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Spiritual Transformation: Community Outreach and the Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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The Harvest House of Hope (HHH) located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, Ca offers a mission services ministry to their community, they had become inactive in their community outreach missions. The ministry concerns of HHH surround the subject of spiritual transformation and the role of the church in community outreach. The purpose of this project is to educate the men, women, and children of Harvest House of Hope on the value of mission services, in hopes to drive them towards the spirit of community outreach. The proposed educational component included a theological structure built upon the Holy Scripture, as it pertained to caring for the homeless, underprivileged, and poverty-ridden community, built on the foundation of love, compassion and commitment. This project will investigate the effectiveness of the preaching, teaching, training and implementation of the intervention design. The results of this project gained through research of books, journals, Scripture, and data from focus groups, interviews and questionnaires will enable HHH to redefine the specific causes of inactivity as it pertains to community outreach and project the need for further study.

Outreach, Community, Love, God's Mission Plan, Compassion, Commitment.

Abbreviations

ESV	English Standard Version
HHH	Harvest House of Hope
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
REB	Revised English Bible

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Becoming a church that serves the physical needs of the community is the right path to becoming a healthy church. Some of the characteristics of a healthy church include biblical sound teaching and preaching, discipline, prayer, fellowship, and biblical missions. One of the benefits of having a healthy church is that it can build and grow other healthy churches. To develop the fruits of a healthy church the congregation must participate in missions locally and abroad. Helping one's neighbor is scripturally based, "The Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25-37).¹ Community outreach causes the church to have an outward-focus and requires a heart of empathy and compassion. "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will be gracious, to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" (Exodus. 33: 19 KJV). When a church has an outward focus, it displays that the church members are healthy on the inside. It also triggers one's recollection of the importance of giving back to the community. When a church has an inward focus, it will not display the spirit of sacrifice. The 25-member congregation of the Harvest House of Hope, can show compassion, give a helping hand to the community at large, and show themselves to be a supporter of the community by having an outward focus. This is going to take motivation on the behalf of the congregation, along with a sense of urgency, and solid sound doctrinal teaching and preaching from the pastor and leadership. It is notably true that leadership plays an important role in the development of church members, "The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master" (Luke. 6:40 KJV). When the pastor has a heart for the people, it drives the

¹ *King James Version*, (Thomas Nelson, Inc.,) 2003. All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless noted otherwise.

congregation to have a heart for the people. Unsuccessful ways of equipping church members in community outreach, can and will lead to a stagnant church. There is no accumulating of food for the underprivileged and deprived, and there is no reaching out to the hurting community. There is not heartfelt desire to participate in helping the hurting community of San Bernardino, CA for the 25-member congregation of the Harvest House of Hope. This project is designed with the intent of gathering the information that can be used for the Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project.

Ministry Context

Harvest House of Hope is a new ministry in the city of San Bernardino. The ministry began as a small group Bible study in the home of the pastor. It was at this time that he expressed the desire to purchase or lease space in the inner-city of San Bernardino so that they could continue the work of the Lord. The pastor envisioned a church built on discipleship, loving their neighbors, and serving the community. During October 2017, a small space was leased, and a group of members was selected to plan the first service, and it was to be called Harvest Fest. The doors would be open to the community, food would be made available, and prizes awarded throughout the day. On the day of Harvest Fest, the children sang and danced to the Lord, the adult praise team also sung, and the spirit was high throughout the day. This was thought to be the beginning of something special.

From the eyes of the pastor of Harvest House of Hope, the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA was in trouble of becoming a hotbed for homelessness and poverty with no help in sight. He had a heart for the people and a burning desire to “become all things to all men in order to save some” (1 Cor 9:22), he hoped to take the ministry beyond the four walls of the church and into the community. It was his vision and heart that the church is built on discipleship, going out and reaching those that are displaced, hurting, and lost. Coming from a small town in Ohio, he had

never seen such need in the community. Being the only full-time minister and pastor and a member of the paid staff of Harvest House of Hope, he desired to fulfill the call of his ministry to serve the community. "McClure summaries related activities such as serving meals at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter, also bringing to the attention the duties of providing reserve relief and support for penurious families. McClure emphasizes that offering after-school programs for neighborhood children are also present."²

Harvest House of Hope has worship service on Sunday morning at 11:30 to uplift the name of the Lord. The bulk of the membership is related to one another by marriage. The pastor along with the first family and willing members hold Bible study at the church on Wednesday nights from 6: 30pm-7: 30 pm. Each week the pastor chooses a different book of the Bible or highlight a specific theme to instill in the congregation the tools for their Christian journey. The very first members of the church were a lovely Hispanic couple, who brought smiles to everyone's faces. They also brought with them a special and Spirit-filled ministry based on re-entry. The Re-entry program at Harvest House of Hope supports those who have been incarcerated adapt to the changes of society while attempting to lead them to a successful return to the community. The meetings are not held at the church but a local community center. They go as representatives of Harvest House and speak with individuals about opportunities providing information as it pertains to finding legitimate employment through programs that hire felons who are searching for and needing a successful transition.

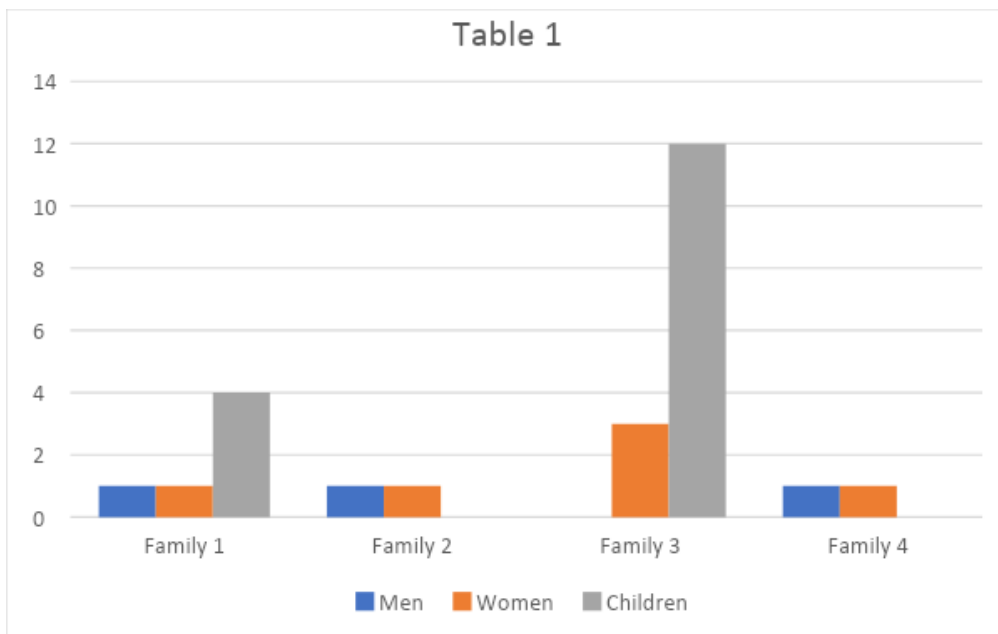
² Jennifer M. McClure, "Go and Do Likewise: Investigation Whether Involvement in Congregationally Sponsored Community Service Activities Predicts Prosocial Behavior," *Review of Religious Research* 59, no. 3 (2017): 342.

