completed Marine Corps boot camp at either Parris Island or San Diego and Marine Combat Training at Camp Geiger or Camp Pendleton before being assigned to these schools for instruction. Each of the students at this command has been in the Marine Corps for less than one year, most for less than six months. The students are expected to learn their occupation while at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training before entering their permanent units in the operational Marine Corps. The students are learning skills of great importance. The instructors remind the students that their diligence in their assigned tasks may

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determine the difference between life and death. An error in the maintenance of an aircraft could cost the lives of the aircrew and others. These are young men and women that are being given great responsibility.

There were 302 students assigned to this command in July 2019, 286 are members of Generation Z, the youngest generation currently serving in the military. This generation is comprised of individuals born on or after the year 1995. The United States Marine Corps is a pluralistic environment made up of a diverse group of individuals from various backgrounds and walks of life. The student population at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training is 91 percent male and nine percent female. Sixty-one of the 302 students self-identify as some type of Protestant Christian, while 210 are either atheist, agnostic, or no preference. The student population is racially diverse, with the largest ethnic group being European/Anglo at 65.2 percent and the second largest being Hispanic at 20.5 percent. African American, Native American, Caribbean, Asian, and Pacific Islander are also ethnic backgrounds included in this population. These students come from various settings across the United States and sometimes around the world. While not the focus of this thesis, this unit also has a small group of students from the Japanese Air Force.

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Figure 1: CNATT Students by Birth Year

Figure 2: CNATT Students by Rank
The Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training has lower numbers of students in the summer months and more students in the winter months. Most Marine recruits enter the Marine Corps Recruit Depots at San Diego and Parris Island in the summer months and arrive at their specialty schools in the late fall or early winter. Therefore, the student population of the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training doubles in size throughout the winter months. This
command will also be adding training programs for sailors that work on the V-22 Osprey aircraft, which will increase the size of this command and the amount of Generation Z service members in this location.

The warrior ethos of the United States Marine Corps unites the Marines as an elite warfighting force. However, this ethos can also enhance the secular nature of this context. Marines are taught that their task is to win wars and support the infantry units from the first day of boot camp as they embody the statement “Every Marine a rifleman.”\textsuperscript{10} This mentality often produces a group that is physically fit, mentally ready, and spiritually void. The image of the motivated Marine is rarely viewed as someone of faith. James White states that Generation Z “are not thinking about religion and rejecting it; they’re not thinking about it at all.”\textsuperscript{11} The same is true about Generation Z in the Marine Corps but possibly enhanced by the warfighting context of their environment. Karl Marlantes acknowledged this lack of spiritual thought when he recalled his own experience. He stated, “You can’t force consciousness or spiritual maturity. Teenage warriors like to fight, drink, screw, and rock and roll. You can, however, put people in situations where consciousness and spiritual maturity can grow rapidly, if those people know what to look for.”\textsuperscript{12} The warrior mentality of the Marine Corps develops a lack of thought for spiritual things, even though the Commandant of the Marine Corps has called for all Marines to be spiritually fit and exhibiting the core values of the Marine Corps; honor, courage, and


\textsuperscript{12} Karl Marlantes, \textit{What It is Like to Go to War} (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011), 9.
commitment. The chaplains and other Christians can help these Marines in their spiritual walk and discipleship if they are intentional.

Purpose of the Applied Research Project

The problem this project will address is the lack of adequate discipleship ministry for the Generation Z Marines assigned as students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training at New River, North Carolina. These students need to be discipled, but there are limited opportunities for discipleship ministry in this context for various reasons. Believers should continue to grow in their faith throughout life and learn from others through a discipleship process. However, this is not the case in this setting.

Problem Presented

The students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training have limited resources and opportunities for discipleship. Currently, the ministry offered to these students consists of Sunday worship services and Wednesday night Bible study at the chapel. There are no Bible studies, discipleship groups, or worship services, specifically for these students or their generation. The Protestant chapel worship services are attended mostly by retirees and are traditional with the singing of hymns and limited technological usage. Tony Morgan wrote, “If you want to attract young adults, you will have to make the young adults you already have visible.” The chapel services do not have young adults, and the style of worship is not appealing to a post-Christian generation. The Wednesday night Bible studies are led by retired

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14 Tony Morgan, Reaching & Leading Millennials: Practical Conversations to Get You Unstuck (Dallas: The Unstuck Group, 2015), Kindle Location 227.
volunteers and attended by Marines and spouses that are mostly staff noncommissioned officers. These are individuals that are not a part of their generation or close to their rank. These issues produce stumbling blocks for the students of this command and the lower-enlisted Marines across the air station.

The students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training are not authorized to drive a personally owned vehicle because of their student status. Limited transportation adds to the issue of discipleship by limiting the students’ ability to attend chapel functions, especially during times of inclement weather. The students can leave the air station during their time off, but transportation becomes an issue. The Christian students find it challenging to connect to a local church or ministry off base because of the lack of transportation. The chapel and chapel annex are located approximately two miles from the students’ barracks. A two-mile walk, especially in bad weather, discourages the attendance of students that might wish to join believers at the chapel. Therefore, ministry in the unit spaces becomes a necessity for discipleship ministry. The only options for ministry in the unit spaces would be the chaplain, a lay leader, or a parachurch organization. A parachurch organization is a faith-based group that provided religious ministry independent of a local church.

There are currently four parachurch organizations that are actively doing ministry in the Jacksonville area: Cru Military, Military Ministry Center, Navigators, and Tun Tavern Fellowship. These organizations provide ministry to the military and enhance and supplement the ministry of the chaplains. However, none of these organizations is active at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training due to the limited size of the student population and the duration of training. The Military Ministry Center and Tun Tavern Fellowship both meet off base and focus their ministry on the Marines in the Fleet Marine Corps. The issue of transportation
becomes a limiting factor for both of these groups. Cru Military and the Navigators are active on base. The Navigators minister primarily in Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune to the ground forces, such as infantry and artillery units. Cru Military ministers to Marines that are in a student status but focuses on Camp Johnson, where most schools are located, and the School of Infantry that has a larger number of students.

The Generation Z Marines at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River, are not being adequately discipled. This issue is a result of limited ministries that are available and accessible, a lack of transportation, and the absence of other helping agencies such as parachurch organizations. One solution to this issue would be for a chaplain to offer some form of discipleship ministry at the unit or barracks to make this type of ministry available and eliminate the need for transportation.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this project is to create an opportunity for discipleship for the Generation Z Marines at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training. This ministry will be a strategic short-term, five-week discipleship Bible study that systematically focuses on critical doctrines of the Christian faith through the examination of five parables or teachings of Jesus that are found in all three synoptic gospels. The structure of the discipleship program will be able to be reproduced by chaplains and lay leaders within the command with a variety of texts from Scripture. However, for the purpose of this study the following parables and teaching will be used: Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13:1-23, Mk. 4:1-20, Lk. 8:4-15), Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Matt. 21:33-35, Mk. 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19), Parable of the New and Old Clothes (Matt. 9:14-17, Mk. 2:18-22, Lk. 5:33-39), Teaching of Salt and Light (Matt. 5:13-16, Mk. 4:21-
23, Lk. 8:16-18), and the Parable of the Faithful and Wicked Servants (Matt. 24:45-51, Mk. 13:34-37, Lk. 35-48).

A discipleship opportunity placed in the unit spaces will address the problems explained above. The chaplain will provide for the free exercise of the students’ religious beliefs through organizing an opportunity for Christian fellowship and discipleship. The Christian faith of Generation Z should be encouraged and nurtured. McDowell and Wallace stated that this generation of Christians are leaving the church at an unprecedented rate, and “Gen Z is the least religious of all generations in America.” ¹⁵ David Kinnaman stated that “Faith switching is most likely to occur between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine,” ¹⁶ which is the age-group of these Marines. If these Christians are not discipled, there is a possibility that these young Marines will leave the church and reject the faith because of the influences in society.

Researcher’s Basic Assumptions

Numerous assumptions are made when beginning a study, and this study is no different. The researcher has made some underlying assumptions in three significant areas; assumptions about command and location, assumptions about the study, and assumptions in generational studies. Each of these areas is vital to this study.

Assumptions about Command and Location

The researcher is making two assumptions about the context in which the study is being conducted. First, the student assumes that some necessary technical equipment will be available and functional in the meeting space. The researcher will need the use of a television or projector.


¹⁶ David Kinnaman, You Lost Me.: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church . . . And Rethinking Faith (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 32.
to play videos. There is a television in the location of the Bible study, but there was an assumption that this television would be operational at the time of the study. The research needed some device to play the videos. Therefore, there is another assumption that the video would play on the researcher’s laptop, and the computer would connect to the television. The introductory videos were downloaded from www.gotquestions.org, www.ubdavid.org, and The Global Gospel.

Second, this researcher assumes that permanent staff members will promote this study and help to make the information known to their students. One of the difficulties in this unit is communication. The students are in classrooms in four different buildings on the air station. The research will need the instructors to help promote the Bible study, or at least make the information known to the students. However, staff members that are not believers may not help pass the information, even though this study is being supported by the commanding officer.

**Assumptions about the Study**

This researcher also made assumptions about the study itself. The first assumes that Generation Z Christian Marines want a discipleship program in the unit and would attend. Students in the past have asked for Bible studies. However, since these students are continually leaving the unit, it was assumed that there are still Christian students that desire to be discipled and attend a Bible study.

The chaplains attempted to hold a Bible study in 2018 at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training headquarters building during lunchtime on Wednesdays. After a couple of months, the lack of interest terminated the Bible study prematurely. The students' feedback was that the time and location of the Bible study were an issue. Lunchtime on Wednesdays was the time that many Marines went to the gym, and several classes go to the chow hall together. The
students’ schedules did not allow for the attendance of a Bible study during the workday. Thus, an early assumption that this researcher made was that the students are more likely to attend a discipleship program after hours in a location near their living quarters. The discipleship study occurred on Tuesday evenings, a time that the students are not actively engaged in other tasks with the command.

The researcher also assumes that the Marines who participate in this study will experience spiritual growth, growth in knowledge of Scripture, and a greater understanding of fundamental biblical doctrines. The Marines that attend the discipleship Bible study and participate in the conversation should grow in their walk with Christ as they examine vital doctrines of the faith and the parables of Jesus. This growth leads to the assumption that the participants will also increase their ability to evangelize and lead others to Christ in the pluralistic environment of the United States Marine Corps.

**Assumptions about Generational Trends**

One of the most significant assumptions being made in this study would be that the generational trends examined in the literature will be consistent with the participants of the study. The literature views the generation as a whole and not a segment of the generation, such as military members. This researcher will be working with members of Generation Z who enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. The number of individuals that enlist in the Marine Corps is a small population of the generation. The United States Armed Forces comprise less than one half of a percent of the nation’s population.\(^{17}\) Although this is such a small segment of the population, the research

assumes that the Generation Z Marines will display the various trends seen in the larger population. As some trends may not apply to this group of Marines, the results of the study may challenge some of these assumptions.

Definitions, Delimitations, and Limitations

Definitions

Discipleship is a process in which someone replaces a nonbiblical portion of worldview with a biblical one.\textsuperscript{18} This process involves three stages of life in the believer: leading unbelievers to faith, encouraging the believer to follow and become Christ-like, and the believer making other disciples.\textsuperscript{19} This researcher will be defining discipleship in the same manner as Willis and Snowden, who wrote, “Discipleship is developing a personal, obedient, life-long relationship with Jesus Christ in which He transforms your character into Kingdom values, and involves you in His mission in the home, the church, and the world.”\textsuperscript{20}

Evangelism is a term that has been defined in different ways depending upon the emphasis of the ministry. An emphasis on social ministry would define evangelism in a way that is different from street evangelism, and the attractional and missional models of ministry would also define the term differently. Millard Erickson defined evangelism as “The presentation of the gospel with the goal of bringing the hearer to faith in Jesus Christ and thus to salvation.”\textsuperscript{21} For

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Avery T. Willis Jr. and Mark Snowden, \textit{Truth that Sticks: How to Communicate Velcro Truth in a Teflon World} (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2010), 152.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Aubrey Malphurs, \textit{Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), Kindle Location 554.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Willis and Snowden, \textit{Truth that Sticks}, 115.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Millard J. Erickson, \textit{Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology} (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 52.
\end{itemize}
this project, the researcher will define evangelism as “the sharing of biblical truth and the Good News of Jesus Christ with others to make disciples.”

Generation Z is the youngest generation currently serving in the military. This generation includes all individuals that were born between the years of 1995 and 2010.22 The current ages of these individuals in this generation from nine-years-old to twenty-four years of age. Most of the students in this context recently finished high school and are members of this generation.

**Delimitations**

There are four delimitations due to the ministry context in which this study will be completed. First, the researcher will be limiting this study to the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River. This researcher also serves as a chaplain for several other units, but this study will be focused only on the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training. This study is further limited to only the student population in this command. The staff at this unit includes senior leadership and course instructors, but these individuals will not be a part of the study because of the generational focus of the study.

Second, the researcher will focus on Generation Z because ninety-five percent of the student population are members of this generation. The majority of the armed forces are members of Generation Z. The Council on Foreign Relations stated, “Eighty-four percent of Marine recruits are aged twenty or younger.”23 A study on discipleship in the military context of Generation Z could benefit a multitude of chaplains across the armed services.

Third, discipleship will primarily focus on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and spiritual formation through a study of five of Jesus’ parables that are found in all three of the

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23 Reynolds and Shendruk, “Demographics of the U.S. Military”. 
synoptic gospels. Discipleship and Bible study can be conducted by studying any passage of Scripture. However, for this study, only five of Jesus’ parables will be examined. This delimitation will make this study more manageable with a limited scope and a systematic way of narrowing the study.

This study will consist of two groups: a focus group and a Bible study group. These groups will meet weekly for only five weeks for Bible study with the focus group meeting once before and once after the Bible study to complete questionnaires. Most Marine Corps training programs at this location are only eight to ten weeks in length with different starting and ending dates. Therefore, the study must be short in length to ensure that the majority of participants in the discipleship Bible study will be able to complete the study.

Finally, the researcher is a Navy Chaplain endorsed by the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Therefore, the researcher will conduct this study from the faith perspective of the Southern Baptist Convention as described in the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. Issues of the denominational perspective in the questionnaires, such as baptismal regeneration, will be evaluated from the researcher’s faith tradition.

Limitations

The researcher faces four limitations that constrain the researcher. First, the students in this unit have not been authorized to use a privately-owned vehicle. Therefore, transportation could be a hindrance, depending upon the venue of the study. This limitation forces the researcher to conduct this study in an area that would be easy for the participants to access. The researcher is conducting the study at the common area in the student barracks, eliminating the need for transportation.
Second, the student’s busy academic schedules and other obligations limit the scheduling of the Bible studies. The staging of Bible study must not interfere with the operation of the unit or the academic schedule of most students. Therefore, conducting the project after regular working hours is a necessity. Most of the students attend classes during the day, but a smaller group is part of the night shift. As such, the work schedule will exclude some students, but most students do not have other obligations at the selected time for the discipleship Bible study.

Third, many of the programs of study at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training are only eight to ten weeks. The time to disciple these students is constrained because they leave the unit upon graduation. The study needs to be short in length to ensure that most of the participants in the discipleship Bible study can complete it successfully. The use of a five-week study will meet this requirement and also allow the focus group to complete the questionnaires before and after the study.

Finally, official electronic communication is significantly limited in this context. The students do not have a military e-mail until they reach their permanent unit. Therefore, conventional means of promoting any chapel event or class are unavailable. The Marine Corps computer systems also restrict the usage of any social media. Thus, the usage of technology to appeal to this generation or to teach will be significantly restricted. The researcher showed the introductory videos during the study on his personal computer because the usage of unofficial social media for an event on base is prohibited by the Marine Corps. The researcher utilized handouts posted in the units’ spaces to publicize the study.

Thesis Statement

Generation Z is greatly influenced by technology, a need for diversity, a different structure of learning new material, and a desire for mentorship. This project also addresses the
generation’s view of spirituality, the need for discipleship ministries, and methods of discipleship and learning by teaching the parables of Jesus through video, stories, and personal interaction. James White stated that one must “develop your discipleship, first and foremost, around who it is you are trying to reach.” Chaplains should use the methods and strategies for discipleship that relate to the generation that is currently serving in the military. If Navy chaplains engage Generation Z Marines at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River, in intentional, strategic discipleship ministry, then the Marines will grow in their faith and begin to disciple others.

This study will make a world-wide impact as believers understand how to make disciples of Generation Z. This generation is vastly different from any others and will need to be reached with the gospel and discipled in ways that relate to them. This study will continue to make an impact throughout the Navy-Marine Corps team and possibly throughout the entire armed forces.

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24 White, Meet Generation Z, 153.
Chapter 2:
Foundations
Review of Literature

The researcher reviewed literature from a wide range of topics that have touchpoints on the subject of Christian discipleship to Generation Z Marines. These topics included but were not limited to, Generation Z, Millennials, discipleship, and education. Recurrent themes were omitted from this study due to the lack of correlation, such as the acceptance of sexual sin.

An Overview of Generation Z

The youngest generation currently in the workforce and the military is Generation Z. Generation Z is the generation born after the Millennial generation and before Generation Alpha. Authors defined this generation differently, causing much overlap in the inclusion of the generation. Scholars such as George Barna, David Kinnaman, Thom Rainer, Jess Rainer, and Adam Brooks extended the Millennial generation into the early 2000s. However, other scholars, such as Anthony Turner, Silvia Puiu, Corey Seemiller, and Meaghan Grace, disagree and place Generation Z starting in the mid-1990s. Even these authors vary in their definition of Generation Z with the beginning of the generation ranging from 1993 to 1997. Sean McDowell


and J. Warner Wallace argued for a later dating of the Generation Z, starting in 2000 and continuing until 2015,\textsuperscript{27} while most authors concluded this generation in 2010. Puui believed that Generation Z should be further divided into two different generations; Z1 (the mid-90s to 2005) and Z2 (2005 to 2010).\textsuperscript{28} These differences in defining the generation can cause confusion when addressing Generation Z, but also provides a basis of generational overlap in trends and tendencies between the Millennial generation and Generation Z. The authors who defined the Millennials as concluding in the early 2000s were writing about the same generation as many of the Generation Z writers. One of the distinctions of Generation Z is the abundant usage and availability of technology, especially the internet. Therefore, this researcher defines the start of Generation Z the way that was stated by Seemiller and Grace, “In 1995, the internet was born. So, too, was Generation Z.”\textsuperscript{29}

Generation Z shares some similarities with the Millennial generation, but they are different as well, and treating Generation Z like younger Millennials would be a mistake.\textsuperscript{30} Generational distinctions are not as clear as some authors might suggest. However, some characteristics of Generation Z are vastly different from previous generations. The majority of sources agree that this generation is different, but the authors are not consistent in describing the variance.

Fromm and Read suggested that this generation is earnest, hard-working, and driven.\textsuperscript{31} However, Kinnaman and Twenge suggest that the generation is self-centered, self-important, and

\textsuperscript{27} McDowell and Wallace, \textit{So the Next Generation Will Know}, Kindle Location 275.

\textsuperscript{28} Puui, “Generation Z,” 62-63.

\textsuperscript{29} Seemiler and Grace, “Generation Z: Educating,” 21.


\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 6.
suffer from a lack of social skills. Fromm and Read wrote about Generation Z from a perspective of business and economics with the intention of marketing products to this generation. The intended audience for Fromm and Read’s work is readers of business literature. This definition appeals to the arena of commerce because the authors are presenting the generation as one that is willing to purchase goods. Kinnaman’s perspective on the generation is different, as he wrote from a Christian world view, and the increasing pluralism is this generation. Twenge also wrote from a different viewpoint, as she wrote on the generation from a social perspective.

There is a need to understand this generation, as Generation Z entered the workforce in 2013, will make up over 20% of the workforce, and constitutes 25.9% of the United States population, 19% of the population is between the ages of 10 and 19. Tim Keller argued that the generation is more willing to listen if the person understands their hearts and culture. This generation does seem to be different from previous generations in several ways. Thom and Jess Rainer believed the Millennials to be upbeat, positive, and happy. However, Generation Z is primarily characterized by selfishness and unlimited self-esteem as they are a product of a culture made by previous generations.

While changes from one generation to the next are evident, there are still numerous tendencies that are found in both groups. Both Millennials and Generation Z are considered

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34 Timothy Keller, Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 15.

35 Rainer and Rainer, The Millenials, 18.

36 Twenge, Generation Me, 172, 283.; White, Meet Generation Z, 47.
digital natives and are very individualistic. The highest goal of both groups is to be transparent, striving to express their trust in self.\textsuperscript{37} However, Rainer’s research was a product of surveying only the older generation of Millennials. Therefore, his data might be somewhat removed from the next generation.

**Generational Issues and Trends**

High self-esteem and self-importance characterize Generation Z. The previous generation ensured that this generation knew that they were individuals and unique. This self-assurance as children produced a generation of young adults considered to be self-focused, self-absorbed, self-important, and narcissistic. These tendencies are the logical conclusion of the self-centered revolution of the Boomer generation.\textsuperscript{38} The constant praise throughout their childhood produced unrealistic expectations of adulthood. Generation Z is the first generation “to believe that everyone should have high self-esteem.” The generation is now experiencing more anxiety and depression than any previous generations.\textsuperscript{39} However, Generation Z continues to be optimistic about the future even though they are skeptical about institutions that shape the society in which they live.\textsuperscript{40}

Generation Z is more racially diverse than the previous generation and has an expectation of diversity and inclusion in the various areas of life.\textsuperscript{41} Generation Z not only expects diversity but also takes pride in the inclusiveness inherent in their extreme diversity.\textsuperscript{42} Generation Z is the

\textsuperscript{37} Morgan, *Reaching & Leading Millennials*, Kindle Location 64.

\textsuperscript{38} Barna and Kinnaman, *Churchless*, Kindle Location 1516.; Twenge, 172, 8, 283.

\textsuperscript{39} Twenge, 10, 70, 283.

\textsuperscript{40} Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 49.


\textsuperscript{42} Fromm and Read, 4.
most inclusive and tolerant generation in history. However, their view of tolerance is different from previous generations. Generation Z has redefined tolerance to mean the acceptance or affirmation of one’s action. Therefore, one must affirm one’s action to accept the individual.\(^43\) The generation’s view of diversity, inclusivity, and acceptance has produced a generation that is motivated by human equality in all areas. The advocating of human equality has led to the generation voicing their opinions on poverty, human trafficking, and more. This ultimately means that all opinions and preferences are as valid as the next.\(^44\) Their view of inclusiveness and acceptance has also led to strong support for such issues as gay marriage and transgender rights.

Anthony Turner states, “A generation is defined as a set of historical events and related phenomena that creates a distinct generational gap.”\(^45\) Generation Z has either experienced or been affected by numerous historical events and phenomena that have shaped them as a generation. Millennials and Generation Z are, in many ways, a product of their environment and are vastly different because of their environments. These generations were raised differently because of differences beyond their environment and outside of their control. Generation Z grew up in a world where the economic downturn and financial hardships were a way of life for their families. This generation witnessed the financial struggles of their family, but the Millennials grew up during a time of economic success. Generation Z youth seem to be more conscious


about the importance of money and saving a higher priority than the Millennials, as a result of seeing their parents struggle.46

Generation Z is more driven to obtain financial security due to the crumbling economy of their youth. More members of Generation Z are choosing to go to college than even the Millennial generation, the previously most educated generation in history. The pursuit of education is viewed as a path to find fulfilling work and more aspire to find such contentment. Even though Generation Z will be the most educated generation, only thirty-three percent of college graduates are considered proficient readers.47

Generation Z grew up in a world that had already experienced the terrorist acts of September 11th. McDowell and Wallace pointed out that members of Generation Z “are the first generation without any memory of September 11 and were raised in a world still coming to grips with the reality of terrorism and what that means for immigration, government oversight, and so on.”48 Violence and terrorism became a constant fear of Generation Z children as the threat of school shootings, random acts of violence, and terrorism became more common throughout their school years. As children, this generation experienced not only fire drills at school but also mass shooting drills. Generation Zers were children during the constant wars of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Middle East. These events led to a generation that believed the world to be unsafe, but they also gained greater global awareness. Nevertheless, the

46 Ibid., 104; Puiu, 63.
48 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 529.
majority of Generation Z continues to believe that they will have the power to change the world for the better.\textsuperscript{49}

**Technology**

Millennials have been regarded as “digital natives,” but Generation Z has never known a time without mobile internets, such as the smartphone.\textsuperscript{50} Clarie Madden emphasized the importance of technology to this generation in that “technology has shaped their thinking, facilitated communication, redefined community, become core to their learning and become almost like a companion to them.”\textsuperscript{51} One of the characteristics of Generation Z is the ease of access to modern technology. This access has also come with dangers that exist in a context where technical advances are so common.\textsuperscript{52} Generation Z can post thoughts and pictures instantly through social media, many of which could produce unexpected dangers and future embarrassment. Williams stated, “Social media never disappears so that ‘unintended’ comments on a social media website can follow us for years and have the potential to embarrass us, and maybe even get us fired.”\textsuperscript{53} Twenge explained, “A recent survey found that 28% of 15 and 16-year-olds had sent a nude picture of themselves by e-mail or text, and 57% had been requested to do so. It is so common that it even has a clever name: sexting.”\textsuperscript{54} Seemiller and Grace viewed technology as an opportunity for connection with others or personal growth, but Twenge

\textsuperscript{49} Seemiller and Grace, “Generation Z,” 22.; Turner 105.
\textsuperscript{50} Fromm and Read, 9.
\textsuperscript{51} Madden, *Hello Gen Z*, Kindle Location 216.
\textsuperscript{53} Williams, 375.; Brooks, *Understanding Millennials*, Kindle Location 73.
\textsuperscript{54} Twenge, 51.
explained that technology and social media produced a lack of social skills in this generation.\textsuperscript{55} Technology has changed the way this generation learns and processes information to the point that Opris and Cenusa believed the internet had caused structural changes in the brain, causing Generation Z to be too impatient and distracted from learning information in the same way as the previous generations. Attention spans are now shorter than ever before due to the exposure to technology and the need for immediate reward.\textsuperscript{56} Willis observed that many people in the United States are secondary oral learners, ones who prefer to learn through oral forms such as stories or videos. Generation Z not only prefers videos, but they also build lasting perceptions on ten-second video clips.\textsuperscript{57} Generation Z prefers shorter videos for learning; after six minutes, they lose interest.\textsuperscript{58}

Generation Z spends an exceedingly large amount of time absorbed in technology. Even though this generation prefers shorter videos, White states, “Teenagers spend nearly nine hours a day absorbing media.”\textsuperscript{59} Generation Z prefers mobile communication over any other form, including face-to-face conversations. Smartphones are more than just a talking device; they allow the generation to be connected continuously to the internet as they move between different digital platforms. Generation Z is the first generation not have known a time when the internet was not in their pockets, whether the phone is theirs, a friend’s, or one that belonged to a family

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{55} Rainer and Rainer, 71.; Morgan, Kindle Location 92.; Seemiler and Grace, “Generation Z,” 24-25.; Twenge, 261.
\bibitem{57} Avery T. Willis Jr., \textit{Making Disciples of Oral Learners: To Proclaim His Story Where It Has Not Been Known Before} (Lima: Elim Publishing, 2004), 57, 4.; Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 688.
\bibitem{59} White, \textit{Meet Generation Z}, 42.
\end{thebibliography}
Almost ninety-five percent of teenagers have access to a smartphone. The internet plays a distinctive role in the lives of young adults today. Generation Z communicates through social media, which has benefits and liabilities.

Rainer and Rainer explained that social media allows people to connect with friends and families throughout the world. In some ways, technology is beneficial as it assists families in connecting. However, Myron Williams points out that one of the liabilities of social media is the permanence of personal critiques and public criticism. He states, “Social media never disappears so that ‘unintended’ comments on a social media website can follow us for years and have the potential to embarrass us, and maybe even get us fired.” Williams argued that much of the generation has learned to be careful on social media, but not all. However, Brooks viewed this age group as struggling with appropriate self-disclosure; they give too much personal information. Twenge noticed that technology had made some of this generation meaner because of the anonymous venue of online communication, which has produced cyber-bullying.

The ease of access to unlimited internet has been profitable to Christianity in some ways. Kinnaman states, “Thousands of young Christians are creating new venues for the gospel via new media, the internet, podcasting, blogging, and tweeting, among many others.”

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60 Ibid., 41.; Fromm and Read, 9.; Madden, Kindle Location 229.
61 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 241.
62 Rainer and Rainer, 71.
63 Williams, 375.; Brooks, Kindle Location 73.
64 Fromm and Read, 12.
65 Twenge, 53.
66 Kinaman, 42.
believes that social media can and should be used for discipleship. However, easy access to online material granted by the smartphone also gives access to less-wholesome material.

**Religious Beliefs and Views**

McDowell and Wallace observed that Generation Z is the least religious generation in United States history. The largest religious group in Generation Z is the nones, and religious unaffiliated, which encompass twenty-three percent of this generation, and George Barna stated, “The proportion of unchurched adults has risen (and continues to rise).” White states that the nones are the fastest-growing religious group in the United States. The generation seems to embrace the idea that spirituality and belief are private matters and are entirely irrelevant to the way they live. Many Millennials and Generation Zers view religion as an extracurricular activity. Previous generations approached the area of the spiritually and the Bible with some sense of reverence. However, more people in Generation Z and the Millennials are disregarding the authority of the Bible than ever before, and the newer generations are considered biblically illiterate.

Many members of Generation Z are not rejecting religious beliefs, as much as they are ignoring them or not thinking about them. The number of individuals who never attended

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67 Williams, 375-378.
68 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 282.
73 Morgan, Kindle Location 183.
religious services doubled from the 1970s to 2010; furthermore, the amount who claim no religious affiliation has grown by more than four hundred percent over the same years.\textsuperscript{75} Atheists in the youngest generation are twice as many as the general population.\textsuperscript{76} Thom and Jess Rainer observed that spirituality was essential to only thirteen percent of the Millennials surveyed.\textsuperscript{77}

The members of Generation Z raised in households practicing church attendance are now exiting the church at an unprecedented rate, many deciding to leave their faith even before they leave their parents’ home.\textsuperscript{78} Nineteen percent of Generation Z now claim to be former Christians.\textsuperscript{79} Only thirty-three percent of Millennials and fourteen percent of Generation Z attend a weekly religious service, while less than twenty percent of Americans of any generation attend religious services with any regularity.\textsuperscript{80} Most authors did not define what attending a religious service regularly means; however, Barna and Kinnaman wrote, “The actively churched are those who attend church regularly, usually once a month or more often.”\textsuperscript{81} Therefore, if this is the definition of active attendance, one would only need to attend services twelve times a year to be considered active. Since the majority of authors did not define their terms, and the researcher is left to apply Barna’s definition to the works of others. Clark observed that the ones who remain practicing Christians are increasingly isolated because of their beliefs.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{75} Twenge, 43.
\textsuperscript{76} McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 283.
\textsuperscript{77} Rainer and Rainer, 22.
\textsuperscript{78} McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 233, 393.
\textsuperscript{79} White, \textit{Meet Generation Z}, 11.
\textsuperscript{80} Rainer and Rainer, 47.; Twenge, 43.; Malphurs, Kindle Location 344.
\textsuperscript{81} Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 126.
\textsuperscript{82} Clark, 61.
Generation Z does not hold an overall favorable opinion of the church. Twenge stated that Generation Z overwhelmingly has a negative view of the church, but Kinnaman stated that the view of the church dramatically depends on the young adults’ past experiences. Someone with good experience with a local church will have a favorable view, whether they attend or not. Twenge also observed that fundamentalist denominations that required more from members are growing more than mainline or liberal denominations. However, denominationalism is less important to Generation Z than any previous generations.

Many young adults want nothing to do with the church because they view the church as being too concerned with money, power, and politics. Barna and Kinnaman pointed out that a substantial number of Generation Z have no idea what Christians truly believe. Therefore, many members of this generation are determining their views and beliefs about the local church from a position of ignorance. Smith and Dean both stated that many teenagers view religious involvement as a “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism,” in which religion helps one to be a good person and feel good about themselves. Bass argued that Generation Z refers to themselves as being spiritual instead of religious. This spiritualism seems to connect with an intrareligious movement toward an individualistic approach to belief.
Discipleship

Gallaty, Geiger, Kelley, Nation, Cox, and Peck agreed that local churches and Christians in the United States are deficient in true discipleship.89 Beard concluded that much of the discipleship programs had lost their focus. He believes that discipleship should not merely be an assortment of facts and propositions for one to memorize, but the transformation of the individual.90 One error in discipleship is simply that many methods of discipleship communicate in a way that Generation Z cannot or will not understand. True transformational discipleship requires that Christians communicate in ways that Generation Z can understand, such as oral storytelling, videos, social media, or online content. Therefore, the discipleship programs of the past will not be sufficient for reaching and discipling Generation Z.91 However, Seemiller and Grace found that Generation Z students preferred face-to-face communication instead of electronic communication, but they also view video conferencing through platforms such as Skype as face-to-face.92 Alan Taylor mentioned that not only do methods need to change, but disciple-makers must have an intentional starting point that involves people in discipleship.93

Generation Z needs a more straightforward approach to discipleship, learning, and application. The methods of discipleship that focus on studying facts about the Bible will not

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92 Seemiller and Grace, Generation Z Leads, 49.

93 Alan Taylor, Sunday School in HD: Sharpening the Focus on What Makes Your Church Healthy (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009), 20.
work for this generation, as education has changed during this generation. They need a fragmented approach that will only focus on a small part of Scripture at a time that can be connected with the vast whole of Scripture. Millennials and Generation Z also desire mentorship in various areas of life. Kinnaman noticed that relationships are still the driving force in discipleship. This desire for mentorship could open the door to discipleship. Fromm and Read confirmed that Generation Z learns well from stories, even from a secular perspective.

Willis and Snowden explained that God wired human beings to learn from reproducible stories. The learning of stories is only an introduction to discipleship, but this cannot be the goal; discipleship’s goal is a transformation into the image of Christ. Geiger, Kelley, and Nation recalled that discipleship transformation occurs through action, while Willis and Snowden stated that obedience and accountability are bonding elements of the discipleship process. Puiu observed that two-thirds of Generation Zers learn by doing, not reading. Therefore, discipleship needs immediate application elements, not just rote memorization and Bible study.

The goal of discipleship is to develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ that are being transformed and are faithful to Christ. Discipleship should always focus on a relationship with

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94 Opris and Cenusa, 684.
95 Rainer and Rainer, 40.; Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 1518.
97 Fromm and Read, 14.
99 Geiger, Kelley, and Nation, 42.; Willis and Snowden, 120.
100 Puiu, 66.
God through Jesus Christ. Gallaty believed that discipleship is useful because it empowers others for the work of ministry, and the result, over time, is the person being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. Rick and Shera Melick communicated the same belief but stated that the goal of discipleship is holiness in the life of the disciple. Issler concluded that Christian discipleship must not be reduced to a set of rules to follow, such as legalism. Christianity is the changing of the inner heart to be like Jesus.

Gaps in Literature

The most significant gap in the literature is the limited sources dealing with discipleship to Generation Z. This gap occurs because the oldest member of Generation Z is currently twenty-four years old, with the youngest being only nine. As the generation continues to grow into adulthood, more books will be written on the subject. However, there are numerous resources on generational education and nongenerational discipleship to help fill these gaps. Sources on the Millennials and discipleship have been utilized to view trends that might apply to Generation Z, as well. Resources for discipleship were used with educational resources to help develop a review of discipleship literature and methodologies that would relate to the youngest generation. Also, the differences in defining the generations help to bridge this gap. Scholars that consider the Millennial generation to end in the 2000s are writing about older Generation Z as defined by the researcher.

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Theological Foundation

Discipleship is a process in which someone replaces a nonbiblical portion of worldview with a biblical one. The concept of discipleship is well documented throughout Scripture, from the passing of oral stories in the Pentateuch to its continued fulfillment throughout the early church. Jewish discipleship fills the Old Testament as one generation passed the customs and lessons of Israel to the next. Jesus commanded the early church to make disciples as they “go” in the Great Commission. The book of Acts recorded the work of the Holy Spirit in the early church as they fulfilled Jesus’ commission. Notably, numerous discipleship interactions in the book of Acts and the early church could be considered as short-term discipleship because of the limited amount of time spent between the teacher and the disciple.

The Great Commission

Before Jesus’ ascension, he instructed His followers to share the good news of the Gospel and teach what He commanded. This command is known as the Great Commission and is recorded in Matthew, Luke, and John. The gospel of Mark also included a version of the Great Commission, but this is only found in later manuscripts. Matthew recorded, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the 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 commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20). Luke, who was a physician and detail-oriented, recorded the Great Commission twice, once in his gospel and once in Acts, he wrote,

Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you (Luke 24:46-49).

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105 Willis and Snowden, 152.

In the book of Acts, he recorded, “you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). John stated, “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you’” (John 20:21).

All Christians are called and commanded by Jesus to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). Jesus started this command by declaring that “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). Jesus has all the authority of heaven and earth; he has all the ability and right to command His believers. The Great Commission is a command instead of an option. He commanded them to make disciples. Stuart Weber correctly concluded of the Great Commission that, “The central command is to make disciples. At the heart of our mission is the reproduction in others of what Jesus has produced in us: faith, obedience, growth, authority, compassion, love, and a bold, truthful message as his witnesses.”