Harvest House of Hope ministry is built on family. The next family that joined Harvest House drove over an hour because they believed in the ministry. This young lady would bring her children, mother, grandmother, nieces, and nephews, in the hope of hearing a word from God. Being the only evangelist, after a watch period, she was placed over the youth at Harvest House. This ministry was known as Triple H, stemming from the three H's in Harvest House of Hope. The Triple H youth ministry met every Saturday morning to learn about the Scriptures and to brainstorm about what they can do to contribute to the mission of Harvest House. But this was not the only purpose of Triple H. It also allowed the youth to meet and socialize with their peers and aided in their growth by being character driven. They were also goal oriented. Once they set a goal to raise \$1000 in one month and accomplished that goal by having weekly car washes and selling snacks after service. The youth of Triple H would also be involved with various volunteer activities, such as painting, cutting grass, or cleaning yards. Youth night for Triple H is Friday nights. They would meet at the church from 6pm-9pm, where they would play games, watch movies, and minister to each other. The Triple H youth would also have sleep-ins at the church in which they would pray most of the night.

There was also a young couple who traveled about thirty minutes to be a part of Harvest House of Hope, both were great teachers of the word. The pastor placed the young man over the men's ministry and the young woman over the women's ministry. The men's ministry meets every fourth Thursday at 7 pm to fellowship, pray and study. Each month a new theme is introduced, and the men dissect the Scripture accordingly. This weekly fellowship has produced a small bond of brotherhood. The founding Scripture of the group is "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Ps. 133:1). No outreach opportunities have been established through the men's group. The women's group meet on Tuesday nights at 7 pm.

They are a group of worshipping and praying women. The name of their group is Women of Worship (W.O.W.). Tuesday nights are filled with prayer and worship for two hours straight. Their main concern is covering the church and the children in prayer. Their main Scripture focus comes from the book of John. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

These families make up the 25-member congregation at Harvest House of Hope in San Bernardino, Ca. Three adult men between the ages of 35-55, two in which are African American and one Hispanic gentleman, six adult women between the ages of 30-80. Five of these women are African American and one is Hispanic, and sixteen children. Three teenage girls, two teenaged boys, eight girls under the age of twelve, and four boys under the age of ten. All the children are African American.



Demographics

Although the congregation of Harvest House of Hope comes from geographical areas, their church traditions and rituals remain the same. Easter is still celebrated, communion service is still currently held, and through worship, style may differ, some may clap, others wave their hands, their love for God is present. They come from different cultures, about social habits, music, art, language and denominations they were all on one accord when it comes to the worship service. Several activities are most instrumental in shaping this diverse congregation at Harvest House.

Music plays a key role in influencing what this group thinks of itself. Lifting their voices to the Lord is one way that they display their appreciation to God, crying out to Him in song. Different symbols describe their personalities. Some display tattoos, while others carry their Bible. More of the younger generation do not carry Bibles, but they use their electronic devices to find Scripture. The congregation of Harvest House values family, the family relationship within the four walls of the church is something that they hold of high esteem. This is best described as love. They believe that there should be love for one another inside the church.

The city of San Bernardino, CA was established in 1853, it has a population of 2,035,210, the primary airport is named Ontario International Airport. The California Gold Rush (1848-1855) sparked a rise in population for San Bernardino. One of the greatest things that San Bernardino is known for is the birthplace of the fast-food chain McDonald's. The last census that was taken reveals that the racial makeup shows 57% white, 49.2% Hispanic or Latino, 8.9 % African American, 6.8% Asian, and 1.1% Native American. Their Governmental makeup is as follows, (County government) 5 districts, State and federal representation, 5 congressional

districts, 8 assembly districts, and the Senate are split between three Republicans and three Democrats.

The church, Harvest House of Hope is located right in the heart of the poverty-ridden city of San Bernardino, about 5 minutes from the downtown area, 1.4 miles. Many areas of San Bernardino are poverty-ridden, but some of the best places to live in San Bernardino County include Loma Linda which has a median home value of \$333,200, Redlands (\$350,900), Chino Hills (\$567,200), and Rancho Cucamonga (\$444,200).

Harvest House of Hope has been worshipping in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA for seventeen months at a small 600-foot location that can comfortably seat fifty, with room to spare for musician equipment, pulpit, and three tables. The location is equipped with a restroom, but no office for the pastor or to operate the business. It is the first building of sixteen within a fenced area in which neither faces the streets with clear visibility that would allow people passing by to know that there is a church in the location. It was not long that the pastor relocated the church into a larger 1200-foot building within the same facility, because of his desire to serve the community. He saw visions of room to feed the homeless, and areas for clothing giveaways, and places for storage. This building was equipped with two restrooms, and a pastor's office, large enough for a conference table, for meetings, and a private restroom. In the hall leading to the pastor's office, there is space designed perfectly for private study and prayer. The sanctuary could easily seat over 100 people, with room for equipment and supplies. One half of the room was to be used for a dining area after church service.

It was a perfect fit for the pastor's vision of a heartfelt, compassionate church that served the community. This new facility only lasted for four months, because with the larger space also came higher bills and more responsibility. Soon Harvest House of Hope, found themselves back

in the same location that they had so eagerly left. They went back in with newfound vigor, the painting was done, new curtains were added, even a new floor to make the church more presentable to the guest.

Once an up and coming community in San Bernardino, the neighborhood was unable to bounce back after the city went bankrupt in 2012. It took five long years for the city of San Bernardino to officially be declared out of bankruptcy but by now homelessness had increased tremendously, poverty overshadowed the once beautiful neighborhood. Jobs were lost, never to be recovered, stores closed, buildings filled with squatters, and the streets filled with those transporting their entire belongings in shopping carts. The entire neighborhood needed transformation.

The worship services at Harvest House of Hope is a blessing to all who attend, they are a non-denominational church because it is the desire of the pastor who comes from a Baptist background for the church to be open to all Christian denominations. It is the heart of the pastor for the church to be built on discipleship and evangelism. Repeatedly the pastor teaches on discipleship and mission services and yet the congregation fails to respond adequately to the call. Discipleship never stops, it is a lifestyle that one undertakes who are Christians followers of Jesus Christ. This call to discipleship is what Jesus used to call His disciples when he summons them and set them apart from the world. Continually the pastor asks for volunteers to spearhead community outreach committees to no avail, and he ends up leading the charge, sometimes alone.

When the foundation of the church began, the mission of the pastor for the church was clear. The mission of Harvest House of Hope is to provide Christ-centered excellence in ministry while partnering with the community to advance God's kingdom. This mission undergirds every

aspect of ministry and drives our commitment to building God's kingdom, here on earth. But still there is a gap present because on Sunday mornings the church is filled with the spirit of worship, praises flow from the lips of the congregation, love is in the air all over the sanctuary, but where real love is needed goes beyond the four walls of the church and into the community.

Problem Presented

The community intends to know the agencies that serve them so they will know where they can go for needed assistance in any given situation, this builds stronger relationships within the community. When organizations become active members of the community a positive impact can be seen in society and it results in the betterment of that community. Community outreach gives back to the community, causes the name of the church or organization to be known and could increase membership. They distinctly identify a need and work together to provide aid to help those in need. The benefits of community outreach are but not limited to, building memorable bonds, life contentedness, increased social attentiveness, and amenability.

The role of the church in community outreach is of major importance. It is here that the void is filled that can be only met by the church. There is a huge responsibility to meet the needs of the people not only spiritually, but also physically. Churches are to become public service to their adjacent communities. The role of the pastor in community outreach can be a difficult one, because no matter their hearts desire for the community, to align the congregation and have them properly prepared for active community outreach ministry depends on the strategies that they implement to carry out the task.

The 25-member congregation of the Harvest House of Hope located in San Bernardino; CA is inwardly focused. Their hearts hunger and thirst are not outwardly with their fellow servants of the community. They do not strive to demonstrate biblical morals and values of

perceptibly looking upon those who need assistance. They instead see it as a sort of legalistic obligation, and their answer is of non interest or a refusal to participate, but enthusiastically contributing to the ministry work within the four walls of the church in which they bring an over exhilarated spirit of self, failing to comprehend that this ostensible aspect is not biblically based.