Craig Blomberg explained, “To ‘make disciples of all nations’ does require many people to leave their homelands, but Jesus’ main focus remains on the task of all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be.” Discipleship is not merely producing converts to the faith but also teaching them as recorded in the gospel of Matthew, “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:20).

Paul Helm defined the term disciple as “Someone who follows another person or another way of life and who submits himself to the discipline (teaching) of that leader or way.” Discipleship involves following, not merely adhering to a faith. Therefore, Christian discipleship

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is more than merely converting to the faith; it involves following Jesus. Blomberg points out, “The verb ‘make disciples’ also commands a kind of evangelism that does not stop after someone makes a profession of faith.”¹¹⁰ Lenski explained that the command to “make disciples” is imperative, but this command never instructed the early church on how to make disciples.¹¹¹

Gerald Borcher stated that Jesus continued to send His followers similarly as the Father had sent Christ.¹¹² God the Father sent the Son to be the perfect sacrifice for the sin of all humankind that man could have reconciliation with God. Jesus was sending His followers to make disciples and let the nations know of the sacrifice of Christ that they might have the reconciliation with God.

Robert Stein believed that “Luke saw the role of the disciples as witnesses as assuring the veracity of the message. The disciples were not just proclaimers of Jesus’ message but eyewitnesses who were to share their personal experience of the risen Christ.”¹¹³ If part of the Great Commission in the Gospel of Luke is the assurance of the accuracy of the message and the sharing of personal experience, then part of discipleship today must also be to teach others to follow Christ as recorded by Matthew (Matt. 29:20).

The second time that Luke recorded the Great Commission, he wrote, “You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the

¹¹⁰ Blomberg, 431.
earth” (Acts 1:8). This command in the book of Acts is the only time that the Great Commission is in a tense other than the present tense. Luke recorded this commission in the future tense.

One must pay attention must to the authors’ original language, clear communication, and intent. The New Testament was written in Greek, not English. David Alan Black pointed out that verb tense in the Greek, unlike English, communicates kind of action more than time.114 Gerald Stevens stated the “Present tense usually is durative action.”115 The Great Commission, written in the present tense, communicates durative, ongoing action. Stevens also wrote, “Many descriptive words could be used here for this kind of action. Take your pick: durative, continuous, progressive, linear, or incomplete. Action is ongoing.”116 The future tense, which Luke used in his gospel, can also communicate ongoing action.117

Matthew, Luke, and John wrote the Great Commission in a way to communicate durative, ongoing, incomplete action. This commission is an expectation of continued action, and believers today are still mandated to fulfill the Great Commission. This command to make disciples and teach them thus remains in effect today, it is still applicable and integral for every believer. Jesus continues to call His followers to make disciples of the nations, baptize, and teach. Since all authority in heaven and earth is with Jesus, he has all the authority to command His followers to continue to fulfill this commission until he returns.

117 Ibid.
Generational Discipleship

Generational teaching and discipleship are found throughout the Scriptures. One can find examples of one generation teaching and mentoring a younger generation in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Old Testament examples include mentorship of key leaders, such as Jethro’s advice to Moses and continued generational instruction. The Apostle Paul encouraged the early church to instruct younger generations through generational discipleship.

Moses’ life contains examples of generational mentorship. Moses received direction from his father-in-law, Jethro, and he mentored Joshua throughout the forty years in the wilderness. Joshua was recorded as the servant (Ex. 33:11) or attendant (Num. 11:28) of Moses. Joshua was one of the twelve spies sent into the land of Canaan, though he was known as Hoshea. Moses changed his name to Joshua in Numbers 13:8.118 Throughout the time that Moses led the people of Israel, Joshua was continuing to learn from him. Moses was not only teaching Joshua; he was also preparing him for a life of service where the Lord commissioned Joshua to be the leader of Israel after learning from Moses. The books of Numbers and Deuteronomy recorded the Lord’s words, “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him’” (Deut. 31:14). Not only did Moses mentor and teach Joshua, but he also led and taught all the nation of Israel to worship God. By the end of Moses’ life, his entire generation had died in the wilderness. Therefore, Moses’ leadership of the nation is also an example of generational teaching and mentoring.

The prophet Samuel entered the service of the Lord at a very early age. His mother, Hannah, declared, “I will not go up until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, that he may

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appear before the LORD and stay there forever” (1 Sam. 1:22). The Random House College Dictionary defined the term *wean* as “to accustom (a child or young animal) to food other than its mother’s milk.”¹¹⁹ Robert Bergen suggested that Hannah probably did not go up to festivals for three years when the boy was weaned.¹²⁰ From the time in which Samuel was weaned, probably around three years old, he was to live before the Lord (1 Sam. 2:11, 18, 21). When Samuel departed from his mother, he lived in Shiloh under the care of the prophet Eli. Eli mentored Samuel as Samuel was taught to serve God. God called to Samuel while he was still a child, but Eli was the one who discerned God calling Samuel vocationally (1 Sam. 3). When the Lord called to Samuel, Eli instructed him to “Go lie down, and it shall be if He calls you, that you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening’” (1 Sam. 3:9). This mentorship of Eli to Samuel is another early example of discipleship from one generation to the next.

The Old Testament mandated generational spiritual mentorship and instruction for Israel. The Shema is “the Jewish confession of faith made up of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41.”¹²¹ *Shema* is always the first two Hebrew words of Deuteronomy 6:4. The beginning of the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 was recorded as, “‘Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.’” The following four verses mandate generational mentorship and teaching.

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them

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as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deut. 6:6-9).

The Israelites were to teach their children the law of the Lord and the Shema. The Israelites were to write the Law on their hearts; this infers that they were to meditate and talk about the instruction of the Lord throughout their lives. The Israelite parents participated in generational mentorship and spiritual instruction as they taught the next generation about the Lord and His law.

The Apostle Paul could be considered one that was discipled, discipled others, and even encouraged generational discipleship. Even after Paul’s conversion, many of the believers still feared him and refused to associate with him. However, Barnabas brought him to the disciples (Acts 9:26-28), encouraged him, and involved him in ministry (Acts 11:23-26). Though Barnabas did not lead Paul to faith in Christ, he did disciple Paul as they ministered together. Barnabas was an early convert to Christianity named Joseph, but whose name was changed by the Apostles to Barnabas because he was such an encourager. One could assume that Barnabas continued to encourage Paul throughout their early ministry in Antioch (Acts 13:1) and on the first missionary journey. Barnabas acted as a spiritual leader when he brought Paul to the disciples (Acts 9:26-28) and continued through their ministry together.

Paul later discipled numerous people throughout his missionary journeys. He also encouraged and discipled two younger individuals that are listed in Scripture by name: Titus and Timothy. Paul referred to Timothy as “my true child in the faith” (1 Tim. 1:2) and Titus as “my true child in a common faith” (Titus 1:4). These designations indicate a relationship in which there is much affection between Paul and these men. Titus may have been a convert to the
Christian faith because of Paul’s ministry. Timothy was probably a Christian before he met Paul based on Acts 16:1-3. However, according to Lea and Griffin, “Paul could legitimately view him as a spiritual child or a ‘son’ in the ministry.” Since Timothy was a Christian before meeting Paul, this shows that discipleship is more than just evangelism, as Paul was able to disciple Timothy after his conversion. Paul discipled these two younger men and viewed them as sons in the faith. This is an example of generational discipleship.

Paul further encouraged Titus to set up generational discipleship in the early church (Titus 2:2-5). Paul encourages the early church to participate in making generational disciples as the older men are to teach the young men and the older women are to teach the young women. Lenski explained that “These are not official elders but ‘old men’ as such, who ought to be an excellent example to the rest of the members.” This passage is descriptive of the early church but could be applied to generational discipleship today.

Paul also left Timothy in Ephesus to continue in the ministry (1 Tim. 1:3) and encouraged him to “Let no one look down on your youthfulness” (1 Tim. 4:12). Lea and Griffin wrote, “Acceptable estimates of Timothy’s age could easily place him between thirty and thirty-five years old.” It would be reasonable to think that the church in Ephesus included members that were younger than Timothy as well as older. Timothy was referred to as Paul’s “beloved and faithful child in the Lord” (1 Cor. 4:17). This designation shows that Timothy was discipled by Paul, and the statement of youthfulness in 1 Timothy illustrates that Paul and Timothy were a

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123 Ibid., 64.

124 R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 909.

125 Lea and Griffin, 137–138.
part of generational discipleship. Paul was older than Timothy when during the time of discipling. Paul discipled Timothy then Timothy continued in discipling others.

**Short-Term Discipleship**

Authors such as Robby Gallaty believed that discipleship could not be fruitful without a long-term commitment to the discipleship process. He wrote, “The mass-production mindset of McChristianity is adversarial to discipleship and spiritual growth. Why? Because you can't microwave disciples. Discipleship is a Crock-Pot recipe.”  

However, the New Testament seems to support both long-term and short-term discipleship. The twelve disciples were involved in long-term discipleship with Jesus as they followed Him in His earthly ministry for three years. However, other occasions in the New Testament could be classified as short-term discipleship.

After the resurrection of Jesus, He appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus. Jesus explained how the Christ must suffer to enter His glory (Luke 24:25-26). Jesus traveled with these men for one day and explained the Scriptures and taught them. At the end of their travels, they urged Jesus to stop and eat with them. They did not realize who was teaching them until He blessed the food and vanished from their sight. This one-day Scripture lesson and explanation would fit the description of short-term discipleship. Robert Stein explained that “this lack of recognition allowed Jesus to teach the necessity of his death and resurrection and to show how this was the fulfillment of Scripture.” Jesus taught the two men for only one day; he discipled them for a limited amount of time. This short time of instruction and discipleship produced a change in the lives of the individuals. “And they go up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, saying, ‘The Lord has

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126 Gallaty, 130.
127 Stein, 610.
really risen and has appeared to Simon’” (Luke 24:33-34). Jesus taught these men for only one day, and they returned to Jerusalem to unite with the apostles.

Another example of one-day discipleship was Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip was instructed by an angel to go to the road to Gaza (Acts 8:26). While he was on this road, he met an Ethiopian eunuch who was reading the book of Isaiah. Philip explained the meaning of the text to the Ethiopian, and he placed faith in Christ. The eunuch even asked, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:36) Philip baptized the Ethiopian, and the Holy Spirit snatched him away (Acts 8:38-39). Philip only spent a short time with the Ethiopian. This interaction was not long-term discipleship, but short-term with eternal impact. John Polhill suggested that “Philip’s witness to the eunuch may be considered the first conversion of a Gentile.”128 Through this short-term discipleship, the Ethiopian placed faith in Jesus and committed to following Christ.

The two examples above illustrate one-day discipleship. However, not all short-term discipleship is limited to only one day. The apostle Paul practiced short-term discipleship in various locations throughout his journeys. Paul had a vision of a Macedonian man appealing for him to help, and Paul immediately left for Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10). Paul had been in the city of Philippi only a few days before the Sabbath when he met Lydia, who placed faith in Christ and asked them to stay in her house (Acts 16:11-15). While in Philippi, a slave girl with a spirit of divination followed them for many days declaring, “These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17). The authorities in Phillipi put Paul in jail for casting out the spirit. However, the chains in the jail were released

during an earthquake while Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns around midnight. The jailer awoke and was about to kill himself when Paul stopped him and presented the gospel. The jailer and his family placed faith in Jesus and were baptized. Paul and Silas were in Philippi a matter of days, not years, and discipled Lydia and the jailer. Luke recorded that the slave girl followed Paul and Silas for many days (Acts 16:18), not several Sabbaths (weeks) as is recorded in chapter 17. Therefore, this designation of time is limited to less than a month. This is an example of short-term discipleship. Paul changed the lives of Lydia and the jailer’s family as he proclaimed the gospel message and provided instruction to them within the short time he was with them.

Paul left Philippi to go the Thessalonica in Acts 17. While in Thessalonica, Paul entered the synagogue to reason with the Jews about the Scriptures. Luke recorded, “And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, ‘This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ’” (Acts 17:2-3). Paul remained in Thessalonica for three to four weeks. This passage could also be considered short-term discipleship as well. Polhill believed that Paul remained in the synagogue for three Sabbaths, but the Thessalonian ministry was somewhat longer. But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; . . . The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea (Acts 17:4-5, 10).

\[129\] Ibid., 360.
The brethren sent Paul and Silas away after the uproar by the Jews, which occurred after the three Sabbaths. This passage indicates that Paul’s initial visit to Thessalonica was only three to four weeks long. This could be considered to be short-term discipleship because Paul explained and gave evidence that Christ suffered and rose again (Acts 17:3). Some of the Jews and a large number of God-fearers were persuaded and placed faith in Christ during this time of discipleship.

One further example of short-term discipleship could be Jesus’ travel to Samaria in John chapter four. After Jesus’ interaction with the woman at the well, she told the people of the city, “He told me all the things that I have done” (Jn. 4:39). Many of the Samaritans believed in Christ because of her testimony, and they asked Jesus to stay with them. Jesus spent two days in Samaria (Jn. 4:43). Jesus taught the people of Samaria and showed them that He was the Messiah and that God desired people to worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:23). Jesus taught and discipled the people of Samaria for only a short time.

Each biblical example of short-term discipleship listed above focused on the gospel message. Jesus taught on the road to Emmaus that Christ must suffer. Phillip showed the Ethiopian that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies in the book of Isaiah through His death, burial, and resurrection. Paul presented the gospel to Lydia and the jailer. While in Thessalonica, Paul reasoned with the Jews that Jesus was the One for whom they had waited. Jesus focused on pointing the Samarians to the truth of God and explaining that He is the Messiah. He told the woman at the well, “I who speak to you am He” (Jn. 4:26). Therefore, short-term discipleship should focus primarily on the gospel of Jesus Christ. This project focused on the gospel by teaching the parables of Jesus found in the Synoptic Gospels.
Oral Tradition in Scripture

The research is constructed to communicate biblical truth through Bible storying because this is a method that is understandable by Generation Z. Storying and oral instruction have been long held as an acceptable means of discipleship and spiritual instruction. Elwell and Beitzel stated, “Oral transmission was very important in Judaism, and one of the strongest characteristics of rabbinic theology is the importance attached to the oral law in addition to the written law. This oral law consisted of traditional interpretations which had been handed down from teacher to pupil.”¹³⁰ The Genesis account was passed down for centuries through oral teaching. K. A. Matthews explained, “These smaller narratives and law collections at one time existed independently, and they were composed and transmitted orally, thus serving as an older witness to the ancient Israelite settings.”¹³¹ The oral teaching preserved this older witness from one generation to the next. The Genesis account was not compiled until the days of Moses.¹³² However, Moses was not born until Israel had already been slaves in Egypt for centuries (Ex. 1-2). The oral tradition of Israel ensured an accurate account as generations continued to pass down the stories of ancient Israel.

Oral tradition continued in the Old Testament, even after the recording of the Genesis account. In Exodus 12, God established the Passover. The Israelites were to kill an unblemished lamb or goat and spread its blood on the doorframe. The angel of the Lord would later pass over the land of Egypt and kill the firstborn son, sparing anyone with the blood on the doorpost. The Lord commanded Israel to celebrate this observance as a lasting memorial in Exodus 12:14. The

¹³² Ibid., 32.
Lord said, “Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance” (Ex. 12:14). The Passover is still celebrated by Jewish families today as they retell the story of how God freed the Israelites from slavery in the land of Egypt. This retelling of the Exodus account at Passover is a part of the oral tradition, which has lasted for millennia.

The use of oral tradition did not stop in the Old Testament. The gospel of Jesus was spread throughout the known world in the first century to the point that some of the Jews claimed the Christians were upsetting the world (Acts 17:6). Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection occurred in the early 30s AD. However, the gospel of Mark is thought to be the earliest gospel account written. Mary Healy argued that the gospel of Mark was written to the Christian who “Under Emperor Nero (AD 64-68) the church in Rome suffered brutal persecution.” If Mark wrote the first gospel in the mid-60s, this would leave 30 years of oral teaching regarding the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The book of Acts communicates how the gospel spread to the nations. The apostles, early church, and missionaries spread the gospel message through the spoken word or oral tradition.

Finally, Jesus taught through stories. Many of the teachings of the Lord recorded in the synoptic gospels are parables. David Seal defined a parable as “A story or saying that illustrates a truth using comparison, hyperbole, or simile.” Jesus communicated biblical truth through stories and illustrations. This method of teaching was used to communicate the truth about the kingdom of God and to reveal the truth from some while hiding the teaching from

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others (Lk 8:4-10). Jesus often answered questions by telling stories that illustrated the meaning. In Luke 15, Jesus was accused of receiving sinners and eating with them. In response, Jesus told three stories; the lost sheep (Lk 15:4-7), the lost coin (Lk 15:8-10), and the lost son (Lk 11-32).

Theoretical Foundations

Generation Z is a different generation with different tendencies and preferences. One major issue in discipleship is simply that many methods of discipleship communicate in a way that Generation Z cannot or will not understand. True transformational discipleship requires that Christians communicate in ways that the learner can understand, such as oral storytelling, videos, social media, or online content. Therefore, the discipleship programs of the past will not be sufficient for reaching and discipling Generation Z.135

Technology

The usage and availability of technology greatly influence Generation Z. This generation prefers to learn through technology, such as videos. Consequently, they build lasting perceptions of ten-second video clips.136 The usage of technology is needed in the discipleship of today’s young adults. Williams found that “using social media as a means for discipleship may find more women and men involved, the younger generation more active, and those with minimal education.”137 Technology is such a large part of Generation Z’s lives that the absence of technology in discipleship would be a mistake.

The drawback of using technology is the ministry context. The Marine Corps will not allow individuals to access video streaming websites, such as YouTube, or social media on

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136 Willis, 57, 4.
137 Williams, 78.
government computers. The students in this context do not have military e-mail until they reach their first permanent duty station, and the use of personal e-mail for chaplaincy work is strictly prohibited. These restrictions limit the amount and type of technology that can be used in this ministry context. However, short videos have been downloaded to the researcher’s personal computer and shown during the Bible study as an introduction to the lesson.

**Subject-Spotting Education**

Generation Z struggles with a limited attention span. Opris and Cenusa argued for subject-spotting education for Generation Z. Subject-spotting is a method in which the student is introduced to a single subject or a part of a concept, instead of the larger whole. Generation Z has structural changes in the brain that cause “fast attention shifting, increased distractibility and multitasking behaviors.” These changes have caused Generation Z to need fewer complex instruction and more that can be easily understood and connected to a broader concept. The goal of subject-spotting education is to teach the student more straightforward subjects that can be found and connected to the larger narrative.

The study included subject-spotting education by teaching parables found in the Synoptic Gospels. The lessons of the parables communicate biblical truth that can be connected to the larger narrative of Scripture. These lessons are intentionally built to develop a more extensive view of five elements of discipleship; (1) Christian growth, (2) understanding the Gospel, (3) sanctification, (4) evangelism, and (5) Christian responsibility while continuing to focus on the gospel message. The Bible study teaches the parables using nothing more than an introductory video and the verbal telling of the corresponding Bible stories and a facilitated discussion, although the Marines were also told where to find the parables in the gospels within the larger narrative.

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138 Opris and Cenusa, 683.
context of the Bible. Therefore, the Marines also learned how to find the parables in Scripture, while being taught in a method in which they understand.

**Bible Storying**

Willis and Snowden have argued for a verbal-based discipleship method called Bible Storying. Most of the current generation can only read the most basic printed material, and many prefer receiving information through forms other than printed text. Willis and Snowden claimed that God wired human beings for stories and are better able to understand the information presented in story form.\(^{139}\) They also point out that the facilitator needs to communicate the biblical stories as “clearly and accurately as possible; we want those we are discipling to know the difference between the Word of God and our comments about it.”\(^{140}\) Although the Bible Storying discipleship model eliminated the written text that could be a stumbling block for Generation Z, it does not emphasize the technology and hands-on methods from which the generation learns best.\(^{141}\) Morgan stated, “What worked to connect with 18 to 34-year-olds in the 2000s won’t be the same things that work to connect with the same age group in the next decade.”\(^{142}\)

The Bible Storying method connects with Generation Z, who favors stories more than other forms of information. Fromm and Read, who wrote from a secular perspective, also advocated for teaching through stories.\(^{143}\) A facilitator, using the Bible Storying method, tells the story found in the Scriptures, in this case, the parables. The researcher then asked open questions

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\(^{139}\) Willis and Snowden, 35.; Willis, 11.

\(^{140}\) Willis and Snowden, 58.

\(^{141}\) Williams, 380-381.; Seemiller and Grace, “Generation Z: Educating” 22.

\(^{142}\) Morgan, Kindle Location 73.

\(^{143}\) Fromm and Read, 14.
to facilitate conversation about the text and application. Since stories are easier to remember, the learners were also asked to share the story with others throughout the week as a means of evangelism. Gallaty wrote, “Evangelism and discipleship are two oars attached to the same boat. With only one oar in the water, you will row in a circle. Both oars are required to navigate in a straight line to reach your destination.”

**Mentorship**

Young adults desire the opportunity for mentorship. Thom and Jess Rainer wrote, “More than 40 percent of adult Millennials currently have a mentor in their lives. That means for every five Millennials; two are connected with a mentor.” This is a trend that has continued into Generation Z. Kinnaman stated that mentorship is a requirement for true discipleship, but this element was missing in the church life of Generation Z as they were growing up. Four out of five churchgoing youths reported that they had never been mentored. Turner pointed out that humans are “hardwired to want a connection with one another,” even though they are always connected to technology.

The method used in this study provided mentorship to the Marines. A chaplain facilitated the Bible study and was available before and after the study to talk with participants. The chaplain provided a means of mentorship for both military and personal matters. Part of the chaplain’s duty is to “care for all and advise those served.”

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144 Gallaty, 165.
145 Rainer and Rainer, 41.
146 Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 13, 119.
147 Turner, 104-105.
of a mentor. Therefore, the chaplain has the responsibility of mentoring the Marines and sailors in the unit.

**Blended Approach to Discipleship**

This researcher believes that the best approach to the discipleship of Generation Z is not one single method, but a combination of both video and verbal methodologies. The researcher utilized technology such as videos to connect with Generation Z through technology and further examine the scriptural text through a verbal Bible Storying. This approach would emphasize the text of Scripture while not merely going through printed material. The combination of these methods takes into consideration the way the generation learns best. Opris and Victor-Eduard wrote, “As the cognitive structure of the students is changing, the education methods must be adapted to their possibilities, requirement, and needs.”\(^{149}\) This same principle is accurate in the context of discipleship and ministry. Bruce Powers agreed in his writing, “Education is fundamentally important for the church’s work, and it should be conducted with understanding, integrity, and clarity.”\(^{150}\) Clarity requires that the method be a form that can be best understood by the one being discipled.

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\(^{149}\) Opris and Victor-Eduard, 691.

Chapter 3:
Methodology

Intervention Design

The Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River had limited religious provision and no discipleship ministry in the unit before the start of this doctoral project. The researcher developed a repeatable, strategic discipleship plan for Protestant Christian students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River, focused on fundamental Christian doctrines. The project used generational information and trends found in the review of the literature to create a five-week Bible study and discipleship program that emphasized the fundamental doctrines of Christianity through teaching the Synoptic Gospel parables of Jesus. This study included an anonymous “Basic Bible Questionnaires” that was completed before and after the five-week study and a “Generational – Methodology Questionnaire” completed at the end of the Bible study. The five-week Bible study was an open group, available to all Marines and Sailors on Marine Corps Air Station New River, but the primary focus was on Generation Z students at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training.

Soliciting for Research Volunteers

The study must collect data from volunteers to verify its thesis in order to be viable as a research project. Therefore, the recruitment and solicitation of research volunteers were necessary. The researcher chose to limit his research volunteers to Protestant Christian Marines due to the context, discipleship focus of this project, and the researcher’s endorsement through
the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, as a chaplain and
officer. The researcher was cautious of the need to avoid any perception of command influence
or coercion in the solicitation of voluntary participation in the research. Therefore, the researcher
intentionally conducted this study as a doctoral candidate and attempted to have limited role
confusion during the project. This clarification of roles was difficult as the majority of students
understood that the researcher was also the commanding chaplain for the unit.

The solicitation of research volunteers was completed in person as the researcher visited
workspaces and classrooms. The researcher visited these areas while in civilian attire, instead of
uniform, while emphasizing that this was a doctoral project and there was no requirement to
participate. The goal was to ensure that the Marines did not feel obligated to participate due to
the rank or position of the researcher. The researcher asked the Military and Family Life
Counselor for the unit, who is a civilian counselor, to accompany him as he solicited volunteers
to limit any appearance of command influence. Another way of limiting the appearance of
command influence was the removal of higher ranks during the solicitation. Since the students at
the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River are lower ranks (E-1 to E-3), only
these ranks were permitted to stay in the room during the solicitation for volunteers. The
researcher feared that if the instructors were allowed in the room, they might have influenced the
participants. The solicitation was accomplished by reading the approved recruitment script found
in Appendix J.

The researcher limited his research volunteers to individuals that were (1) at least 18
years old, (2) born on or after January 1, 1995, (3) identify as a Protestant Christian, (4) are a
Marine student at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit New River, (5) will not
graduate until October 10, 2019, or later, and (6) are willing to participate. The volunteers were
informed they would be expected to complete three questionnaires, attend five weekly Bible studies, and participate actively in the Bible study. Since this study was completed through anonymous questionnaires, the researcher did not maintain a list of research volunteer participants. Marines were able to volunteer by arriving at the first Bible study 30 minutes early to complete the first questionnaire. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and no compensation or any other award was given for their participation. The possible volunteers were each asked if they met the requirements as defined in the script when they arrived to complete the first questionnaire. If a Marine did not meet the requirements as defined in the recruitment script, they were not given a questionnaire to complete. However, they were invited to the Bible study since this was an open group.

**Intervention Logistics**

The researcher worked with the command to secure a location for the Bible study on Tuesday evenings in the unit spaces because the chapel is located approximately two miles from the Marines’ barracks. Therefore, the researcher was allowed to use a room in building AS-4008, the common area of the barracks. The researcher received written permission from the unit’s commanding officer to use this space. The room consisted of a large area with chairs, a television, a pool table, and vending machines. It was located next to the barracks duty hut. The actual barracks rooms for the Marines are located in two buildings located right behind this building. Conducting the Bible study in this building eliminated the two-mile walk to the chapel, which could have caused decreased attendance, especially in bad weather; also being centrally located, it provided greater visibility to the Bible study.

The researcher decided to hold the Bible study on Tuesday nights because of the limited student obligations during this time. The majority of students at the Center for Naval Aviation
Technical Training New River are part of the day crew. Day crew are members that work, or go to class, during the day; night crew works, or goes to class, during the night. The majority of the students are released from class for the evening around 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm. Tuesdays were also suitable because the students have other obligations on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Monday evenings at 6:00 pm, the students have a mandatory field day of the barracks. Field day is a naval term for cleaning. The entire barracks were thoroughly cleaned every Monday night. Wednesday evenings, the students have a mandatory formation at 6:00 pm for accountability purposes. The Bible study would get limited participation if scheduled on Fridays since it was the beginning of the weekend. The researcher had other chapel obligations on some Thursday evenings. Therefore, Tuesday nights became the clear choice for scheduling the Bible study.

The Bible study was scheduled on Tuesdays, but the time became another issue. The Marines who are the focus of this study normally eat at the dining facility, which serves the evening meal at the same time as the scheduled Bible study. The Marines participating in the study would possibly miss this meal if another meal were not provided. However, the Protestant congregation at the Marine Corps Air Station Memorial Chapel provided a meal each Tuesday night for the Marines attending the Bible study. The meal consisted of pizza and sodas from Domino’s Pizza, located at 1135 Old Maplehurst Road in Jacksonville, NC. The pizza was paid for by the Protestant Religious Offering Fund by the instruction that governs religious offerings in Navy and Marine Corps chapels. The Religious Offering Fund can be used for the “purchase of supplies, decoration, food, non-alcoholic [sic] beverages, and other consumables to support Command Religious Program (CRP) fellowship, community outreach, and CRP volunteer
recognition events.” Since this study provided a Protestant Bible study on the Air Station, the usage of the Religious Offering Fund was approved by the Protestant Chapel Council and authorized by the Religious Offering Fund administrator. The meal was limited not to exceed five dollars per person each night of the Bible study. The meals were ordered by the enlisted Religious Program Specialists assigned as the Religious Offering Fund custodians at the Marine Corps Air Station New River Memorial Chapel.

The questionnaires used to collect data during this study were anonymous. Therefore, the research was unable to ensure equal participation in the pre-study questionnaires and the post-study questionnaires. The researcher was also unable to ensure that the same volunteers completed the pre-study and post-study questionnaires. The sample size used in this study was ten to twelve Marines. That was because only sixty-one Marines at this unit self-identify as Protestant Christians. The participation of only ten to twelve Marines would represent 16% to 19.6% of the self-identified Protestant Christian population at this unit.

Generation Z prefers videos for learning, and they build lasting perceptions on ten-second video clips. Since Generation Z has a limited attention span and is greatly influenced by technology and media, the researcher included an introductory video to the Bible study. The researcher used his laptop for the videos due to the Marine Corps’ restrictions on videos played on a government computer. The videos were downloaded from the internet and saved onto the computer. While there is wireless internet capability in the building, the researcher wanted to ensure that the videos would play even if the internet were not working. The laptop was not large

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151 U.S. Department of the Navy, Secretary of the Navy Instruction 7010.6B, Under Secretary of the Navy (Washington, DC, 2018), Enclosure 4, Page 4.
152 Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 688.
153 Opris and Cenusa, 683-684.
enough to show a video to a larger group, but the researcher was able to connect the laptop to the television through an HDMI cable. The PowerPoint presentation with the embedded videos played without a hitch on the television.

Data Collection

Data were collected by the use of two anonymous questionnaires. The goal of the project was to create a method of discipleship ministry at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River that used generational information and trends. Therefore, the focus of the research was on the group as a whole, not individuals. One of the questions that the research sought to answer was, “Did members of Generation Z grow in biblical knowledge during this five-week study?” Since the emphasis of the project was on the generation instead of individuals, anonymous questionnaires were utilized. There was no need to connect pre-study questionnaires and post-study questionnaires to an individual because the results were viewed as a generation in aggregate.

The two questionnaires that used during this study were the “Basic Bible Questionnaire” and the “Generational – Methodology Questionnaire.” The research volunteers completed the “Basic Bible Questionnaire” before and after the five-week Bible Study. The questionnaires were used to evaluate the growth of biblical knowledge in the group. The goal of the first questionnaire was to learn the amount of biblical knowledge the Marines started with and create a baseline for measuring change. McDowell and Wallace observed that Generation Z is the least religious generation in United States history. Therefore, this is also the generation with the least amount of biblical knowledge. The first Basic Bible Questionnaire gave the researcher a

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154 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 282.
starting point for the collection of quantifiable data, which revealed how orthodox the Generation Z Marines’ biblical belief was as a group.

The first section of the Basic Bible Questionnaire contained open questions for a written response, and the second section contained scaling questions. The scaling questions consisted of statements followed by the choices of (1) Fully Agree, (2) Somewhat Agree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Somewhat Disagree, and (5) Fully Disagree. The researcher evaluates the written response section of the questionnaires for themes, slippage, and silence, as well as orthodoxy. A theme is a statement or thought that appears on numerous questionnaires indicating an agreement or commonly held belief within the group. Slippage is a statement that is not alike or similar to the other statements from the group. Silence is a thought or belief that the researcher expected that was not present in any of the answers from the participants. The scaling questions were given a point value according to orthodox Christian doctrine. The most correct answer, according to conservative Christian doctrine, was given a point value of “4,” with the least orthodox answer was given a score of “0.” The average score of each question and doctrine became the value of the group’s collective belief or knowledge. The same procedure applied to the pre and post-study questionnaires.

The pre-study Basic Bible Questionnaires and post-study Basic Bible Questionnaires were compared for differences to evaluate the change of belief and knowledge over five weeks. The pre-study questionnaire established the baseline for change, and the post-study provided the amount of change that occurred in the group during the five-week Bible study. The comparison of these questionnaires provided the researcher with the basis for evaluating the structure and effectiveness of the Bible study as well as the methodology used. These questionnaires also provided a structure to appraise the growth of biblical knowledge as a group. One limitation of
this structure was the fact that the questionnaires were anonymous. The researcher was unable to ensure or verify that the group taking the first questionnaire was the same group as the final questionnaire. Since all participants that completed the questionnaires met the requirements as described in the recruitment script, this process gave an overview of the Generation Z Marines in the unit. However, as a group, the researcher could not ensure that the same individuals completed both the pre-study and the post-study questionnaires.

A Generational – Methodology Questionnaire was also used at the end of the five-week Bible study. Each of the participants was given this questionnaire after the completion of the final Bible study. This questionnaire focused on the learning style of the generation and methodology used during the Bible study. This questionnaire also contained two sections: the first section contained open questions for a written response, and the second section contained scaling questions. The scaling questions consisted of statements followed by the choices of (1) Fully Agree, (2) Somewhat Agree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Somewhat Disagree, and (5) Fully Disagree. The written response section of the questionnaires was evaluated by the researcher for trends found on multiple questionnaires, slippage, and silence. These trends provided a basis for a generational perspective on discipleship, Bible study, and methodology. The scaling questions functioned much like an end of course survey. The answers were viewed and evaluated by the researcher for the effectiveness of the study. This section of the questionnaires was not given a point value like the Basic Bible Questionnaire scaling questions because this section did not establish a baseline of knowledge or evaluate measurable data.

The risk of human error in the evaluation of the results was limited by the information being confirmed by the researcher’s supervisory chaplain, Commander Patrick W. Smith, and the air station’s contracted priest, Father William G. Waun. The confirmation and double-checking
of material ensured the accuracy of the information that would be reported in this thesis and the limitation of individual bias by the researcher.

The researcher secured the data collected during this study by keeping the filled questionnaires in a locked desk drawer in the researcher’s office. Only the researcher had access to the completed questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were also scanned as a PDF and saved on the researcher’s personal computer. The researcher’s personal computer was password protected. The researcher’s government computer was not utilized for this study, other than initial e-mails with the Marine Corps’ Institutional Review Board. The data from the questionnaires were saved in Word and Excel documents on the researcher’s personal computer. This data will be kept for three years after the conclusion of this study; then, all records will be deleted or destroyed.

**Bible Study**

The researcher held a Bible study for only five weeks due to the limited time that the students are at the unit. A five-week Bible study allowed the students who are only at the unit for six to eight weeks to attend the full study. The researcher needed to narrow the focus of the study to limit the Bible study to only five weeks. Consequently, the researcher decided to limit this study to parables or metaphoric language recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. The sections of Scripture included in this study were: The Parable of the Sower, The Parable of Tenants, the Parable of the Cloth and Wineskins, the Metaphor of Salt and Light, and The Parable of the Faithful and Wicked Servant. The selected passages emphasized discipleship and fundamental Christian doctrine. The Bible study focused on these passages but expanded on themes found within these parables. The researcher taught fundamental Christian doctrines while utilizing the parables and metaphoric language of Jesus’ teaching.
The methodology used in the Bible study was a combination of different discipleship methods. While some only focus on mentorship, Bible study, video, or discussion, this study utilized a combination of various methods. The researcher was also the facilitator of the Bible study, even though he is not a member of Generation Z. The difference in age from the researcher and Marines could have affected the study. Tony Morgan wrote, “If you want to attract young adults, you will have to make the young adults you already have visible.” The researcher did not have a member of Generation Z available to lead the study. However, the open discussion allowed the members of Generation Z to take an active role in the group.

The passages chosen for this five-week Bible study were arranged strategically to guide the students through the discipleship process and give a basis for a faithful Christian life. The passage was introduced to the group at Bible study through a short video after explaining the context of the passage. Each of the videos was only one to three minutes because short videos are the preferred method of communication for Generation Z. The researcher ensured that the students had an understanding of the necessary context of the passage before beginning to ensure that the passage is understood in its original context. The videos communicated the scriptural passage and sometimes examined the meaning of the passage as well.

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155 Morgan, Kindle Location 168.
156 Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 688.
Table 1: List of Introductory Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Bible Story</th>
<th>Creator of Video</th>
<th>Location of Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parable of the Sower</td>
<td>Got Questions</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gotquestions.org/parable-sower.html">http://www.gotquestions.org/parable-sower.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parable of the Tenants</td>
<td>The Global Gospel</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZGjLXMWfuob">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZGjLXMWfuob</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Parable of the Cloth and Wineskins</td>
<td>Full of Eyes</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fullofeyes.com">http://www.fullofeyes.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the video concluded, the researcher told the passage to the student through Bible Storying, starting with the biblical context. The researcher told the students where the passage was located in the Bible, but he did not read the passage to the students because most Americans are oral learners. Willis stated, “Even though the majority of Americans can read, many of them cannot read with adequate comprehension.”\textsuperscript{157} The researcher needed to ensure that he knew the text before telling the story. The goal was to communicate the biblical passage in a way that Generation Z would better understand. Therefore, the researcher learned the three accounts of the stories in the Synoptic Gospels and memorized the passage to tell the story accurately.

After narrating the passage using the Bible storying method, the researcher leads the students in retelling the story through a series of questions. This process of retelling the story included questions about the context and the passage. Questions included in this section were very focused on the text, such as “What was the context?” and “What happened next?” The students retold the story through this method before talking about meaning or application. The goal was to ensure that the students understood the text of Scripture. Willis and Snowden\textsuperscript{157}

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\textsuperscript{157}Willis and Snowden, 27.
correctly emphasized that “We are to communicate the Word of God as clearly and accurately as possible; we want those we are discipling to know the difference between the Word of God and our comments about it. For twenty-first-century oral-preference learners, we need to reinforce what God says.”