This inward focus is blinding the members of Harvest House of Hope from seeing the big picture need within the community. Because of these issues at hand being pastor, a strategy change is in order. The system of ministry that is currently used to move the congregation at Harvest House of Hope towards community outreach must be re-evaluated and new strategies implemented.

Over the last 17 months, the morning church services at Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA have been spirit-filled, the 25-members come to church, they bring their children, and everyone sits and engulfs the Word of the Lord. They are on one accord and prepared for worship service. Everyone participates, ministering within the four walls of the church and they express the love of God between each other. However, the problem is that the 25-member congregation at Harvest House of Hope, located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA does not have the aspiration to participate in community outreach.

The Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry study is to educate the men, women, and children of Harvest House of Hope located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA on the value of mission services, in hopes to drive them towards the spirit of community outreach.

The mission set forth by the pastor of Harvest House of Hope in San Bernardino, CA is to provide Christ-centered excellence in ministry while partnering with the community to advance God's kingdom. This mission undergirds every aspect of ministry and drives their commitment

to building God's kingdom here on earth. But for Harvest House of Hope reality stepped in and it can be seen through their effort. The focus of this research is locating what is missing from the Harvest House of Hope ministry that has left a void in the community outreach ministry.

According to the church's mission, the church is to establish a foundation of servitude towards and with the community. The tangible benefits of establishing this foundation will lead to a healthier Christ-centered church. Allowing the pastor to become well rounded in ministry teaching from a biblical perspective, building strong spiritual leadership.

Over the next 12 months, Harvest House of Hope set a goal to have at least half of the adults and teens currently attending to participate in four community outreach events in the six months following IRB approval.

Basic Assumptions

The most common assumption says that the participants of the study are telling the truth. The reasoning given by the 25-member congregation of Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA for their lackluster ambition for community outreach is assuming that they are truthful and honest. There also is the assumption that there is a belief that they have nothing in common with the homeless population, that the homeless are greedy, that they can work but will not work. That they are only looking for a handout, and not willing to do what it takes to advance in life. "Firmin suggest that the church is viewed as uninformed or unfamiliar to the homeless, especially their conditions, and the needs predisposed by persons in poverty,"³ There is also the belief that they have nothing in common with the homeless, poverty-ridden population. There is

³ Michael W. Firmin et al., "How College Students View the Church's Responsibility for the Homeless 1.5 Years After a College Poverty Immersion Experience," *Social Work and Christianity* 43, no. 4 ((Winter 2016)): 68-84.

also the assumption that there are so many homeless, that they could not help them all. The validity of the sample is another assumption. The final assumption is that the 25-member congregation of Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA and their views towards community outreach represents the whole city of San Bernardino, State of California, or the whole non-denomination affiliation.

Definitions

Church- The word Church refers to “The Christian community,”⁴ comes from the Greek word ekklesia, “an assembly” Also can be recognized as an edifice for public Christian worship, the people of God. The church was first used in the book of Matthew when Jesus said, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16: 18). The word church also refers to the bride of Christ.

Community Outreach- Community outreach refers to efforts that link organization’s concepts or practices to the public. A community can be known as a cluster of individuals living in an area. This group of people may or may not have common interests or goals, although they are part of a larger society, they do share commonalities, such as social activities, social state or conditions, political likeness, and economics. Outreach is the outspreading of services or support outside of current or traditional parameters. Community outreach brings the community together. Those who perform community outreach have an agenda and they are working together to achieve a goal or purpose. Community outreach happens when, “Some congregations sponsor activities through which people can serve in the community, like serving meals at a soup kitchen

⁴ W.R.F. Browning, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Online: Oxford University, 2010), 1.

or homeless shelter, offering after-school programs for neighborhood children, and hosting counseling and support groups.”⁵

Congregation- “The people of Israel considered as a group for travel (Exod. 16:1) or worship (Isa. 1:13, ‘convocation’, NRSV, ‘sacred assemblies’, REB, ‘assemblies’, NJB). The Hebrew word is translated ecclesia in the Greek LXX.”⁶ gathering of people assembling for religious worship, or for a common cause. The book of Matthew defines the congregation of being as small as two or three people gathering. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). The book of Revelation defines congregation as, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith on Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

*Equipping-*to furnishes with needed resources to accomplish the task at hand. When equipping members, the Scriptures teach, “Ephesians 4:13-16 teaches that the church is to be built up continually until unity is achieved and the knowledge of the Son of God is attained.”⁷ To prepare mentally and physically to complete a certain task. The Scripture speaks of equipping the children of God. “Equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:21 ESV).

Missional church- “The missional church is a new consciousness which has been raised for the missionary sending of the church in the West to be a witness for the Kingdom of God in

⁵ Ibid., p. 341.

⁶ Browning, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 15.

⁷ Joshua Rose, “Equipping Members for Ministry through Small Groups,” *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 361.

its own context.”⁸ A mission church can be described as a group of believers band together to further God's mission here on Earth. Their main principles are the mission of God. The Scripture speaks of sending one out to do the work of the ministry. "Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so, I am sending you" (John. 20: 21 ESV). There is also mention of being “Witnesses.” “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts. 1:8 ESV). "We fine mission Dei in Scripture: God the Father sends the Son and the Spirit into the world, and God the Father, Son and Spirit send the church into the world for the sake of the world.”⁹

Mission services-When a group or committee of persons align themselves together to accomplish a common goal. Mission services can be accomplished overseas and abroad. “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15 ESV).

Spiritual formation- “Spiritual formation is the process of Christ being formed in us for the glory of God, for the abundance of our own lives, and for the sake of others.”¹⁰ The process of spiritual growth from one level to the next, a form of maturity. The Scripture speaks of spiritual formation in the book of 1 John. "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will have not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:3 ESV). The Scripture also speaks of spiritual growth in the book of 1

⁸ Timothy A. Van Aarde, “The Missional Church Structure and the Priesthood of All Believers (Ephesians 4: 7-16) in the Light of the Inward and Outward Function of the Church,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 38, no. 1 (18 May 2017): 1-9.

⁹ Semape J. Manyaka-Boshielo, “The Role of the Missional Social Entrepreneurial Church in the Township Community,” *HTS Theologies Studies* 74, no. 1 (Annual 2018): 1-8.

¹⁰ Ruth Haley Barton et al., “Spiritual Formation in the Church,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care*. 7, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 1-20.

Timothy. "Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:7-8 ESV). One gains spiritual growth through sound spiritual teaching. "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42 ESV).

Spiritual Transformation- "Religious transformation can be constructed as a shift in cultural loyalty and personal orientation over time in terms of core beliefs, valorized emotions, congruent relationships, and normative practices/behaviors consistent or in opposition to their social, religious, and cultural contexts."¹¹ Spiritual transformation can be described as a noticeable change in a person's spiritual life, not staying the same, revealing the inner person. The Apostle Paul speaks sound biblical doctrine in the book of Romans. "I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:1-2 ESV).

Limitations

This study just as others will have limitations because there is no flawless system, although the goal may be to identify the issues that are hindering the members of Harvest House of Hope congregation from participating in community outreach major limitations still exist. The first noticeable limitation is the size of the congregation. The participants or sample, the 25-member congregation of Harvest House of Hope chosen to study clearly could not speak for the

¹¹ Al Dueck and Austin Johnson, "Cultural Psychology of Religion: Spiritual Transformation," *Pastoral Psychology* 65, no. 3 (Jun 2016): 299-328.