After the students retold the story, the researcher facilitated conversations with the students about the meaning and application of the biblical text. The researcher acted as a facilitator who led the conversation and allowed the Marines to articulate their thoughts and beliefs about the meaning and application of the text. Some questions often used by the facilitator were “What did Jesus mean by this?” and “How can this be applied at CNATT?” The researcher intentionally connected the stories with other parts of Scripture to reinforce the biblical doctrine. These questions helped to apply the meaning of the passages to the student’s context. Christopher Beard believed that discipleship should not merely be an assortment of facts and propositions for one to memorize, but the transformation of the individual. Therefore, for the gospel message to transform these Marines, they must be able to apply the text to their daily lives. The students must be able to apply the text to life in the Marine Corps and their interactions with others. The facilitated discussion was the key to applying the text of Scripture into their context and vice versa in drawing them into the biblical story.

After the conclusion of the Bible study, the researcher stayed at the building for approximately 45 minutes to an hour to talk with Marines. William Cox and Robert Peck explained that mentorship is an essential part of Christian discipleship. McDowell and Wallace explained that “Young people are seeking reasonable explanations and authentic

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158 Willis and Snowden, 58.
159 Beard, 179.
160 Cox and Peck, 243.
relationships.” This time provided the Marines an opportunity to talk about personal issues or ask questions that they might not have wanted to ask in a larger group. This time of mentorship was also a time in which the Marines were able to have one-on-one conversations with someone that could take more a mentoring role, instead of group facilitation. Since the Marines knew the researcher as the unit chaplain, these conversations were privileged communication per Navy regulations. Therefore, these interactions were confidential, but the researcher had to take on a role as a chaplain and not as a researcher. All one-on-one conversations after the Bible study were conducted outside and away from the other Marines to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Mentorship is one area in which the role confusion played a part. Throughout the Bible study, the researcher acted as a Bible teacher, facilitator, and doctoral researcher. However, after the Bible study, the researcher functioned as a military chaplain. The discipleship process required some overlapping roles for the researcher. This study will not discuss the chaplain’s mentoring role in detail as it is out of the scope of the research.

Each of the five sessions ended with a challenge to share the story that they learned with someone else who was not present in the Bible study. Christians have been called to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19), and the sharing of a biblical passage is one way to open a conversation with someone about the gospel. The goal of asking the Marines to share the biblical story with others was to provide them with an avenue of fulfilling the Great Commission. The next Bible study started with the question about if they shared and with whom they shared. This accountability was intended to encourage the Marines as that exercised their religious beliefs and grew stronger in the faith.

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161 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 339.
162 U.S. Department of the Navy, *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.9*, Assistant Secretary of the Navy - Manpower and Reserve Affairs, (Washington, DC, 2008), 2.
The researcher strategically selected the passages for the study to keep the number of sessions limited to the time the Marines were at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River, and the passages provided an overview of essential Christian doctrine and discipleship. The researcher kept each lesson simple, to the point, and Christ-focused. The primary focus of the five-week Bible study was on the gospel of Jesus Christ and its impact on the student’s life. The goal is transformational discipleship in the lives of these young believers.

The first passage for the weekly Bible study was the parable of the sower. This parable is found in Matthew 13:3-23, Mark 4:1-20, and Luke 8:5-15. This parable is one that Jesus directly gives the disciples its meaning. This parable was chosen to be first in the series because it illustrates that not all who hear the gospel accept Christ, and some accept Christ at first and later reject Him. This parable also emphasized that the true believer will bear fruit (Matt. 13:23). This bearing of fruit shows that a Christian is to grow in his relationship with Jesus and actively share his faith. This parable offers a good overview of the discipleship process, wherein a disciple accepts the Good News of the gospel message, grows in his faith, and shares with others.

The second passage for the weekly Bible study was the parable of the tenants. This parable is in all the synoptic gospels: Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-11, and Luke 20:9-18. This passage was chosen to be the second passage because one can see the gospel presented there. In this passage, the landowner sent his son to the tenants, who killed the son. The landowner then came and destroyed the vine-growers and gave the vineyard to others (Mark 12:9). That week the researcher presented the true gospel to a generation that is considered to be biblically illiterate.

Moreover, one cannot grow in Christian discipleship without first being a Christian. The last three sessions were designed to encourage and challenge the believer. These Marines needed to understand the gospel message of Jesus being sinless, dying in their place, and raising from
the death for their salvation before continuing in this series of Bible studies. Robby Gallaty stated, “The discipleship process always begins here, with a personal relationship with Jesus.”

The middle session of the Bible study was on the passage regarding the cloth and wineskins. This passage is also in the Synoptics: Matthew 9:16-17, Mark 2:21-22, and Luke 5:36-39. Jesus shared this illustration to show that He was doing a new work. His atoning sacrifice would be a new work that was different from the Old Testament sacrificial system.

Another application of this text would be the sanctification of the believer. Christians are to be changed by the gospel message as they follow Jesus. Paul wrote, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Cor. 5:17). Christianity cannot be placed onto or in the individual’s old life. The Christian must be changed into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18) through the process of sanctification.

The fourth passage for the weekly Bible study was the metaphor that Jesus used regarding salt and light. This passage, in Matthew 5:13-16, Mark 4:21, Mark 9:49-50, Luke 8:16, and Luke 14:34-35, emphasized evangelism and living a life of holiness. Salt was used in the first century as a preserving agent, as it was needed to preserve meat. Similarly, Christians are called to be a preserving agent as the world sees them doing good works and giving glory to God the Father (Matt. 5:16). Jesus said, “You are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:17). However, in John 8:12, Jesus stated, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.” Lange and Schaff explain, “They (the disciples) are the light of the world, as deriving their light from Him (Jesus) who is the true light of the world.”

163 Gallaty, 38.
164 Blomberg, 102.
Christians reflect the light of Christ in their own lives so that others might see and give glory to God. This passage primarily emphasizes evangelism, which Christians are commanded to do in the Great Commission. If disciples are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, then there is a responsibility for the fulfillment of the Great Commission in the lives of believers.

The final session of the five-week Bible study was on the parable of the faithful and wicked servants. This passage, in Matthew 24:42-51, Mark 13:33-37, and Luke 12:35-48, emphasized the fact that the Master (Jesus) will return. The faithful servant was one whom the master found working and being on task when He returns (Luke 12:43). The wicked was one that approached life in a way that his relationship with the master did not matter. Jesus said,

“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.” (Luke 12:47-48).

This passage is about Christian responsibility. The Christian is to obey the Master’s will. Jesus showed this in the Great Commission as well, “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:20). Jesus expects His believers to respond in obedience. He asked His disciples, “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46). This parable shows that true believers are expected to obey Christ. Another emphasis in this passage is the punishment of the unfaithful and unbelievers. The phrase, “but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging,” points to the fact that all are guilty, even without hearing the gospel.

These passages of Scripture were chosen because they outline the discipleship process in the life of the believer while continually emphasizing the gospel of Christ. The person must accept Christ and grow, Christ died in the place of sinful man for salvation, the believer is to be
changed into a new creation in Christ, he is the salt of the earth and light of the world as he reflects the light of Christ, and he is expected to be obedient to Christ. This collection of passages displays not only the discipleship process but Christian responsibility.

Table 2: Lessons and Scripture References.

| Lesson 1      | Parable of the Sower | Matthew 13:3-23  
Mark 4:1-20  
Luke 8:5-15 |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Lesson 2      | Parable of the Tenants| Matthew 21:33-46  
Mark 12:1-11  
Luke 20:9-18 |
| Lesson 3      | Parable of the Cloth and Wineskins | Matthew 9:16-17  
Mark 2:21-22  
Luke 5:36-39 |
| Lesson 4      | Metaphor of Salt and Light | Matthew 5:13-16  
Mark 4:21, Mark 9:49-50  
| Lesson 5      | Parable of the Faithful and Wicked Servants | Matthew 24:42-51  
Mark 13:33-37  
Luke 12:35-48 |

Implementation of the Intervention Design

The data collected in the intervention design occurred in three stages: the pre-study Basic Bible Questionnaire, the post-study Basic Bible Questionnaire, and the Generational – Methodology Questionnaire. The pre-study questionnaire was analyzed to establish a baseline for change and understand the initial level of Bible knowledge of the participants. The post-study questionnaire analysis provided the data to establish the amount of change in the collective group. Finally, the generational – methodology questionnaire provided the researcher with data for generational preferences and trends in the discipleship ministry of Generation Z in the Marine Corps. Each of the three questionnaires was analyzed independently, with the results of the pre-study and post-study questionnaires compared for change and growth in the group. The questionnaires in this study were completely anonymous, so the linking of an individual’s pre-
study and post-study questionnaires was impossible; the results must be viewed at the group level and not as individuals.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected during this study were analyzed in three major categories: themes, slippage, and silence. The researcher expects some trends in this study because of the context. Since each participant self-identified as a Protestant Christian, one could expect that some trends would be evident. For example, the belief that Jesus is the only way to salvation was an expected trend within a group of Protestant Christians. The researcher analyzed the data collected, and the trends were extrapolated to the larger population of Generation Z Protestant Christians.

The researcher also analyzed the data for slippages. If the trends are significant in one area, but a participant wrote in a response that is the opposite of the group, this would be considered a slippage. Slippages also indicate that members of the group hold to different beliefs on the same doctrines of the faith or that this is a doctrine that is misunderstood in Generation Z. Since Generation Z has limited spiritual literacy, some slippage was expected.

Since each participant claims to be a Protestant Christian, the researcher expected specific answers to various questions. The absence of these answers constituted silence in the data. If, for instance, the participants only view God as Creator, then Christians in Generation Z may have a limited view of God the Father because of silence in the area of God’s holiness. Another issue of silence would consist of a common Christian doctrine that was only mentioned by one or two in the group.

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166 White, *Meet Generation Z*, 118.
Open Questions

Each of the questionnaires contained a section of open questions that allowed the participants to write in their answers. These questions allowed the participants to articulate their beliefs, views, and opinions in a manner that was not prescriptive or leading. The participants were able to articulate some of the particulars of their beliefs that may not have been shared with the larger group. These questions provided the most data for this project as the participants were able to expound upon their views more than simply circling an answer in the scaling questions.

The analysis of the responses to the open questions provided a greater depth of understanding of the generation because they were able to share their views in their own words. The questions in this section were intentionally written at a lower reading level to ensure that the participants understood the question. The responses to these questions offered a glimpse into the more complex views of the generation. While scaling questions may be used to determine or graph the view of a generation, the open questions provided the diversity of answers within the given subject. The researcher analyzed these answers in the manner as described above: themes, slippage, silence, and orthodoxy.

Scaling Questions

Each of the questionnaires contained open-ended questions for a written response, and the second section contained scaling questions. The answers to the scaling questions consisted of statements followed by the choices of (1) Fully Agree, (2) Somewhat Agree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Somewhat Disagree, and (5) Fully Disagree. The scaling questions were given a point value according to orthodox Christian doctrine. The most orthodox answer, according to conservative Christian doctrine, was given a point value of “4,” with the least orthodox answer
was given a score of “0.” The average score of each question and doctrine became the value of the group’s collective belief or knowledge.

This method produced a numerical value for belief in the group. While this method produced a chartable value, this method could also be misleading. One example of this would be the statement, “All religions lead to God.” The orthodox Christian answer would be “Fully Disagree,” because Scripture is clear that salvation in Jesus Christ is the only way to be reconciled with God (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5), and would be awarded four points. However, if fourteen Marines answered this question and two chose “Fully Disagree,” ten chose “Somewhat disagree,” and the remaining two chose “Neither Agree nor Disagree” the average for the group would be a score of 3.0. A score of 3 out of 4 seems to indicate that most of the group held an orthodox Christian view. However, twelve out of the fourteen did not choose the orthodox Christian answer. Therefore, the scaling value will be used primarily to show growth as a group, not used to evaluating orthodoxy.

One significant benefit of the scaling questions is the reducing of silence in the answers. An answer in this section can only be considered as silence if the participant refused to answer the question and leaves the question blank. However, silence can also come from difficulties encountered by participants who cannot explain their answers or express some confusion in their understanding of the question. In any case, the scaling questions can still be evaluated for both trends and slippage. The evaluations of the scaling questions were reported in both chart and narrative form in chapter four.

One of the limitations of the scaling questions was in the wording of the questions. These were theological questions that could have been confusing for Generation Z that has had limited
exposure to theological discussions. The researcher would understand that a statement such as, “Jesus became God” would be false, but a person with limited theological knowledge might equate this statement with “Jesus is God.” The theological nature of the statements in the scaling questions may be confusing to some participants, but they will expose the limited theological knowledge of the generation.

**Data Triangulation**

Data triangulation is a process in which the data is verified. The process of data triangulation in this project was accomplished with the assistance of the researcher’s supervising chaplain and Dr. William Waun. These two individuals assisted the researcher in confirming his analysis of the data. This process confirmed the researcher’s conclusions and double-checked material to ensure the accuracy of the information reported in this thesis as well as limiting individual bias by the researcher.

Data triangulation can also be carried out by using more than one method to verify the results or data. This type of data triangulation was accomplished in this study through the use of open-ended questions and scaling questions on the same or similar topics. Since the topics of the open-ended questions and scaling questions on the Basic Bible Questionnaire were on the same topics, this produced a data triangulation. The data collected from the open questions should verify the data collected from the scaling questions.

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167 McDowell and Wallace, Kindle Location 282.

Chapter 4:

Questionnaire and Data

Pre-Study Questionnaire

The first Basic Bible Questionnaire was completed just before the first Bible study. The goal of this questionnaire was to establish a baseline of knowledge that could later be compared to the understanding of the participants after the completion of the five-week Bible study. This questionnaire also provided the researcher with information on how in-depth the participants thought about spiritual things.

Trends

Many of the trends found in these data were to be expected in a demographic of self-identified Protestant Christians. The trends in the pre-study questionnaire included views such as God as Creator, Jesus as the Son of God, and Jesus died because of man’s sin. Each of these was expected because the participants all claim to be Protestant Christians. However, some trends, such as the Holy Spirit’s role was only to guide the believer, and the majority believing that all religions lead to God, were not expected.

The dominant view of God in this study sample was that God is the Creator of all things. Nine of the 10 Marines that completed this questionnaire referred to God as the Creator. The 10% that did not list that God is the Creator acknowledged that “God is a higher power,” but did not credit God with being the Creator. This view of God shows that Generation Z Christians have a limited view of who God is. The dominant view is simply that God is the Creator, but
limited the various other attributes of God, such as omnipresent or omniscient. The participants emphasized the idea of God being the Creator, but they believed that God also interacted with His creation. This view indicated that these members of Generation Z did not hold to a deist belief that the Creator had no interaction with his creation.

A large portion of the participants (90%) claimed that Jesus was the Son of God, and 80% believed that Jesus died because of the sins of mankind. The majority seemed to have an orthodox view of the person of Jesus based upon these answers. However, 30% of the participants believed that Jesus either sinned or likely sinned. The idea that Jesus sinned is not an orthodox Christian view of the person of Christ. While much of this group seemed to have a correct understanding of who Jesus is, there was a smaller percentage that misunderstood the divine nature and sinlessness of Christ.

Seventy percent of the participants acknowledged the Bible as God’s word. Moreover, all the participants claimed that the Bible could be trusted, though their reasons for the trustworthiness varied. However, half of the participants indicated that they believed the Bible did or could contain errors, and 60% thought that the Bible should contain books not included in the Canon. The answers on the validity of Scripture were inconsistent from one part of the questionnaire to the next. This deviation in responses indicates that Generation Z does not understand the inspiration of the Scripture nor acknowledge the providence of God in orchestrating the Bible.

Most (90%) of the participants indicated that Christians should attend church or gather with other believers. The reasons for attending church were twofold: to gain knowledge about God (60%) and for support in their Christian walk (40%). Each of these reasons is valid and found in Scripture, but omit other biblical truths. Both reasons indicate that Generation Z views
the church, primarily from a self-perspective. Each of the answers focused on what the individual receives from attending, not what they offer. This theme was also evident in their answers about the Holy Spirit. Sixty percent believed that the primary role of the Holy Spirit was to guide the believer in their personal journey. These responses display a lack of generational servanthood. The self-absorbed answers reflect an omission of others-centered orthodoxy.

**Slippage**

Some answers varied and were different from the responses of the other participants; these answers are called slippages. Most of the slippages departed from traditional Christian beliefs and doctrine. However, one did not stray from Christian belief but embraced it. This participant wrote, “It’s (prayer) sacred to me. Taken place in quiet. Reciting Scripture and basically praying and talking to Jesus.” The majority of answers indicated an infrequent, stagnate prayer life of the individuals; however, not all Generation Z only prays at bedtime and meals like the majority (70%) of Christians in this group.

Some of the slippages included denial of the divine personhood of God. These statements included “God is a higher power,” “Jesus is God brought to a more human level,” and the Holy Spirit “is the helper of God.” Each of these statements rejects the personhood of God. God was acknowledged as a “higher power,” but not as a person that can relate to the participant. Jesus was described as a “more human level,” but not human. This statement denies the personhood of Christ as being truly God and truly man. The Holy Spirit is claimed to be “the helper of God,” but not a person in the Trinity. This seems to indicate some form of cultural spirituality. Rainer wrote, “Three out of four Millennials say they are spiritual, but not religious.”169 If Generation Z holds to a spiritual-but-not-religious approach, this will account for the rejection of the

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169 Rainer and Rainer, 47
personhood of God in these responses. The “religious” is essential for codifying theological tenets.

One of the most interesting slippages in the pre-study questionnaire was in the question, “Why should someone attend church?” One respondent stated, “Nobody should.” This response was strange because each of the participants claimed to be Protestant Christians. This answer could be a rejection of the church as an institution. Barna and Kinnaman stated that Generation Z embraced “alienation from institutions . . . and skepticism toward sources of authority.”

Another way to interpret this answer would be that the participant has a misunderstanding of the church’s placed and purpose.

Silence

While 90% of participants seemed to agree that Christians should attend church, their reasons for attending were limited to the gaining of knowledge and support for the Christian life. The researcher was surprised by the silence on the topic of worship. No one mentioned worship as a reason to attend church or gather with other believers. Both reasons given seemed very self-seeking. The participants would attend church to gain knowledge for themselves or to be supported in their Christian walk, but not to worship. Morgan wrote, “As the unchurched rate in our society grows, we cannot continue expecting people with no felt need for the Church to see immediate value in our worship services.”

This data seems to indicate that these self-identified Protestant Christians only see a self-reflected value of worship, not true worship of submitting to God and serving others.