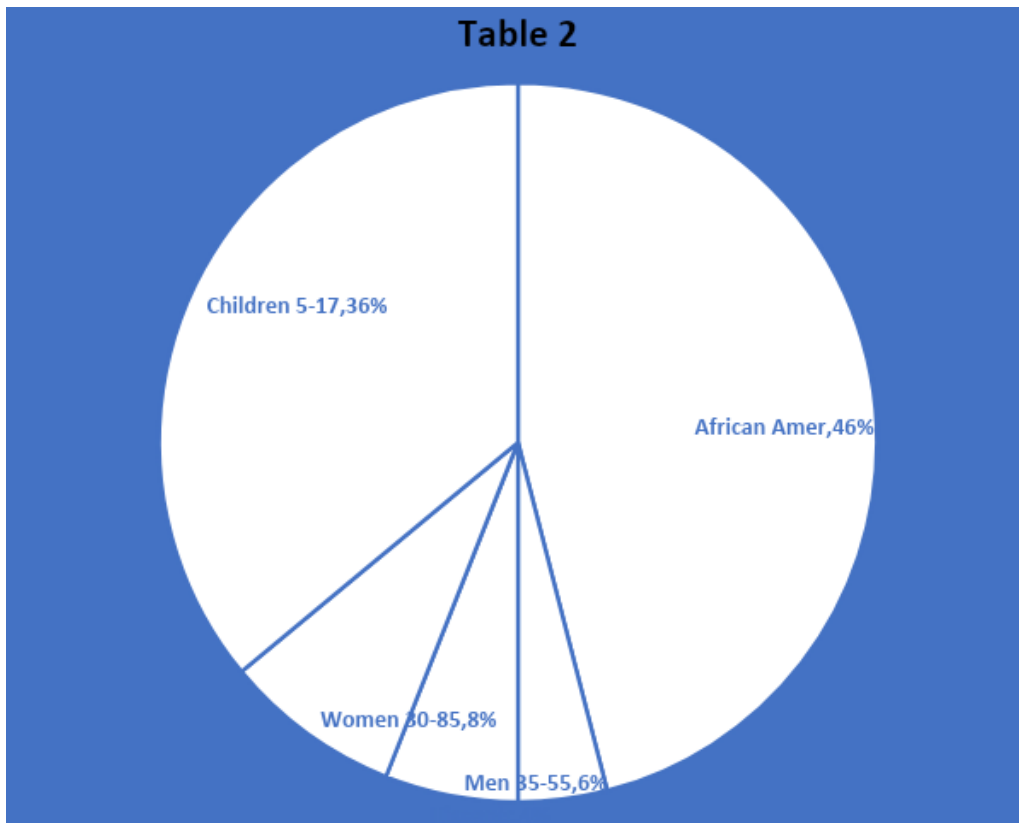
masses, because they are a selected group of men, women, and children, from a poverty-ridden community, which is the second limitation. The community in which the Harvest House of Hope has serviced is fluttered with homeless families, and research portrays a gap in the literature. Major research is present about the need for community outreach but little to none on the reasoning why some do not desire or have the aspiration to participant in community outreach.

Another challenge considered is the amount of time Harvest House of Hope has been established and stable in the San Bernardino, CA community. Relying upon other sources that do not directly connect to the atmosphere created by Harvest House of Hope, will be something else that limits the project. The recruitment or partnering with other small ministries that are dealing with the same issue will pose a limitation. Accessibility is also a limitation because even though Harvest House of Hope has a 25-member congregation, all of them do not attend Sunday service every week, which means that they are only available for a limited period. The evangelist that travels an hour to service attends often, but they are not able to attend every week. Sometimes due to prior engagements and other times due to the amount of travel time required.

Delimitation

Some self-imposed researcher restraints have been placed on the study. The topic of discussion is one. While many topics could have been chosen, Harvest House of Hope's commitment to community outreach was selected. The population chosen is another delimitation of the study. The study is based on a population of 25 lower to the middle class, African American, and Hispanic, men, women, and children, between the ages of 5-85. With the base number of 25, this excludes others who would possibly be a part of the study. Because their vocations fall between lower and middle class, it would be considered a delimitation because no one outside of this range will be studied, as it pertains to the upper-class individuals or church

assemblies. Although the age range is wide, and the bulk of the congregation is children, gender and age become a delimitation. There are many more women and girls than there are men and boys, and only two Hispanics. This means many more are left out of the study. The ministry chosen is also a delimitation, because they are non-denominational. Which leaves, out the other denominations such as Baptist, Apostolic, and Methodist, for example.



Thesis Statement

When the 25 member congregation of the Harvest House of Hope ministry located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA are trained regarding to the significant effects of the ministries non-commitment to community outreach, informed of its importance to serve the community and educated on the value of mission services, it will lead to spiritual formation that will bring change, and transformation, in turn, generate the spirit of community outreach.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Review of Precedent Literature

In this review of the literature, research has been conducted and evaluated as it pertains to the subject of community outreach. In doing so the research has been warranted, to make known that there is a need for further research. This review of literature will also identify the correlation of works in the framework of the subject matter, “Spiritual Transformation: Community Outreach and the Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA.”

In this review of the literature, a list of authors will be presented along with their roles as it pertains to the review. Jill Snodgrass and Jennifer McClure bring extensive research to the forefront as it pertains to community outreach, which also includes the roles and mission of community outreach. While Hans and Albertson also speak of the roles of community outreach, but they also touch on why people don’t participate and expanding their vision. This is one of the major issues in which the project deals. Merwe and Colberg bring the attention back to the role of the church in community outreach, which directly impacts the project’s congregational base.

The meat of the project lies with the work of Stella Potgieter. Her research covers a multitude of information that is vital to the project. She discusses the importance of community outreach, the mission of the church and spiritual growth. Finally, Allison Faslio along with the group of Firmin, Markum, Stultz, Johnson, and Garland research leans towards moral responsibility of the congregation, the disinterest of the congregation and the implementation of new ideas and tactics to get them more involved.

The core headlines in contemporary research are outreach, community, commitment, and compassion. The researchers developed a roadmap that requires active movement of progression leading toward spiritual transformation. The first phase outlines the spirit of outreach. This opens the door to the next phase which is the community. Because outreach requires movement into the community, to meet the needs of the community. Then the road map leads to commitment. Mariet Mikaelian brings to the forefront opposing views on one being committed, and the act of transformation into a true leader. While Noel Purdy and Heather Meneely research which institutions should show commitment to the cause. Being committed to a common cause reveals compassion. The Robert Oliver group outlines the doctrine of compassion as it pertains to the church. When one opens their heart and the spirit of compassion comes in it leads to a spiritual transformation.

Outreach

When one places effort on reaching out to others in a time of need, it is considered outreach. In doing so, one becomes involved in the community. This requires making moves, being intrepid, and sometimes going somewhere that may cause one to be uncomfortable but in doing so the process can also be satisfying. When one is involved in outreach, they provide a service, not necessarily in one location but throughout the community, meeting the needs of others in a time of need. Being involved in outreach causes one to make a difference in the lives of others and the community. Sometimes outreach can be scary because one is entering the unknown, one is never knowing what type of response they will receive, but in the end, it will be completely worth it, by becoming engaged in the community to make a positive change in the community. Participating in community outreach paints a picture of remembrance by the watching eye gleaning the significance of giving back.

The purpose of outreach is to provide a special service to those who need that service. Jesus continually did the work of community outreach. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt. 4:23). Jesus is a prime example of community outreach and they of the church should follow the example that Jesus put forth. Jesus brought Himself to the community and made Himself become a part of the community. There is another strong Scripture that outlines the strength of Jesus and community service and how He came to help the people. "To bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and open the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61.1). Jesus came to serve, and as children of God servitude should be within the heart of His children. As children of God, doing what Jesus comes to do is being a true believer. He came to alleviate the struggles of the people and cause them more hurt and harm, nor did He overlook those who were in need. As a congregation, one would need to inquire what value we hold if there are no community contributions. Because this is one of the most visible aspects of Scripture.

When one participates in community outreach, in doing so, one becomes involved in the community. Not only do they become involved in the community they also become a positive aspect of the community in which others will see and can depend on to be a beacon of light or hope. When one participates in community outreach, in doing so they let their light shine. Plus, these examples that are set provides leadership and someone in the community that people can look up to and mirror. Whether this is serving food, participating in volunteer opportunities or supporting a community cause. Any positive community outreach effort is a positive event and transforms the lives of others. Providing services to areas that would not usually have the resources to help themselves. Being a child of God means loving your neighbor no matter who

he/she is or what condition they may be in. Christ calls His people the "salt of the Earth," (Matt. 5:13). The salt is the ones who are supposed to bring flavor and show the kindness of God, the love of Christ.

Community

When describing the community, it is a cluster of families, or individuals residing in the same location or a feeling of camaraderie. Traditionally, the community can be the notion of a people in a specified geographical locale, the word can genuinely imply to any group with a common cause. There are certain factors that determine what a community consist of and these characteristics include its history, it's past, the account of what happens or how it was formed, its relationships with others, its existing societal assembly, its cultural principles, our collective commitment to each other and the way it governs itself, and attain their given vision. People in a community can depend on one another in a time of distress, and they can come together to share in love and support. Community outreach defines the need of the community and meets that need in a manner that displays love, empathy, and compassion. Some of the main sources of community outreach agents are churches, a non-profit organization, and other religious institutions.

The reach of Jill L. Snodgrass is essential to this review of the literature, her research directly relates to the topic of community outreach. Snodgrass conducted research that involved 16 research participants, who had served in a 90-day emergency shelter program in Los Angeles, California. There were several revealing finds in the study. The participate in the study understood and were able to have a question and answer session with the researcher. They varied in age, race, and gender. Snodgrass's research reveals that "homelessness can be felt like a separation from God and the church. In the closing of Snodgrass' article, she also reported that

one constant remains among Christian churches and other religious communities and that is the contribution in outreach to the homeless.”¹²

Jill L. Snodgrass and Jennifer M. McClure concur that community outreach is a way that organizations such as churches focus on their communities. "raising funds for community outreach events is a focus of the church. One way this can be done is by donating used goods."¹³ Community service is done to benefit others, although it is usually done in your community, it can be completed abroad. Although community outreach can be done individually, it is usually accomplished and organized by a local group such as a church. Though more research is needed, churches during their outreach aspirations created an atmosphere of hope and inspiration to those who were homeless. Being aware that the overarching issue remains to be an increase of those needing assistance, Snodgrass speaks of "putting together systems that will improve the well-being of the people in their communities. Building structures that will be beneficial to the community."¹⁴ "One common service continues to be outreach. A number of entities experience homelessness, the need for effective programs of care is rising accordingly."¹⁵

Oh Hans and Sam Albertson, agree with Snodgrass and McClure as it pertains to the role of religious organizations in community outreach, their research involved faith-based agencies that produced these results, "There have been numerous faith-based social service agencies recognized over the last five years that has directed a yearly itinerant outreach campaign. This movement is called Don't Walk By (DWB). These establishments have systematized thousands of volunteers from local churches."¹⁶ Jennifer M. McClure took a more specific approach to the

¹² Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 341-66.

¹⁴ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹⁵ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307.

¹⁶ Hans OH and Sam Albertson, "Don't Walk by Urban Faith-Based Homeless Outreach Campaigns," *Housing, Care and Support* 17, no. 2 (2014): 112.

study. She brings to the forefront the importance of activities that will support, and gear congregations and/or religious institutions to focus outward to their communities. In McClure's research, she outlines some of those community outreach strategies, namely, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, support for impoverished families, and after-school programming.¹⁷

Oh, and Albertson and McClure each speak of the activities the religious institutions should partake in so that adequate care is given during community outreach ventures. "The campaign goal, aim or purpose is to engage the homeless and facilitate their entry or reentry into rehabilitative programs, whatever the extent. Some of these programs include but are not limited to, educational and vocational training."¹⁸

The key formula designed in the reading was how actual involvement gives the congregation a motivated attitude, especially when they can see the good works they have performed. General acts of kindness leave a long-lasting impression on Christians and non-Christians and can lead to others stepping up and generating acts of kindness within the community.

This displays a prosocial behavior among the congregation, members or just others willing to help or support. "The form of prosocial behavior that McClure speaks of designed by the CSCSA, are put into place to be helpful to others, along with volunteering, compassionate charitable giving which sometimes include financial services, civic assignation, along with supplementary community events."¹⁹ This intent to help or benefit other people or humanity is often driven by empathy or the apprehension about the civil rights or liberties of others. This prosocial behavior has a great positive impact on children and future generations. It is this

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 341-66.

¹⁸ Oh, and Albertson. *Don't Walk by Urban Faith-Based Homeless Outreach Campaigns* p. 112.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 341-66

concept that makes prosocial behavior so important when it involves community outreach according to research. “Positive forms of behavior by church members have been seen as a predictor of prosocial behavior.”²⁰

The call for the church to be the controlling post at the forefront of the battle of homelessness and poverty, to lead the charge of community outreach is the road map laid by Johan van der Merwe. By the word church, Merwe's research showed that he was referring to the people of God who assemble themselves in a relationship with one another. These are the ones who should be at the top and ready to help and serve others in community outreach. McClure and Merwe's research displayed similar results as it relates to congregational involvement. “There are often avenues provided by churches or other religious services that stretch beyond the worship service and Bible study respectively It is these outreach activities that lead to predicting prosocial behavior. When the congregation volunteer for services outside of the worship service and engage in civic responsibilities it reflects the behavior of the church.”²¹

Research showed the need for a structured system to be put in place that required the local church to appoint the pertinent people and the government would fund the project. Oh, and Albertson's research also concluded that a more structured system is needed when it involves community outreach and the homeless community. "According to Oh, and Albertson, a more mediating structure is to be put in place if these correct results are going to be obtained. They speak of de-stigmatizing and humanizing the problem of homelessness, and still supporting financially. One breakthrough that is held in high standards is providing affordable housing"²²

²⁰ Ibid., p. 342.

²¹ Ibid., p. 343.

²² Ibid., p. 344.

“Scripture has always been the catalyst that fought the good fight against homeless and the struggles of the community”²³ The position of the church is to serve the community, especially those families who need assistance. This is the true meaning of community outreach.

Kristin Colberg, research led her to summarize the mission of the church in times past and in the present time while taking into consideration its Ecclesiological approach and mission. Research showed that in today's world the tables have turned and the role of the church as it pertains to the local community is at the forefront of discussion. Colberg's research on the mission of the church also aligns with McClure's research on Religious Beliefs and Values, "Prosocial behavior comes from processes that are intuitive, they have an impulse. With this intuitive predictor being present they are noted to be precursors."²⁴

Colberg is alerting the readers that the mission of the church is to serve those who are less fortunate and to provide avenues of relief, to be transparent in their work of the Lord. Colberg suggests that the goal of the church is instead of pointing to itself, to be a community that preaches, serves and witnesses to the reign of God, to be a missionary. The sending of the apostles and the outreach of the community "It is often good to interchange the church and mission."²⁵

The role of the church as an agent of community outreach is essential to its mission. Stella D. Potgieter, brings to the forefront in her research, other reasoning that shows the importance of community outreach, suggesting that serving others will bring internal growth for oneself spiritually (Gal. 6:2; Ja. 5:16; 1 Th 5:11; 1 Cor. 12:25; Eph 4:12; John 13:34 and Mt

²³ Johan van der Merwe, "The Local Church as a Non-Governmental Organization in the Fight Against Poverty: A Historical Overview of Bethulie 1933-1935," *HTS Teologiese Studies* 70, no. 21 ((Jan. 2014)): 1-7.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

²⁵ Kristin Colberg, "Ecclesiology Today and It's Potential to Serve a Missionary Church," *Missiology: An International Review* 46, no. 1 (2018): 23-36.