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170 Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 1314.
171 Morgan, Kindle Location 260.
In the scaling questions, only 20% of the participants indicated that they fully disagreed with the view of baptismal regeneration, the belief that baptism is a part of the salvation process. However, no one listed baptism for the statement, “Briefly describe what a person must do to have salvation.” This inconsistency shows that the participants had not individually processed the whole of salvation or that they do not comprehend the doctrine.

Table 3. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 22 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 22 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “You must be baptized to have salvation.”

Scaling Questions

The scaling question portion of this questionnaire produced some inconsistencies in the data. All participants believed the Bible was trustworthy in the first section of the questionnaire. However, only 50% fully disagreed with the statement, “The Bible contains errors,” and only 40% fully disagreed with the statement, “There are other books that are not in the Bible that should be.” These statements produce inconsistencies in their responses because if the Bible is trustworthy, the Bible would not contain errors. However, the participants in this study stated that they believed the Bible was trustworthy but also contained errors and were missing books, which would not be trustworthy.

Table 4. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 8 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (100)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 8 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “The Bible can be trusted.”
Table 5. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>5 (50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “The Bible contains errors.”

Table 6. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 24 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 24 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “There are other books that are not in the Bible that should be.”

Only 70% fully agreed with the statement, “I believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are One God in three persons.” Thirty percent of the participants, who claim to be Protestant Christians, deny the doctrine of the Trinity. The reason for this could be that the generation has not been discipled, has rejected this fundamental doctrine of the faith, or does not understand the theological language.

Table 7. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 14 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (70)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 14 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “I believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are one God in three persons.”

This researcher believes that the participants did not understand some of the theological language used in the scaling questions section of the questionnaire. The majority (90%) of the participants wrote that Jesus was the Son of God on question 2 of the questionnaire, but only 40% full disagreed with the statement, “Jesus became God.” This inconsistency seems to point out that Generation Z does not understand the theological language. Morgan wrote that “more and more Millennials disregard the authenticity and authority of the Bible. Their children will be
raised not just skeptical of it, but more likely, biblically illiterate.” The results of this questionnaire seem to confirm Morgan’s conclusion.

Table 8. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Jesus became God.”

The following chart contains the average scores of orthodoxy from scaling questions. Denominationally-specific categories, such as baptismal regeneration and the assurance of salvation, were scaled based on the researcher’s faith background, Baptist. These results served as the baseline for change. A score of 4.0 would indicate complete orthodoxy or Baptist view in the group, while a rating of 0.0 would mean a total rejection of the orthodox or Baptist view.

![PRE-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE SCALING QUESTION RESULTS](chart.png)

Figure 5: Pre-study Questionnaire Scaling Question Results

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172 Morgan, Kindle Location 183.
Post-Study Questionnaire

The final Basic Bible Questionnaire was completed right after the final Bible study. The goal of this questionnaire was to establish the amount of change that occurred during the five-week Bible study. The results from these two questionnaires will be compared in the next section of this chapter.

Trends

The trends in the results of the post-study questionnaire were varied. Some trends were to be expected in a demographic of Protestant Christians, such as Jesus being the divine. However, some of the patterns were surprising to the researcher, especially after the five-week Bible study, such as 50% of the respondents believe that the Bible may contain errors. The trends in the pre-study questionnaire included views such as God as Creator, the divinity of Christ, and the Bible’s trustworthiness.

Eight of the ten Marines referred to God as the Creator. Only two participants did not list God as the Creator. The participants are limited in their view of God as merely the Creator, without mentioning any of the other attributes of God. One of the participants list that God is “Alpha and Omega” but gave no context. The participants also rejected the idea of deism, “belief in a God who created but has no continuing involvement with the world and events within,” as 80% believe that God still interacted with His creation.

All participants described a view in which Jesus is divine, with 90% explicitly stating that He is the Son of God. Ninety percent also acknowledged that Jesus died for the forgiveness of sins. The majority (80%) indicated that one must believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. Upon completion of the study, most of this group seemed to have a correct understanding of who Jesus is and that salvation is by grace through faith.
Only half of the participants claimed the Bible as the Word of God. The majority (90%) of participants claimed that the Bible is trustworthy, while 50% fully disagreed with the statement, “The Bible contains errors.” The answers regarding the reliability of Scripture were inconsistent with the questionnaire. These differences in responses seem to indicate that these participants still do not understand the inspiration of the Scripture.

Table 9. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “The Bible contains errors.”

Sixty percent of the participants stated that one should attend church to gain knowledge about God, and 50% claimed one should attend to worship. While the majority still indicate a reason for attending church from a self-perspective, half believe the purpose is also to worship God. The idea of attending church for the purpose of something other than self is a change from the norm of Generation Z, known for possessing narcissistic tendencies.¹⁷³

Trends were also noticed in the groups’ view of salvation. Most (80%) of the group acknowledge that accepting Jesus is to the focus of the salvation process, while 50% of the group also included good works, or following Jesus, after the entry point of salvation. These responses indicate that half the group believed that salvation was not a one-time event, but an ongoing process. This view seems to correspond with the idea of sanctification and ongoing discipleship, which was discussed during the five-week Bible study.

¹⁷³ Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 1516.
Slippage

The majority of the slippages from this questionnaire departed from traditional Christian beliefs and doctrine; however, one did not. One participant stated that one should attend church for “Community, Service, Love.” Most of the answers to this question consisted of gaining knowledge (60%), worship (50%), and fellowship (20%). This participant viewed church as a chance to be in community with other believers, serve others and display the love of Christ. This answer also indicated that he viewed service as a staple of the Christian walk.

One participant indicated that his prayer life is not one in which he is “regularly walking in prayer.” Most of the responses revealed a minimal, stagnate prayer life with prayers only at certain times of the day, such as before sleep and meals. This slippage indicates that some of Generation Z are faithful in their Christian walk and striving to have a better relationship with Jesus. However, this also reveals that such faithful goals are not among the majority.

Some of the slippages denied the very nature of God. One respondent stated that God is a “specific sense of care,” and the Holy Spirit “is the feeling of God/Jesus’ work through us.” The downgrading of the Divine to only a sense or feeling is to deny God as a person and all His attributes. This same individual also stated that Jesus died because “He saw a potential for His people to grow into something more. It took His death for us to realize it.” These answers indicate that, even though this Marine may self-identify as a Protestant Christian, he has no real relationship with Christ. These responses also show that there is confusion in Generation Z about what a Christian is and what Christians believe.

Silence

One prominent piece of silence was in the answers to the question, “Who is God?” While the majority (80%) acknowledged God as the Creator, and one individual stated that He is “Lord
of this universe,” no other mention was made of God's attributes. God is the Creator of all things, but He is also omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, loving, eternal, and majestic. The listing of Creator only signifies that Generation Z has a limited view of God. These Marines acknowledged God on the most basic level but seemed to fail to understand that God the Father is more than just the Creator.

The participants’ answers to the question, “Who is Jesus?” displayed a very basic and limited view of the person of Jesus. Each of the participants acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God, and many (50%) even stated that He was the Savior. However, no one recognized the eternality of the Son or that He is King. While the research did not expect a proper development view of Christology, he did expect more than was written on the questionnaires. These answers would explain why 40% of the participants gave an unorthodox response to the statement “Jesus became God” in the scaling questions.

**Scaling Questions**

The scaling question portion of this questionnaire showed much inconsistency in the group. Many of the answers on the first portion of the questionnaire did not match the responses in the scaling questions. The responses in the open question section of the questionnaire seemed to be much more orthodox than the scaling question portion. One example of this inconsistency was the responses to the divinity of Christ. Every participant acknowledged that Jesus is the Son of God in the first section of the questionnaire, but only three participants fully disagreed with the statement, “Jesus became God.” Therefore, the participants either have a misunderstanding of the divinity of Christ, or they did not understand what was being asked. Numerous participants told the researcher, after the questionnaire, that they were confused by the wording on several
statements in the scaling question portion, which indicated a limited theological knowledge and literacy.

Table 10. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Jesus became God.”

Eighty percent of the participants fully agreed with the statement, “I believe the Bible is the Word of God,” and the other 20% somewhat agreed. However, only 50% fully agreed that the Bible contained no errors, and 30% believed the Bible contained errors. The responses of these questions seem to indicate that Generation Z does not understand the inspiration of Scripture, does not trust their translations, or does not trust God as the author of Scripture.

Table 11. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 11 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 (80)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 11 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “I believe the Bible is the Word of God.”

Table 12. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 12 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “The Bible contains errors.”

The majority (60%) suggested that they believe that only good people go to heaven. Another participant neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, 70% of the group seemed to think that
one must be a good person to enter heaven. This response seems to suggest that many Generation Z Christians believe in works-based salvation, instead of salvation by grace through Jesus, only. However, only 20% indicated that they did not have an assurance of salvation. Therefore, most of this generation consider themselves to be good people.

Table 13. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “All religions lead to God.”

Table 14. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 25 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 (40)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 25 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “I will go to heaven.”

Only 30% of this group disagreed with the statement, “All religions lead to God.” This statistic is consistent with the literature on the generation and the generation’s view of inclusion, to include religion-based inclusion. However, this view of inclusivity is not compatible with the biblical text. The Apostle Peter, speaking of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth, said, “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Furthermore, 90% of the group believed in the reality of hell and the need for evangelism, which is inconsistent with the generation’s extreme inclusive views.
Table 15. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “All religions lead to God.”

Table 16. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 19 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 (60)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 19 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Hell is a real place.”

Table 17. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 15 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>6 (60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 15 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Faith is a private matter. Christians should keep their beliefs to themselves.”

The following chart contains the average scores of orthodoxy or Baptist doctrines from the scaling questions. These results served as the baseline for change. A score of 4.0 would indicate a complete orthodoxy or Baptist view in the group, while a rating of 0.0 would mean a complete rejection of the orthodox or Baptist view.
Comparison of Data

The growth of biblical knowledge amongst the participants was not as much as the research had hoped. However, the data indicates that there were both growth and declines during the five-week Bible study. The increase of knowledge was primarily found within the first section of the questionnaire, and the decline was evident in the second section. Most of the data proved that the growth and decline of biblical knowledge were minimal.

Growth

One of the most significant points of growth was in the perspective in which the answers were given. The first questionnaire consisted of responses that were self-focused and self-absorbed. The responses contained answers such as “God is a higher power who shows me my purpose” and “He watches over us and continues to bless us.” These answers were parallel with the view of the generation. Twenge wrote, “GenMe is not as much self-absorbed as self-
important. They take it for granted that they’re unique, special individuals, so they don’t need to think about it.”174 The post-study questionnaire still contained answers that would be considered self-focused, but much less. The pre-study questions, “Should someone attend church? Why?” resulted in very self-focused responses. Ninety percent of the responses were self-focused, and 10% believe one should not attend church at all. However, during the post-study questionnaire, some participants felt that one should attend church to worship God. The focus of the answer shifted from self to God due to the emphasis of the study in presenting the risen Christ.

Obedience was another point of growth for the participants. The participants were asked to “Briefly describe what a person must do to have salvation.” During the pre-study, no one mentioned obedience or faithfulness. Half of the participants indicated some form of obedience or faithfulness after salvation in the post-study. These answers could be interpreted in two ways: growth in knowledge of Christian responsibility or salvation by works. Since the answers consisted of phrases such as “pass this belief onto others,” “pledge yourself to God following His teaching,” and “practice what Jesus teaches in our lives,” this researcher believes that the participants are referring to spiritual disciplines. These statements would be harmonious with the ending of the Great Commission in the Gospel of Matthew, “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:20).

The answers to the pre-study and post-study questionnaires revealed a slight increase in the prayer life of the participants. The participants were asked to describe their prayer life. Many of the responses (50% pre-study, 40% post-study) acknowledged that they only pray before meals and sleep. Thirty percent of the Marines in the pre-study questionnaire suggested that they have a more in-depth prayer life, more than just before meals and sleep. This number increased

174 Twenge, 8.
slightly to 40% in the post-study. While this is not a considerable increase, this statistic does provide insight into growth and transformation in the students.

**Decline**

The decline of biblical knowledge was more significant than the researcher anticipated. This decline in biblical knowledge was evident in the scaling questions. The scaling questions provided a scale of orthodoxy, in which the biblical knowledge could be measured and graphed. Of the fifteen questions or areas in the scaling questions, only one area had increased orthodox views or beliefs. This area was the sinlessness of Christ. Most areas only had slight changes, indicating that not much changed in the participants' biblical knowledge or understanding. However, two areas had a more substantial decline of biblical orthodoxy: the divinity of Christ and works-based salvation.

The graph located below provides a comparison of the answers from the pre-study and post-study questionnaires. The following chart contains the average scores of orthodoxy or Baptist doctrines from the scaling questions. A score of 4.0 would indicate complete orthodoxy or Baptist view in the group, while a rating of 0.0 would mean a total rejection of the orthodox or Baptist view.
The researcher believed that these results were partially due to the theological language used in the scaling questions. The area of the divinity of Christ was a response to the statement, “Jesus became God.” The researcher intended to measure the adherence to the heresy that Jesus was not eternal and became God instead of always being God. However, 60% of the Marines were confused by the wording of statements, as individually relayed to the researcher. Several of the participants acknowledge that Jesus was God in flesh and eternal but fully agreed with the statement “Jesus became God” because they equated this statement with the divinity of Christ. Half of the participants chose either “fully agree” or “somewhat agree” to the statement “Jesus became God.” This response would indicate that the participants either did not have an orthodox view of the person of Christ or were very confused.
Table 18. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Study</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>5 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Study</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 13 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Jesus became God.”

The response to the statement, “Good people go to heaven,” measured the area of works-based salvation. This question was intended to learn if Generation Z believed that someone could go to heaven based on their works. However, Jesus said, “No one is good except God alone” (Luke 18:19), and Paul wrote, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). The truth is that no one is good and, therefore, cannot claim to be good. Therefore, no one can go to heaven because they are not good. The responses to this question seemed to indicate that the participants believe that someone could earn their salvation through good works. These responses are a departure from actual biblical teaching, but 60% agreed that “good people go to heaven.” The majority held to the idea of good people going to heaven, and 80% stated they had an assurance of salvation. Half of the group believed “good people go to heaven” and have a guarantee of salvation. Therefore, they thought of themselves as good people. However, one could ask, by what standard is good measured. The measuring stick for this generation is self. Their focus on attending church was self-focused, their view of prayer life is self-focused, and their indication of what ‘good’ is also self-focused. Generation Z holds themselves as the standard of good. Therefore, they believe themselves to be good because they are the standard of measurement.
Table 19. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 17 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Study</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Study</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 17 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “Good people go to heaven.”

Generation Z is characterized by their view of inclusiveness, which is evident in their response to the statement, “All religions lead to God.” James White wrote that "Members of Generation Z hold few things dearer than acceptance and inclusivity." Only 30% of the participants disagreed, and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed, with the statement, “All religions lead to God.” Sixty percent of the participants believed that other religious structures lead to a relationship with God. Fromm and Read seem to be correct when they wrote that Generation is often “downplaying religion and politics and embracing a more inclusive culture.”

Table 20. Response for Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 16 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Study</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Study</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>4 (40)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Basic Bible Questionnaire statement 17 is: Circle the answer that describes your views: “All religions lead to God.”

Observations

The decline in biblical knowledge could partially be credited to the confusion of theological statements, but that does not encompass all of the downward shift. The idea of works-based salvation and the inclusivity of all religious views as equally valid calls the beliefs of the participants into question. Most of the statements and questions in the Basic Bible

175 White, Meet Generation Z, 92.
176 Fromm and Read, 153.
Questionnaire were issues of fundamental Christian doctrine. All the participants described themselves as Christians. However, the answers given seem to show that they might be mistaken or define the term Christian in another way. Dean Inserra wrote, “Many people think they’re Christians but have no concept of the severity of sin, necessity of repentance, message of grace, or the overall message of the gospel.”\textsuperscript{177} This cultural Christianity seems to be the basis of belief for many of the Marines in this study. Inserra also stated that “Cultural Christianity admires Jesus, but doesn’t really think He is needed,” and “the root of self-righteousness is the belief that your own personal works justify you before God.”\textsuperscript{178} Each of those statements accurately describes many of the responses on the questionnaires.

The researcher believes that some, not all, of the questions and statements added confusion for the participants due to theological training and congregational application. Luke Crawley stated, “Christians routinely use words like ‘sin,’ ‘salvation,’ ‘fellowship,’ ‘sanctification,’ and ‘the gospel’ without realizing these phrases can leave their friends confused or even repelled.”\textsuperscript{179} Statements, such as “Jesus became God,” are theological in nature and could be confusing for newer believers. If the researcher’s conclusion is correct, many of the participants were not real followers of Jesus even though they self-identified as Protestant Christians.

The researcher thinks that the passages used during this five-week Bible study may have had both positive and negative effects on the biblical knowledge of the participants. First, the use of parables to teach discipleship and theological principles in a systematic manner was positive

\textsuperscript{177} Dean Inserra, \textit{The Unsaved Christian: Reaching Cultural Christianity with the Gospel} (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019), 17.

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 19, 25.

because the Marines were able to interact with the stories that Jesus told. The research used other passages of Scripture to emphasize the meaning of the text, but the stories were the ones that Jesus told to His disciples. However, Jesus also stated, “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand” (Matt. 13:13). The selection of parables to teach new believers or unbelievers could have possibly added confusion instead of clarification. The researcher did portray Christ clearly as the divine, eternal God who placed on flesh to pay the price for sin in the explanation of the parables.

The researcher believes that the growth in the first section of the questionnaire was due to the increase of true followers of Jesus. The ones that considered obedience a part of salvation and worship a part of church attendance grew in their faith. Therefore, this study was successful in that respect. The researcher also learned that cultural Christianity is not only in the local church but in the military context as well. Many of the participants in this study lack a true relationship with Christ, even though they consider themselves to be good people that are assured of going to heaven.

Generational and Methodological Data

This section of the data was collected from the Generational – Methodology Questionnaire after the completion of the five-week Bible study. Nine Generation Z Marines completed this questionnaire. One of these Marines answered the first section of the questionnaire but did not complete the scaling questions. Therefore, only nine Marines completed the open question portion of the questionnaire, and eight Marines finished the entire questionnaire. The goal of this questionnaire was twofold: first, to collect data on the study from
a Generation Z perspective and, second, to provide an end of study evaluation. This information could be utilized for better and more efficient Bible studies in the future.

**Trends**

The generational perspective on methodology was questioned during this period of data collection. One of the focuses of the researcher was an inquiry of Generation Z’s primary means of learning expediency. The majority (56%) of the Marines stated that they learn the best through a “hands-on” method, while a smaller percentage learned best visually (33%) and through conversation (22%). However, none of the participants listed the lack of a “hands-on” method as a weakness of the study. The desire to learn through a “hands-on” approach seems to indicate to the researcher that the majority of this group might learn best if the Bible study facilitator planned projects such as a Community Relations Project (ComRel) to serve others. Facilitators could also plan activities or craft projects in children’s ministry. However, if the project seems too childish, this could distract from the object of the lesson. Also, 44% of the participants did not list that they learned through a “hands-on” approach. This study did provide a visual and conversation approach to Bible study, which 55% (33% visual, 22% conversation) of the participants stated they learned best.

Most of the participants (89%) that completed this questionnaire stated that they grew in their Christian walk during these five weeks. However, this is not consistent with the results in the previous section. One Marine reported, “Maybe, new knowledge, new perspective never hurts.” The only participant claimed that no personal growth occurred during the study. However, this was the same Marine also admitted he had “left my faith mostly” and “didn’t see it as a priority.” Based on the answers that this Marine provided, the researcher believes that this individual should be classified as a “None,” not a Protestant Christian. Christian growth would
be impossible for an individual who did not have a relationship with Christ. However, the Marine was introduced to a Christian worldview through this Bible study.

Videos are a large part of the lives of Generation Z; this group was no different. Eighty-nine percent of the participants believed that videos enhance the learning experience. The researcher utilized videos to introduce the passages and subjects that would be discussed in that Bible study session. While Generation Z prefers videos, the responses indicated that the group did not wish for the videos to replace discussion. The participants suggested that the videos were best used as introductions to the text, a visual aid, or a brief break in the study. Generation Z wants interaction with the facilitator. Therefore, the facilitator is critical to the message and Bible studies that are taught entirely through video does not appeal to this group, but neither does a Bible study prepared without video.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study**

Most of the Marines listed participation as both the greatest strength (78%) and weakness (56%) of this study. The group enjoyed the relaxed small group setting in which they could discuss the biblical passage and doctrines. One student wrote, “It gets you involved makes you feel a part of something.” The facilitation of discussion was viewed as a strength in this study, as one participant stated, “because it keeps us involved and gets us thinking about it.” Facilitation and open discussion allowed the participants to have a voice in the conversation. This type of Bible study allowed these young Marines to voice opinions, something they feel unable to do in other areas of life.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants preferred the Bible storying method and discussion over a Bible study, in which the text was directly read from the Bible. While this

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180 Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 688.
Statistic shows that the members of Generation Z are oral learners, one-third of the participants still prefer to read the text. One of the participants preferred Bible storying, but suggested, “A combination of both would be nice, just to help us get more familiar with the Bible.” An integration of both would ensure that all the participants heard and understood the text in a way they understand.

The most significant response to the weakness of the study was a lack of participation (56%). The researcher believes that there are a couple of reasons for the lack of involvement. First, each of the students knew the researcher to be the unit chaplain. Chaplains are commissioned officers in the Navy, and the participants were very junior Marines. This difference seemed to produce difficulty in the conversation for several of the Marines. As each of the Marines entered the Bible study each week, they gave the researcher the proper greeting of the day, “Good evening, Sir.” This greeting shows that the participants still viewed the researcher as a commissioned officer, even while in the role of a doctoral candidate. This distinction could produce a hesitation to participate. Second, this group consisted of all males, with one exception. A female Marine joined the Bible study for the second, third, and fourth weeks. During this time, the conversation was minimal. The dynamic of the group completely changed during these three sessions. The Marines seemed more willing to participate in weeks one and five when there were only males present. This observation may indicate that discipleship ministry is best accomplished in an all-male or all-female group. Spiritual immaturity is concealed when trust is lacking, which could be the case in both of the above examples.
Chapter 5:

Conclusion

This study did not produce the desired result of increase biblical knowledge for all participants. The scaling questions revealed that the biblical orthodoxy decreased in the group during the period of the five-week Bible study. However, much could be learned from this study about Generation Z. This study proved that many of Generation Z in the Marine Corps share the same traits and views as the generation outside the military structure.

Lessons Learned During Study

The researcher learned five things about Generation Z during this study: (1) they are confused about the biblical gospel message, (2) they embrace a view of religious inclusivism, (3) their religious views are self-focused, (4) much of the generation is religiously unconcerned, and (5) they prefer oral learning or active learning. However, the preference for oral or active learning does not mean that they learn better this way, but they prefer these methods.

Each participant who completed the surveys self-identified as a Protestant Christian, but the results clearly indicated that the majority of Generation Z is confused about basic Christian doctrines, especially the gospel. The Apostle Paul defined the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” The results not only demonstrated that Generation Z is confused about the biblical message of the gospel, but many of that generation who claim to be Christian
have no true relationship with Christ. Many of the participants articulated views that are completely contrary to the biblical message of the gospel and basic Christian dogma. The results of the study were consistent with what Kinnaman described, “The vast majority of churchgoing teenagers said they understand the teachings of the Bible ‘very well.’ But when we asked specific questions about the basic content of those teachings, most teens in the study performed quite poorly. In other words, their self-confidence was totally out of proportion with their actual knowledge.”

The culture of religious inclusiveness seemed to be a great stumbling block for this generation. Biblical Christianity is not an all-inclusive religious view, which is difficult for members of this generation. Generation Z holds inclusivity and human rights extremely high in their priorities, even in their religious views. The inclusivity of religious views in the generation was evident by only 30% of the participants fully disagreeing with the statement, “All religions lead to God.” Extreme inclusivity is the opposite of what Jesus taught in the Gospels. Jesus stated, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matt. 7:13-14). Generation Z’s inclusive view is a hindrance to orthodox Christian belief because not all religions are equal and not all people will be saved. Inclusivity will continue to be an issue in this generation. Generation Z has embraced an idea of tolerance is the same as acceptance. Therefore, they believe that religious inclusivity is necessary for one to be tolerant. Barna and Kinnaman were correct when they wrote, “Young adults typically embrace tolerance, open-mindedness, flexibility, and inclusiveness, and most want to find areas of common ground with each other, even if that requires minimizing real and

181 Kinnaman, You Lost Me, 116.
critical differences.” However, this extreme inclusivity leads to a universalist view in which all paths lead to God and a rejection of absolute truth. Scripture is clear that not all people will be saved.

Generation Z has been characterized as selfish and self-absorbed. These are traits that the generation carries into other areas of their lives, even in their religious views. Many of the participants seemed to think of God as One to help them on their journey or in their purpose. The emphasis of the religious view of the generation is largely self-focused. This was one area of growth in this study, as some shifted their focus to God instead of self. The Christian is to be a disciple, or follower, of Jesus; therefore, Jesus is to be the focus of the Christian’s religious walk, not self. However, the generation seems to be fixated on self in their religious views. Biblical Christianity has a focus on Jesus, instead of self. Jesus is the central figure in Christianity: only He died and rose again, only He provided salvation, and only He is worthy of praise. The dominant view of Generation Z is a view in which self is the focus and Christ helps the individual along the person’s way. True Christianity is a view in which the disciple follows the Master, and He becomes the focus of the individual. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matt. 22:37). Even in the Old Testament, this is the same view, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4-5).

The biblical view of Christianity is not one in which the individual is self-focused. The focus of the biblical view must be Jesus. The Master is to be the focus in discipleship and not the

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182 Barna and Kinnaman, Kindle Location 1369.
183 Twenge, 8.
individual follower. Jesus told His disciples that “a slave is not greater than his master” (John 15:20). The focus of the Christian life should be Jesus as the Lord and Savior, not the follower. However, many of the participants in this study viewed themselves as the focus of their Christian walk. This was evident in the responses to the open questions, such as God is “a specific sense of care” or the primary role of the Holy Spirit is to “guide us every day in our purpose.”

Generation Z is largely unconcerned with religious or spiritual matters. The five-week Bible study was held in the common area of the barracks to ensure the availability of all Marines to attend the study. The largest group to attend the study was in the third week, with 16 Marines. This was an attendance of only 5.59% of the total Generation Z population of the unit and 26% of the Protestant Christians. The average attendance during this study was 12 Marines, 4.2% of Generation Z, and 19.6% of Protestant Christians. This indicates that 80.4% of the Protestant Christians in the unit chose not to attend the Bible study, even though the Bible study was scheduled during a time in which most Marines had “free time.” Furthermore, a constant theme in the Generational-Methodology Questionnaire was the lack of concern by the other members of the generation when the Marines attempted to share what they were learning during the Bible study. Only one participant indicated that he had a positive experience while sharing the Bible stories with other members of Generation Z. This suggests that Generation Z, as a whole, is mostly unconcerned about religious or spiritual matters.

The learning style of the participants was also an important lesson. Much of the literature suggested that Generation Z were oral learners. However, only 22% of the participants stated that they learn in a manner other than visual or active learning. Most of the participants (77%) specified their learning style to be visual or active. Visual learning means that the student needs to be able to see the information in a form other than the written word. This could include videos
or active learning, such as crafts. This study focused on oral learning based on the literature. While oral learning can include visuals, such as videos, the primary method was not visual. This study only included short videos to introduce the material. The participants might have learned more if videos or other visual aids were the primary methods of communication. The methodology of discipleship should match the preferred learning method of the participant to ensure the information is presented in a manner that the audience can understand.

Larger Application of Study

The lessons learned from this study are applicable in a variety of settings, to include the fleet naval forces, local churches, and mission fields in western society. All ministries that involve Generation Z in the western world could benefit from this study. Generation Z is comprised of individuals born on or after the year 1995. Therefore, they are currently 25 years old and younger. Any ministry that works with individuals under the age of 25 could benefit from this type of study.

Generation Z is the youngest generation currently serving in the military. The chaplains are called to serve in a context that is filled with Generation Z. The way this generation processes information and views the world is different from the ways and views of previous generations. Christian chaplains in a military context need to be equipped to make disciples of this generation. The lessons learned from this study can assist the chaplains in ensuring that the information they are presenting is channeled through a method the is easiest to understand for the recipients. The chaplain will need to incorporate more video and other visual aids into their discipleship and teaching ministries. However, video cannot take the place of personal mentorship and

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184 Willis, 125.
discipleship. All but one participant fully agreed with the statement, “Personal interaction, not
technology, enhances Bible Study.” This generation desires both personal interaction with a
mentor and technological resources for discipleship. This will continue to be a challenge for
military chaplains as they experience increased limitations on the amount and type of technology
that they can use on government computers and networks.

The local church will also be able to apply this study to its context. Churches are
continually discipling young adults, youth, and children, all of whom are members of Generation
Z. Churches will need to balance the amount of technology with the necessity of mentorship in
all areas of the church. The church must understand that Generation Z is a group of individuals
that are different from previous generations, and discipleship tracks of the past will not assist in
transforming that generation into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. There are several
resources that a church can utilize to help balance mentorship and technology. However, one
should also realize that this generation is divorced from the biblical concepts that other
generations took for granted. Several of the participants in this study indicated that this was the
first time they had ever heard the parables. These are stories with which older generations would
have been familiar with, even if they were not Christians.

Finally, missionaries and mission teams will be able to apply the lessons from this study.
Generation Z is a large generation, and missionaries will continue to interact with them for years
to come. Missionaries and mission teams need to communicate the truth of the gospel in a
manner the audience will be able to understand and apply the truth to their own lives. The
generation’s desire for visual learning will need to be examined in the missionaries’ context. The
need for visual may not be in the form of video technology, but the need for visual learning may
still be needed. This study was completed in the United States with members of Generation Z.
from a western background. The researcher believes that the study would be applicable to missionaries in a western context because of the similarities of context. However, the researcher also understands that missionaries serving outside a western context, such as the Middle East, may not be able to apply as many aspects of this study.

Further Areas of Research

This study illuminated some areas of discipleship in Generation Z, but there is still much to be studied. The confusion about the gospel in this generation has led the researcher to believe that many of the participants in this study were cultural Christians. Dean Inserra defined Cultural Christianity as “a religion that . . . looks and sounds very Christian on the surface, but is merely Christian by culture, rather than conviction. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not part of the equation.”\(^{186}\) One of the issues in cultural Christianity is that the cultural Christian believe that they are Christian regardless of the need to accept and follow Jesus as disciples. Matt Chandler described this as “The Moralistic, therapeutic deism passing for Christianity in many of the churches these young adults grew up in includes talk about Jesus and about being good and avoiding bad and God factored into all of that, but the gospel message simply wasn’t there”

Further research should be done on evangelism to cultural Christians, along with methods of evangelism and discipleship in a Christian context. People have “heard” the Gospel many times, but has the Gospel really been taught? Jesus clearly stated that He was the only way to the Father (John 14:6). Therefore, one cannot be saved by simply being a part of a Christian culture or claiming a Christian label.

Since the cultural Christian has no relationship with Christ, believers must find a way to communicate the truth of the gospel in ways through which the cultural Christian can see their

\(^{186}\) Inserra, 18.
own disbelief. The use of Christian apologetics will be needed to answer the various questions in the minds of cultural Christians. The area of apologetics to cultural Christians will need further study because of the generation’s misunderstanding of what it is to be a Christian. How can a believer convey the truth of the gospel to someone who thinks that he is already a Christian? One participant in this study wrote, “I have left my faith mostly, too many doubts, not receiving answers.” Christian apologetics would assist in answering the various questions that arise in the minds of the cultural Christians. White stated, “Answering the ‘What is up with’ questions is what lies at the heart of modern-day apologetics, the pre-evangelism so missing in churches.” Furthermore, Christians will need to present the biblical gospel that transforms and empowers the believer instead of the cultural gospel that is only for future eternal salvation.

Another area of further research should include simple approaches to discipleship. Many of the self-identified Christians of Generation Z have limited biblical knowledge. This generation needs a simple approach to discipleship and Christian growth. During the post-study questionnaire, only 30% of participants disagreed with the statement, “All religions lead to God” and only half disagreed with the statement, “Jesus became God.” The facts that Jesus is the only way to the Father and that Jesus is eternally divine are simple concepts and foundational principles for Christian doctrine. However, these are concepts clearly misunderstood by the participants. Therefore, more studies should be completed on simple approaches that communicate biblical truth. The method of discipleship will need to change to meet the needs of this generation. Opris and Cenusa argued that a simpler approach will be needed in all areas of

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187 White, Meet Generation Z, 130.
the learning for Generation Z.\textsuperscript{188} If Generation Z needs a simpler approach to learn new material, then the same would be true for discipleship and Christian education.

Finally, since Generation Z seems to be visual learners, further study should address the use of visual aids in the discipleship ministry. One of the issues in this context was the limit of what a chaplain can do on a government computer. The use of many resources was restricted due to Marine Corps’ policies on computer usage. However, computer-based video is not the only possible usage of visual aids. Children’s ministry often used visual aids in the form of crafts. Crafts in discipleship ministry have the potential to add an element of visual learning for the Generation Z participants. However, this might also face some opposition as well. If the crafts are too childish, the young adult participants may refuse to participate in the activity and further resist learning the material. This is an area for further research, not only for the successful teaching of the material to the generation but also what is deemed acceptable to the participants. The activities that the youngest of Generation Z (10-years-old) would engage in for learning would be different than what the oldest of the generation (25-years-old) find to be acceptable. The method of visual learning would need to be determined not only by the age of the participants but also in the context in which the ministry is being conducted.

This study demonstrated that Generation Z is a vastly different generation from those who have come before. This is a generation filled with religiously unaffiliated, cultural Christians, who are morally unconcerned. The methods of discipleship for this generation will need to change to meet the needs of the individuals. Jesus gave the command to His followers to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-

\textsuperscript{188} Obris and Cenusa, 684.
20). This command continues as believers minister to the members of Generation Z. The message of the gospel is unchanging in ever-changing times, and the methods of discipleship continue to change, but the imperative to make disciples will continue until Jesus returns.
Appendix A – Permission Memorandum to the Commanding Officer,
Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION NEW RIVER
JACKSONVILLE, NC 28545-1001

From: Deputy Chaplain, Marine Corps Air Station New River
To: Commanding Officer, Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training, Marine Unit New River

Subj: REQUEST TO COMPLETE STUDY IN PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS MINISTRY

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1730.7E
(b) MCO 1730.6E

1. Respectfully request permission to complete a doctoral study within your unit. This study will be conducted as both your unit chaplain and as a Doctor of Ministry candidate at Liberty University School of Divinity under the advisement of a faculty advisor. The doctoral study is titled: Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training.

2. This study will consist of two groups, a discipleship focus group and a larger Bible study group. The focus group will be asked to complete a questionnaire before and after a five-week Bible study (10 Sep - 8 Oct) and participate in one focus group discussion. The larger Bible study group will simply attend the five-week Bible study, if they choose to do so. Participation in this study will be entirely voluntary.

3. Respectfully request to use AS-4008, the common space at the CNATT Barracks, for Bible study on Tuesday evenings 1800-1930 in September and October. I further request the use of the television in this space. Since this Bible study will be in the evenings, the chapel will provide a meal for the Marines through the Religious Offering Fund. This Bible study group is in compliance with the provision of religious ministry in accordance with references (a) and (b).

J. S. TAGERT
LT, CHC, USN

COMMANDING OFFICER DECISION

Approved

Disapproved

Other
Appendix B – Permission Memorandum to the Command Chaplain,

Marine Air Station New River

From: Deputy Chaplain, Marine Corps Air Station New River
To: Command Chaplain, Marine Corps Air Station New River

Subj: REQUEST TO COMPLETE STUDY IN PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS MINISTRY

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1730.7E
(b) SECNAVINST 7010.6B
(c) MCO 1730.6E

1. Respectfully request permission to complete a doctoral study as a part of chaplaincy duties at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training, Marine Unit New River. This study will be conducted both as a chaplain and as a Doctor of Ministry candidate at Liberty University School of Divinity under the advisement of a faculty advisor. The doctoral study is titled: Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training.

2. This study will consist of two groups, a discipleship focus group and a larger Bible study group. The focus group will be asked to complete a questionnaire before and after a five-week Bible study and participate in one focus group discussion. The larger Bible study group is simply attend a Bible study. Participation in this study will be entirely voluntary. This Bible study group is in compliance with the provision of religious ministry in accordance with references (a) and (c).

3. Respectfully request to utilize the Protestant Religious Offering Fund (ROF) to provide a meal for the Marines that attend the Bible study on Tuesday evenings at 1800. The Bible study will be located at AS-4008, the common space at the CNATT Barracks. The use of ROF is authorized in accordance with reference (b).

COMMAND CHAPLAIN DECISION

9/3/19
Approved

Disapproved

Other
August 16, 2019

Jeffrey Scott Tagert  
IRB Exemption 3901.081619: Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training

Dear Jeffrey Scott Tagert,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP  
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research  
Research Ethics Office

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971
Appendix D – CITI Training Certificate (Liberty University Social Behavioral Research Basic Course)

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Jeffrey Tagert (ID: 8169074)
- Institution Affiliation: Liberty University (ID: 2446)
- Institution Email: jtagert@liberty.edu
- Institution Units: School of Divinity

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: Social & Behavioral Researchers
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Investigators and staff involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- Record ID: 31919003
- Completion Date: 07-Jun-2019
- Expiration Date: 06-Jun-2022
- Minimum Passing: 80
- Reported Score*: 88

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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/7e30735152-c2b6-45a5-bd79-df35ae327c7f-31919003

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
Email: support@citiprogram.org
Phone: 666-529-5829
Web: https://www.citiprogram.org
COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- Name: Jeffrey Tagert (ID: 8169074)
- Institution Affiliation: Liberty University (ID: 2446)
- Institution Email: jtagert@liberty.edu
- Institution Unit: School of Divinity
- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: Social & Behavioral Researchers
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Investigators and staff involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- Record ID: 31919003
- Report Date: 14-Aug-2016
- Current Score**: 88

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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid independent learner.