28:19). These Scriptures are the foundation for community outreach that brings growth to individuals and health to the community. According to Potgieter, research shows that it is the responsibility of the church to perform and participate in community outreach, take care of people struggling with pain, trauma, uncertainties, and confusion.²⁶

Hans Oh and Sam Albertson placed its research on the focus of the campaign, proving that it could have done better if only it would have stretched its vision. Stretching their vision would have been a great idea because it opens ideas that have not been brought to the forefront. If the company would have expanded by force, they would have come up with more concepts to help the community. Expanding their vision would have allowed them to create something beyond their confines. Although the research showed that the campaign was able to generate a great amount of volunteerism for the project, the bridge still did not reach beyond the vision. The campaign was scripturally based on the story of The Good Samaritan, enhancing compassion and social responsibility.²⁷

This lesson teaching parable taught by Jesus in response to a self-justifying request from a lawyer, who was an authority on the Old Testament laws of Moses set the stage for Jesus' parabolic teaching ministry. It's a familiar story a man was attacked and beaten and left for dead. The priest did not help to assist him and neither did the Levite. But a Samaritan aided the injured man and paid for his stay at a local room. It turns out that this hated Samaritan was the real neighbor to the man because of his heart of compassion (Luke 10:25-37).

One concept that appeared in Oh and Albertson's research suggests the reasons why people do not participate in community outreach and help the homeless. "There is a multitude of

²⁶ Stella D. Potgieter, "Communities: Development of Church-Based Counselling Teams," *HTS Teologiese Studies* 71, no. 2 ((July 2015)): 1-8.

²⁷ Oh and Albertson, *Don't Walk by*, p. 111-115.

reasons that people stay away from assisting the homeless and feel a sense of disgust when around them that led to frustration, and even the fear of catching some disease. It is because of the negative characteristics that the poverty-ridden homeless community bring with them that caused this gap in community outreach."²⁸

Time is one of the main reasons people do not participate in community outreach. They just simply do not have the time to spare, with work, kids, and their obligations. Besides not having the time to volunteer, people believe that they do not have enough information about the project. The key would be to match the skills with the assignment and that will cut down on not understanding the assignment. The feeling of not having enough information has caused many people to fall away and decide against volunteering because of its vague explanation. In situations like this, there is still talk of making the morally right decision.

Research conducted by Allison DiBianca Faslio brings to the attention of her readers the moral responsibilities of humankind. "Moral limits and moral responsibility don't often come together. Helping others has always seemed like the right direction but when helping others brings tension, one's own moral behavior will come into questions."²⁹ When one speaks of moral responsibilities they are implying to their commitment to others. Being morally responsible for the choice one makes is the foundation of moral responsibility. The problem begins when people do not want to be held accountable for their actions. Having moral responsibility says I care about the other person. Their thoughts, needs, wherever they need until they have reached the goal of taking care of themselves.

²⁸ Oh and Albertson. *Don't Walk by*, p. 114.

²⁹ Allison DiBianca Fasoli, "Moral Responsibility, Personal Regulation, and Helping Others: A Cultural Approach to Moral Reasoning in U.S. Evangelical Christian Cultures.," *Culture and Psychology* 23, no. 4 (2017): p. 464.

Being morally responsible for doing what is right means you cannot pass up someone who needs help or assistance. True moral responsible says that everyone included the homeless, poverty-ridden, fallen on hard luck person must people other people before our own needs. Being held accountable for the actions of others.

Firmin³⁰, Markum, Stultz, Johnson, and Garland, take a diverse methodology through a qualitative study to the subject of community outreach when they bring to the attention of the readers the churches' disinterest in the needs of the poor and impoverished people in their communities. Research suggests that the burden of such needs does fall upon the church and that those involved in religious institutions must hold the blood-stained banner and demonstrate the love of Christ to their fellow neighbors, but they concluded that it seems that their aspiration to intermingle with those less fortunate is not prevalent. According to Firmin, "New tactics need to be put in place to reach the countless of the religious community. The need for these types of actions can easily be seen from the leadership perspective but the focus of the congregation of the religious community does not make their desire."³¹

The disinterest of the church to be a help to the needy has spread over the years because of the cultural issues that have risen to catch the eye of church leaders across the world. This has caused the church to take a back seat in the quest to serve the poor and needy. With poverty mostly being in the inner-city and many of the larger member churches on the outskirts of the city, their members don't see what's going on inside the inner-city ghetto's. Although they hear tales, they are still reluctant to go into the inner-city for the fear of crime and/or disease.

³⁰Michael W. Firmin et al., "How college students view the church's responsibility for the homeless 1.5 years after a college poverty immersion experience.," *Social Work and Christianity* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2016): p. 75.

³¹ Firmin. *Social Work and Christianity*, 68-84.

The only answer that seems suitable is not to go inside these inner-city ghetto's and allow the inner-city church to help those in need. Even though they are aware that the inner-city churches are not equipped to handle such a load. Instead being hesitated to help the inner-city community they chose not to go anything to help or assist in a time of need. The future hopes for new tactics to reach those who are suffering from homelessness, or in a poverty-stricken environment.

Fully Commitment

Being commitment in Scripture refers to being “fully committed” to God, to the ways of God. To be totally and completely, without paucity or defect, to His Word, and being obedient, without waver. Fully committed is dedicating yourself to something, being obligated to take on and finish the task that you partook. The foundation of commitment to God and being a servant of God, obeying His commandments is established here in this theses project mainly because this commitment is obedience to His Word which is displayed by an outward action of service towards one's neighbor. “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matt. 22: 37-38)

Commitment

This section will provide information on how commitment to God and being obedient to His Word builds a solid foundation of servitude towards one another. It takes true commitment to God, a spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit to induce the power of agape love and compassion to lead Christians in a life of service to the community. “For, brethren, ye has been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another” (Gal. 5:13).

The church has a specific role in the community when it comes to helping the poor. It takes great leadership and a great deal of commitment by the congregation to be dedicated to doing community outreach. Partaking in community outreach begins with cavernous perceptions about the persons you are going to aid. They would need this information in order to formulate the perfect plan of the organization. The Scripture speaks of this sort of commitment to helping when it talks about having, "all things common" (Acts 4:32-35). "Which institution should step to the forefront to serve the poor or take care of the needs of a dying community filled with homeless and poverty-ridden families. Where should influence stem from when doing such acts of kindness, should education be the forefront of the Church community, is this what it will take to bring guidance, to the notable lack of guidance and research to the role of the Church."³²

Brian Conway and Bram Spruyt's research concur with Purdy and Meneely, as it pertains to the church's commitment to the poor. "Often time the church is found to have increasingly sided with the disadvantaged and downgraded, in places like Brazil and Chile. This has helped the church gain much respect and acceptability among the people."³³ The importance of leadership in matters like these reaches a different level. "There has been researching in the past that indicate the value of people doing research. When they value their religion, they have more of an inspiration to help others."³⁴

The leadership must look at the potential outcomes to see if they outweigh the cost of doing community outreach. Leadership is to give guidance or direction, the act of leading, to

³² Noel Purdy and Heather Meneely, "Good News for the Poor? A Case Study of Church and School Collaboration in Inner-City Belfast," *Pastoral Care in Education: An International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development* 33, no. 3 (2015): 147-53.

³³ Brian Conway and Bram Spruyt, "Catholic Commitment Around the Globe: A 52- Country Analysis," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52, no. 2 (2018): 276-99.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

supervise, manage an assembly of people or an organization. It takes special skills to be a healthy and effective leader. A person in leadership creates a vision for the future and motivates people to engross with that vision. Good leadership can translate an idea into reality. One of the primary tasks of a leader is to direct attention while filtering out interference. A leader sees a problem and strategically organize a plan of attack to solve the problem. Spiritual leadership involves the mission of moving people from where they are to where God needs them to be. Spiritual leaders motivate people from having an inward mentality, depending on their agenda, to chasing God's purpose. Spiritual leaders are steered by the Holy Spirit and not their motives or desires. The greatest example of a Spiritual Leader is Jesus Christ Himself. A spiritual leader is a servant.

Mikaelian brings the idea that “change is limited in a person even if they are being taught within the church community, They still do not show much change in behavior.”³⁵ whereas Snodgrass says leadership factors into the members' overall “incentive to transform.”³⁶ On the other hand, Vhumani Magezi's research grasp concludes that has a specific role. "Headship is an unclear notion, yet captivating. Covertly, all establishments and social unit attest to the crucial role of leadership. Leadership can be seen in different forms, some kids show leadership skills around other kids, some good and some bad. Many churched attempts to build leaders and organization look to develop them.”³⁷

Mikaelian's research was not guided at a specific denomination but used various denominations when developing theories related to a form of learning that transform thinking and behavior. Mikaelian's work is Scriptural based while outlining the steps of a true leader. Of

³⁵ Mariet Mikaelian, “The Transformative Learning Experiences of Southern California Church-Based Small Group Members,” *Christian Education Journal* 15, no. 2 (2018): 172.

³⁶Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 314.

³⁷ Vhumani Magezi, “God-image of Servant King as Powerful but Vulnerable and Serving: Towards Transforming African Church Leadership at an Intersection of African Kingship and Biblical Kingship to Servant Leadership.,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 71, no. 2 (2015): 1-9.

all the features prompting leadership Mikaelian brings to the forefront that research has shown that with all the teaching taking place within the church the members do not change much. They are attentive, made available for service, but there is little to no change in behavior.³⁸

Mikaelian's research lead to the conclusion that even with spiritual teaching it does not implement biblical values in one life that will cause them to change, but Magezi's research puts emphasis on the leader who is doing the teaching, when he concludes, "Magezi, put extreme pressure on the quality of the leaders if the congregation is going to change. Saying that the congregation will adapt if the leader has developed into the type of leader who can aggressively lead by example."³⁹ This leadership role takes on different responsibilities pending on the environment, and so does the duties of that leader. Magezi's research outlines the duties of a leader, "Leaders will always be seen in the homes, with a younger and older sibling, as well as the church when those in authority openly support their pastor."⁴⁰ Great emphasis is put on Spiritual leadership in Magezi's research, just as it is with Snodgrass and Resane. "The image of leadership should come from a biblical servant perspective, as displayed in the Holy Scriptures."⁴¹

Research shows that spiritual formation is needed to build and understand the importance of relationships. Snodgrass' research on leadership factors more into the responsibility of the pastor for spiritual counseling those who are homeless or in an impoverished state, because they can look at the situation from not only a hermeneutical point but also an empathetic understanding. K. Thomas Resane concurs with Snodgrass and places the role of leadership on

³⁸ Mikaelian, *The Transformative Learning Experiences* p. 172.

³⁹ Magezi, *'God-image of Servant King* p. 1.

⁴⁰ Magezi, *'God-image of Servant King* p. 2.

⁴¹ Magezi *'God-image of Servant King* p. 6.

the shepherd, stemming from the Scripture outlining the roles and responsibilities. This person should tend and care for those inside and outside of the flock. Resane's research is mostly Scriptural brings to the forefront the different types of shepherd leaders. "Within the different responsibilities of the shepherd leader, Resane's research prioritizes responsibility, into caring, restoration, feeding, watering, grooming, and leading."⁴²

Compassion

This section will outline the importance of benevolence when it pertains to community outreach. Compassion is when somebody shows sympathy, love, and a readiness to help others. This compassion requires one to put someone else before them or to walk in their shoes or understanding their situation enough to help them. When someone has compassion for another they suffer together. "Speak on behalf of people that cannot speak on behalf of themselves. Watch over the poor people. And supply what they need" (Pro. 31:8 EASY).

Compassion is that human allure that ignites acts of kindness and mercy, it also can be described as love for someone who may be in a vulnerable state of mind, or suffering. Like having sympathy for others and willing to do acts of kindness to relieve the pressures of their situation. The Scripture speaks of compassion is one of the characteristics of God. "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." (Ps. 86 15). According to the Scripture God is filled with compassion towards His people, at one point being known as having "Great compassion," (Ps. 145:8-9). With one of God's great characteristics being compassion. It will take plenty of compassionate people to spearhead any community outreach project. Not only is Jesus Christ the greatest example of a

⁴² K. T. Resane, "Leadership for the Church: The shepherd model.," *Hervormde Teologies* 70, no. 1 (2014): 1-6.

leader but He is also the greatest example of true compassion. Compassion is one characteristic that God encourages His people to clothe themselves with (Col 3:12).

The Scripture is clear when it speaks of the Lord's compassion and how it will always be His people. The Church's example should only from the biblical occurrences of compassion in order to fully grasp the true understanding of compassion. The Lord is saying no matter what is going on in your life, whether it be chaos or things out of place, He is here to show you compassion. "Though the mountains are shaken, and the hills are removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you" (Isa. 54:10).

Oliver, Robinson, and Koebel's research took a compassionate approach to community outreach, as it pertains to homelessness. Their study took place in Southwest Virginia, looking at New River Valley (NRV), and New River Community Action (NRCA) programs geared towards homelessness, stating that "The strength of faith-based organizations is prevalent in the New River Valley of Southwest Virginia. It is so strong that they healthy participate in welfare provisions. Although there may be differences in the way they handle the homeless communities in the urban areas."⁴³ Compassion can also take on different forms in different communities. Some communities may need more or less than others. But studies show that every need was meet according to its purpose.

The common factor among the researchers and Oliver, Robinson, and Koebel is that responsibility and or involvement of the church when it encompasses community outreach, especially towards the homeless. "Love, family, and sympathy, often did more to recompence

⁴³ Robert Oliver, Matthew Robinson, and Theodore C. Koebel, "Compassionately Hidden: The Church Telling Local Homeless To.!" *Geographical Bulletin* 56, no. 1 (May 2015): 27-40.

homeless than the municipal government,"⁴⁴ Love being a characteristic of God leads the way for compassion. Oh, and Albertson's research on the campaign coincides with Oliver, Robinson, and Koebel when it comes to the expression of compassion when engaged in community outreach. "The Good Samaritan parable told by Jesus in which compassion and social responsibility is visualized is the foundation for the campaign."⁴⁵

Community outreach is built on love and compassion according to the Scriptures. God's plan to show mercy and compassion to His people. For them to be committed to being servants who show this love and compassion to others without hesitation. "They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs water" Isa 49:10). This deep sympathy called compassion for someone who is hurting, displaced, or suffering is when they are putting their own needs, wants and desires before others.

The hard part about showing compassion is when it looks like people are truly getting what they deserve, but not only that. Many people desire to show compassion from a distance out of fear. Especially the younger members of the Church. When they notice someone, who is homeless or has been poverty-stricken and displaced, it puts fear in their spirit, and they don't know how to manage that fear. Mainly because they are looking with their eyes and smell with their noses and not with their hearts. What they see and smell causes them to back away and not even consider compassion because they are unlearned.

⁴⁴ Oliver, *Compassionately Hidden* p. 30.

⁴⁵ Oh and Albertson, *Don't Walk by*, p. 112.

But as a true Christian, who are we to judge one's faith. The prodigal son is a great example of this, but God's compassion and grace prevail. But even in the Scripture the prodigal son was judged and ridiculed, so what better person are they who do the same. To overcome, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," it will take pure Christian education from true leadership. People are so focused on what they see in the world that they don't know how to help them spiritually. Displaying the love and compassion of God towards others will begin this healing process.