Verify at: [www.citiprogram.org/verify?7k30735152-c2c4-45a5-bd70-df35ec327c7f-31919003](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify?7k30735152-c2c4-45a5-bd70-df35ec327c7f-31919003)

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
Email: support@citiprogram.org
Phone: 888-529-5929
Web: [https://www.citiprogram.org](https://www.citiprogram.org)
Appendix E – Letter of Support from Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters, U.S. Navy

DEPUTY CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS FOR RESERVE MATTERS, U.S. NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS – NO97
2000 Navy Pentagon, Room 5E270
Washington, DC 20350-2000

1306
24 Aug 2019

From: Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters, U.S. Navy
To: Lieutenant Jeffrey S. Tagert 1278053385/4100 USN

Subj.: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH TOPIC “DISCIPLING GENERATION Z MARINES”

1. The Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters supports the research proposed by Chaplain Jeffrey S. Tagert to learn generational trends in a discipleship ministry focused on the Marine Corps. Jeffrey S. Tagert, doctoral candidate at Liberty University School of Divinity, will obtain the permission of the commanding officer of the unit where he intends to solicit volunteer participants. The Principal Investigator (Tagert) will submit his research proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of his institution and the Human Research Protection (HRP) Official and Chair, U.S. Marine Corps IRB.

2. This support is limited to approval of the topic for this research and does not indicate that any Marine Corps resources will be expended in support of this extramural research. Approval is contingent upon the review and approval of the Liberty University IRB and administrative review and approval of the Marine Corps HRP Program.

3. Chaplain Tagert has agreed to provide copies of his findings to the appropriate office(s) upon request.

4. The initial point of contact for the Navy Chaplain Corps regarding this matter is the researcher’s supervisory chaplain, CDR Patrick W. Smith.

[Signature]

P. E. LEE JR.
Deputy Chief of Chaplains
Reserve Matters
RDML, CHC, USN

Copy to:
Chair, Institutional Review Board, Human Research Protection
Program Official, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 2079 Barnett Avenue Rd, Quantico, VA 22134 (Attn: Ms Leah Watson)
FIRST ENDORSEMENT on Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters ltr 1306 of 24 Aug 2019

From: Commanding Officer, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River
To: Lieutenant Jeffrey S. Tagert 127805385/4100 USN

Ref: (a) DoDI 3216.02
(b) SECNAVINST 3900.16D
(c) MCO 3900.18

1. Readdressed and forwarded. Based on a review of the protocol presented and prior approval and coordination with the commander and his staff at Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters, as provided in the basic correspondence, you are approved to recruit research volunteers from the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training New River, for human subject research study entitled “Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training” during the period from September 2019 to October 2019. This research is sponsored by Liberty University School of Divinity and the purpose for which the research is being conducted for completion of doctoral education. The research was designed to learn about generational trends in the discipleship ministry in the Marine Corps.

2. The Marines will be asked to complete a basic Bible questionnaire at two different times (once at the start of the five-week Bible study and once at the end), complete a generational and methodology questionnaire, and attend a five-week Bible study on Tuesday nights at 1800 in building AS-4008, the common area of the barracks.

3. I have been advised that the participants will be active duty military personnel over the age of 18 and all participants will be informed of their rights to not participate and that they will be given an informed consent form.

4. This approval is contingent upon approval of your institution’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and administrative review by the Marine Corps Human Research Protection Official/Chair of the Marine Corps IRB.

4. The initial point of contact for the command regarding this matter is the researcher’s supervisory chaplain, CDR Patrick W. Smith at (910) 449-6801. The point of contact for questions pertaining to the Human Research Protection Program within the Marine Corps, and ensuring compliance with the references is Ms. Leah Watson at (703) 432-2566.

VW. G. SLACK

Copy to:
MCCDC HRPO
Appendix G – Letter of Support from Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations – East

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS EAST-MARINE CORPS BASE
PSC BOX 20005
CAMP LEJEUNE, NC 28542-0005

From: Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations East-Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune
To: Lieutenant Jeffrey S. Tagert, USN, 1247805385/4100

Subj: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH TOPIC “DISCIPLING GENERATION Z MARINES”

1. The Commanding General of Marine Corps Installations East-Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune supports the research proposed by Lieutenant (LT) Jeffrey S. Tagert to learn about generational trends in the discipleship ministry in the Marine Corps. LT Jeffrey S. Tagert, doctoral candidate at Liberty University School of Divinity, has obtained the permission of the Commanding General of the base where he intends to solicit volunteer participants. The Principal Investigator (LT Target) will submit his research proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at his institution and to the Human Research Protection (HRP) Official and Chair for the U. S. Marine Corps IRB.

2. This support is limited to approval of the topic of this research and does not indicate that any Marine Corps resources will be expended in support of this extramural research. This approval is contingent upon the review and approval of the Liberty University IRB and administrative review and approval of the Marine Corps HRP Program.

3. LT Tagert has agreed to provide copies of his findings to this office upon request.

4. The point of contact regarding this matter is the researcher’s supervisory chaplain, CDR Patrick W. Smith.

J. D. ALFORD

Appendix H – Approval Letter from Marine Corps’ Human Research Protection Program

From: Human Research Protection Official, U.S. Marine Corps (Attention: Ms Leah Watson), 2079 Barnett Avenue, Quantico, VA 22134

To: Mr. Jeffrey S. Tagert, Principal Investigator, Liberty University School of Divinity, 1971 University Blvd, Lynchburg, VA 24515


Ref: (a) DoDI 3216.02
(b) NAVCINST 3900.16E
(c) MCO 3900.18
(d) U.S. Marine Corps Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Policy and Procedures (27 Sep 15)
(e) Liberty University Federalwide Assurance FWA00016439 (Exp 14 Mar 24)
(f) MCO 5300.18 Marine Corps Survey

Encl: (1) Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) Liberty University IRB Application - Full Protocol
(2) Liberty University Investigator Agreement and Signature Page
(3) Tagert - Basic Bible Questionnaire
(4) Tagert - Generational-Methodology Questionnaire
(5) Tagert - Informed Consent
(6) Tagert Recruitment Plan and Script
(7) CG MCI-E ltr 1000 CHAP of 10 Sep 19
(8) Dep Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters USN ltr 1306 of 24 Aug 19
(9) CO Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training, New River, ltr 3900 CO of 26 Aug 19
(10) CITI Training Certificate (Liberty University Social Behavioral Research Basic Course)
(11) Liberty University IRB ltr 16 Aug 19 IRB Exemption (3901.081619)

1. Per references (a) through (d), I have performed an Administrative Review, on behalf of the U.S. Marine Corps Human Research Protection Program (USMC HRPP), of the research titled "Discipling Generation Z Marines: A Qualitative Study at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training.” The purpose of this study is to address the question: “What are generational trends of Generation Z can be used in discipleship ministry at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training, Marine Unit New River?” This research is being conducted as partial fulfillment of your academic requirements as a doctoral candidate at Liberty University, School of Divinity.

2. Enclosures (1) through (6) include your Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, questionnaires, Informed Consent document and the recruitment plan and script. All have been reviewed by this office to ensure compliance with requirements the Department of Defense and USMC HRPP regulations and policies.

3. As outlined in the Liberty University IRB application at enclosure (1), the research population for this study will be Marine students at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training (CNATT), Marine Corps Air Station New River, Jacksonville, North Carolina, who are voluntarily participating in an
open group Bible study. The desired sample size will be 10-15 Marines. Subjects will be at least 18 years old, self-identifying as Protestant Christian, and not scheduled to leave the CNATT until after the end of the study. This study will focus on Generation Z. The research will consist of administering anonymous pre- and post-Bible Study questionnaires. The questionnaires will be returned to an inbox located at the desk of the Duty Noncommissioned Officer. The researcher will not be present in the room when the questionnaires are completed or returned. Analysis will be conducted in aggregate form. The goal of this study is discipleship in Generation Z Marines as a group, not individuals. Anonymous questionnaires will provide data of the growth in the participants as a group without requiring names or the creation of code names or numbers.

4. As required under reference (d), enclosure (7) provides a General Officer level letter of support for your research from the Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations Command-East. Enclosure (8) provides a letter of support from the Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters, based on the topic of this research. Enclosure (9) is an endorsement from the Commanding Officer, CNATT, New River, providing approval for recruitment of voluntary subject participation from within his command. Enclosure (10) is your certificate of completion of the CITI research ethics course required by your university and the Department of the Navy course entitled "DON Supported Extramural Performers."

5. Reference (e) is the Liberty University Federalwide Assurance (FWA00016439) with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP), which authorizes Liberty University to conduct human subject research. The Liberty University FWA expires 14 March 2024. Enclosure (10), provides the Liberty University IRB determination that your study falls under 45 CFR 46.101(b) Exemption Category (2)(i): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

6. The General Officer level letter of support, approval from the Commanding Officer and the proof of completion of research ethics training, satisfy Marine Corps HRPP review requirements for this study. Based on my review of the performer provided documentations, I find that the Liberty University FWA appears to be appropriate for this research. I also find this research meets the definition of human subject research, the activities described were minimal risk and I concur with the Liberty University IRB that this research meets the criteria for Exemption under Category 2.

7. Under reference (f), review and approval by the USMC Survey Office is required prior to execution of this research. A copy of this approval is being provided to the USMC Survey Officer.

8. If there are any changes or amendments to your protocol, you are required to inform this office, as well as your approving IRB, prior to execution. If
Subj: HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM U.S. MARINE CORPS ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OF PROPOSED STUDY: "DISCIPLINING GENERATION Z MARINES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY AT THE CENTER OF NAVAL AVIATION TECHNICAL TRAINING"

...you have any questions or require further information, please don’t hesitate to contact me at (703) 432-2566 or e-mail leah.watson@usmc.mil.  

L. B. WATSON

Copy to:  
USMC Survey Officer
Appendix I – Informed Consent

CONSENT FORM

Discipling Generation Z Marines:
A Qualitative Study at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training
Jeffrey S. Tagert
Liberty University
School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study on generational discipleship ministry in the Marine Corps. This study will evaluate generational trends in the discipleship of students in the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training Marine Unit New River. You were selected as a possible participant because you are over the age of 18, born on/after January 1, 1995, self-identify as a Protestant Christian, and are a Marine student at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training, Marine Unit New River who will not be graduating until after the end of the study. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Jeffrey S. Tagert, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to identify generational trends and best practices in the area of discipleship ministry in the Marine Corps.

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

1. Complete a Basic Bible Questionnaire. This should take approximately 30 minutes.
2. Attend a five-week Bible Study Group at building AS-4008 on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 pm. The Bible Study Group will last approximately 1 hour per meeting.
3. Complete the Basic Bible Questionnaire again after attending the Bible Study Group. This should take approximately 30 minutes.
4. Complete a Generational and Methodology Questionnaire after the completion of the five-week Bible study. This should take approximately 1 hour.

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 benefit participants may expect to receive from taking part in this study is an increase in biblical knowledge.

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 will have access to the records.

- Participant responses to the questionnaires will be anonymous.
- Questionnaires will be stored on a password-locked computer or in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s office. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Conflicts of Interest Disclosure: The researcher serves as a chaplain at Marine Corps Air Station New River. To limit potential conflicts, the study will be anonymous, so the researcher will not know who participated. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate in this study.

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 or the United States Marine Corps. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time, prior to submitting the questionnaires, without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please do not complete or submit your study materials.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Jeffrey S. Tagert. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at 910-449-6801 and/or jeffrey.tagert@usmc.mil. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty mentor, Dr. Jim Fisher, at jffisherjr@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.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.
Appendix J – Recruitment Plan and Script

Recruitment Plan

The researcher will visit the unit spaces and classrooms to solicit research volunteers. The researcher will brief the potential volunteers by reading the script that is provided below. The researcher is aware that he must avoid any perception of command influence or coercion. Therefore, the researcher will solicit for volunteers and conduct this study while in civilian attire. The researcher will also be accompanied by the Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC) while soliciting for volunteers and senior members of the command will not be present.

Research volunteers will complete anonymous questionnaires and attend the Bible study as described below. However, the Bible study is open for all to attend and Marines have the option to not answer any question they choose.

Recruitment Script

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The purpose of my research is to learn about generational trends in the discipleship ministry in the Marine Corps, and I am inviting you to participate in my study.

If you are at least 18 years old, born on or after January 1, 1995, identify as a Protestant Christian, are a Marine student at the Center of Naval Aviation Technical Training, Marine Unit New River, will not graduate until October 10, 2019 or later, and are willing to participate, you will be asked to complete a basic Bible questionnaire at two different times (once at the start of the Bible study and once at the end of the Bible study), complete a generational and methodology questionnaire, and attend a five-week Bible study on Tuesday nights at the barracks starting September 10, 2019. It should take approximately 30 minutes for you to complete each of the basic Bible questionnaires, 1 hour per week to attend the weekly Bible study, and 1 hour to complete the generational and methodology questionnaire. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, show up at the first Bible study on September 10, 2019 at 5:30pm to complete the first questionnaire. The Bible study will begin at 6:00pm.

A consent document will be provided to you as the first page of the first questionnaire. The consent document contains additional information about my research, but you do not need to sign and return it.
BASIC BIBLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Briefly answer the following questions in your own words.

1. Who is God?

2. Who is Jesus?

3. Protestant Christians typically believe that Jesus died on a cross. If you believe this, why did Jesus have to die?

4. What is the role of the Holy Spirit?

5. Should someone attend church? Why?
6. Describe your prayer life.

7. What is the Bible?

8. The Bible can be trusted.
   Agree – Disagree – N/A
   Comments:

9. Briefly describe what a person must do to have salvation.

10. If God is all-powerful, why do bad things happen?
Circle the answer that describes your views.

11. I believe the Bible is the Word of God.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

12. The Bible contains errors.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

13. Jesus became God.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

14. I believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are one God in three persons.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

15. Faith is a private matter. Christians should keep their beliefs to themselves.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

16. All religions lead to God.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree

17. Good people go to heaven.
   Fully Agree  Somewhat Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Fully Disagree
18. Jesus never sinned or did anything wrong.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

19. Hell is a real place.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

20. God loves me no matter what I do.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

21. There are many different gods.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

22. You must be baptized to have salvation.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

23. There is a God, but He doesn’t have much to do with creation.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

24. There are other books that are not in the Bible that should be.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |

25. I will go to heaven.  
| Fully Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Fully Disagree |
Appendix L – Generational and Methodology Questionnaire

GENERATIONAL - METHODOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer the following questions in your own words.

1. What would you consider to be your preferred learning style (how you learn best)? Why?

2. What is the greatest challenge in your faith journey? Why?

3. How could the five-week Bible study be improved for Generation Z?

4. What was the greatest strength to this type of study? Why?
5. What was the greatest weakness to this type of study? Why?

6. Did you grow in your faith journey during this five-week period? How?

7. Did you share the stories with anyone during this five-week timeframe? Why or why not?

8. What were the reactions of other Marines when you shared the stories?
9. What was the greatest challenge to sharing the stories with others?

Circle the answer that describes your views.

10. I feel free to exercise my religious beliefs.
   Agree            Neither Agree nor Disagree           Disagree
   Comments:

11. The videos enhanced my learning experience.
   Agree            Neither Agree nor Disagree           Disagree
   Comments:

12. I preferred Bible storying over reading the text from the Bible.
   Agree            Neither Agree nor Disagree           Disagree
   Comments:

13. I felt that the Bible storying was accurate to the biblical text.
   Agree            Neither Agree nor Disagree           Disagree
   Comments:
14. I think this Bible study would be more effective if taught/facilitated by a member of Generation Z.  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:  

15. The use of the barracks common spaces was a benefit for this Bible study.  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:  

16. The use of the barracks common spaces was a distraction for this Bible study.  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:  

17. More technology could be used to enhance this type of Bible study.  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:  

18. I preferred the scheduled time of the study (Tuesdays at 1800).  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:  

19. The facilitator demonstrated knowledge of the material.  
   Agree  
   Neither Agree nor Disagree  
   Disagree  
   Comments:
20. This study was a good use of my time.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:

21. Chaplains are valuable resources in the military.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:

22. I was encouraged in my Christian walk during this study.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:

23. I have a better understanding of the Bible because of this study.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:

24. I feel better equipped to live a Christian life in the Marine Corps because of this study.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:

25. I would like to be a part of an ongoing study like this.

Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree

Comments:
26. More technology, such as an app, would have greatly enhanced this study.
Agree
Neither Agree nor Disagree
Disagree
Comments:

27. Personal interaction, not technology, enhances Bible study.
Agree
Neither Agree nor Disagree
Disagree
Comments:

28. I seek personal application and a challenge in Bible study.
Agree
Neither Agree nor Disagree
Disagree
Comments:
Appendix M – Bible Study Promotion Flyers

CNATT BIBLE STUDY
TUESDAYS @ 1800
AS-4008

CNATT BIBLE STUDY
TUESDAYS @ 1800
AS-4008
Bibliography


------. The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon. Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937.


U.S. Department of the Navy. *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7E.* Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Washington DC, 2019.


VITA

Jeffrey Scott Tagert

PERSONAL
Born: August 1, 1981
Married: Heddie M. Cardoza, September 3, 2003
Children: Nathanael J. Tagert, August 28, 2006
            Zoe G. Tagert, January 18, 2010

EDUCATIONAL
Master of Divinity (December 2015), New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; New Orleans, LA.

Bachelor of Arts (December 2011) in Christian Ministry, Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; New Orleans, LA.

Associate of Arts (May 2011) in Christian Ministry, Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; New Orleans, LA.

MINISTERIAL
Commissioned: June 13, 2016; Hillcrest Baptist Church, Marshall, TX
Ordained: February 24, 2013; Gunter Road Baptist Church, Florence, MS
Licensed: October 5, 2008; First Baptist Church of Morgan City, LA

PROFESSIONAL
United States Navy; Chaplain, 2016-Present
Hillcrest Baptist Church; Pastor, Marshall, TX, 2014-2016
Pleasant Valley Baptist Church; Pastor, Mendenhall, MS, 2013-2014
L3 Communications; Security Personnel, Madison, MS, 2012-2013
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; Administrative Clerk, 2011-2012
United States Coast Guard, Yeoman, 2005-2009
United States Marine Corps, Aviation Operations Specialist, 2001-2005