Conclusion

This researcher concludes that the review of literature will bring together and display where the present state of research is and focus on ideas/insights and various practices that can be integrated into this theses project. It will be used to build on and/or revise them.

The present state suggests from the research of Snodgrass that churches and religious communities are the Institutions that contribute the most to community outreach. This can be traced back to the foundation of Biblical history which dictates that this is the way it is supposed to be, with the church at the forefront of the charge against homelessness and poverty. Merwe and Colberg's researchers conclude that the church should be the controlling force to fight homelessness and poverty through community outreach. While Jill L. Snodgrass and Jennifer M. McClure together concur that community, outreach is a way for organizations such as churches to focus on their communities.

Oh Hans and Sam Albertson, agree with Snodgrass and McClure as it pertains to the role of religious organizations in community outreach, their research involved faith-based agencies that produced these results. Colberg is alerting the readers that the mission of the church is to serve those who are less fortunate and to provide avenues of relief. Oliver, Robinson, and Koebel

also suggest that responsibility of the church when it encompasses community outreach, their involvement stretch especially towards the homeless. Understanding the foundational focus of the church from the beginning is profitable to the research for this thesis project but it is not the focus of the project. Helping others to understand the foundational viewpoint will indeed be an asset of knowledge that will support the findings of the project.

There is a gap seen in literature because Oh and Albertson's research claim that churches and religious communities are not furthering their vision when it comes to community outreach. Stating that visions to help such causes cannot be stagnant but they must be fresh and creative if they are going to reach the multitude of people that are in need. Firmin's research suggests that the strategies that the churches are using to reach the community are misguided. Stating that erroneous strategies can be taken back to the drawing board and new plans can be implemented that will lead towards a more positive outcome. This gap places a great distance between the study and shows that more implementation is needed by churches and/or non-profit organizations to further advance community outreach.

The reasoning why church members do not willingly participate in community outreach is one of the major topics of this thesis project, because of what is taking place within the inner-city church. But the reason behind that decrease in volunteerism is the major topic.

Oh and Albertson's research suggests reasons why people do not participate in community outreach and help the homeless. They speak of a multitude of reasons that people stay away from assisting the homeless, such as a feel a sense of disgust when around them that led to frustration, and even the fear of catching some disease. This means that safety precautions should be used and training before any church or community outreach organization should go out

and assist the homeless. Because of the less interest for churches to participate in community outreach another approach should be initiated.

Jennifer M. McClure took a more specific approach to the study. She brings to the forefront the importance of activities that will support, and gear congregations and/or religious institutions to focus outward to their communities. In McClure's research, she outlines some of those community outreach strategies, namely, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, support for impoverished families, and after-school. Snodgrass speaks of "putting together systems that will improve the well-being of the people in their communities.

Another gap of literature is present because the research was easily attainable as it related to community outreach and leadership but a small amount as it pertains to motivating the congregates to engage in community outreach. Research shows that spiritual formation is needed to build and understand the importance of relationships. Snodgrass' research on leadership factors more into the responsibility of the pastor for spiritual counseling those who are homeless or in an impoverished state, because they can look at the situation from not only a hermeneutical point but also an empathetic understanding. K. Thomas Resane concurs with Snodgrass and places the role of leadership.

While leading to the conclusion there lies a final slight gap in research. Mikaelian's research leads to the conclusion that even with spiritual teaching it does not implement biblical values in one life that will cause them to change. One thing is certain is that community outreach is built on love and compassion according to the Scriptures. It is God's plan to show mercy and compassion to His people. Stella D. Potgieter brings to the forefront in her research the reasoning that shows the importance of community outreach. In this reasoning, she suggests that serving others will bring internal growth for oneself spiritually.

At its present state, this review of literature brings together the common themes of community outreach, commitment, compassion and address leadership. In doing so it uses books, scholarly resources, articles, and the Scriptures, that will address the subject matter relating to community outreach, commitment, and compassion. There will be a slight gap in literature noticeable. The research was easily attainable as it related to community outreach, commitment, and compassion, but a small amount as it pertains to motivating the congregation to engage in community outreach. The subject matter did hint on some reasoning why they do not indulge, such as leadership teaching or training information not being presented to the congregation and them not being about to ascertain the information. But none that addressed solely them being motivated or having the desire to do community outreach. Outreach is defined as the effort put forth of reaching out to others who are in the need of assistance.

It is the conclusion of this researcher that this spiritual growth that Potgieter speaks of is what will push the people of God to participate in community outreach. The spiritual transformation that will take place through the believer will be induced by the Holy Spirit if they stay committed to God. Staying committed to God will lead to love and compassion that will bring on this spiritual transformation.

Theological Foundation

The theological structure for this thesis project will be built upon the Holy Scripture. This theological foundation lays the groundwork as it pertains to caring for the homeless, underprivileged, and poverty-ridden community through the Word of God. This will include foundational and scriptural basis for Community Outreach, love and compassion, and commitment.

Scriptural Basis for Community Outreach

One of the greatest missions of the church is caring for those outsiders of the church. “Social action refers to all the measures and means by which a society acts on itself to preserve its cohesion, in particular through legislative or regulatory measures and by actions aimed at helping the most fragile people or groups to live better, to live better, to acquire or preserve their autonomy and to adapt to the surrounding social environment.”⁴⁶

The Scripture lays the foundation for this loving task in the book of Matthew. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy soul, and with all they mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like, unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39). This journey of outward acts of kindness and mercy can be traced back to Old Testament Scripture.

The work of Missions denotes everything done by the church that ultimately directs one towards the kingdom, whether that be inside or outside the church. This includes community outreach and depicts the events of churches, and organizations. The Holy Scriptures voices the

⁴⁶ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

account of God's toil on behalf of all people of the world. Although the word mission is not stated in the Holy Bible doesn't mean that the people in the Bible did not do missionary work. The Bible is still a missionary Bible. Many people in the Bible hear who the call of God to do mission services, not only teaching but also helping those who are in need. There is a pure case for Christian mission that can be seen throughout the Old and New Testament.

In the Old Testament, God was not totally the God of anger that He is pictured to be, He is also the God of Love. Even though that is more perceived in the New Testament. God's concerned for His people began at the forefront of creation. Mission labor is God's venture and He allows His people to show and express His love in the world. The churches of God are called to be missionary churches.

Old Testament Foundation of Love and Compassion

The power of love is one of the greatest known attributes of God. It is through love that God freely expresses Himself. Research suggests that there is nothing in God's nature that obliges Him to do something. He loves effortlessly, because, of His perfect nature. Humankind is made in the image of God is the true manifestation of love. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen 1:27). "Moreover, there is an analogy of being between God, who is characterized by love, goodness, and justice, and his image bearers, who are similarly distinguished by love, goodness, and justice."⁴⁷ Being made in God's image comes with the attribute of love. "With respect to the doctrine of God, God's characteristics or perfections, as revealed in Scripture, that he communicates, or shares, with human creatures made in his image. These attributes include

⁴⁷ Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), 13.

knowledge, wisdom, truthfulness, faithfulness, goodness, love, grace, mercy, patience, holiness, jealous, wrath, righteousness/justice, and power.”⁴⁸ From the beginning of time with God the activity of love was ever so present. “Love is seen within the Godhead. There are numerous of verses that talk about the Father’s love for the Son; (John 14:31). With many other passages of Scripture that imply of this love.”⁴⁹

The *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* addresses the love of God as an attribute. “God is not only holy (Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:16), spirit (John 4:24), light (1 John 1:5), and a consuming fire (Deut. 4: 24; Heb. 12:29), God is also love (1 John 4:8, 16). God does not need to attain or attempt to maintain love, because it is God’s nature to love.”⁵⁰ The foundation of God’s love is demonstrated throughout Scripture as an example of how humankind should love. “Love is demonstrated by keeping commandments (John 14:31; cf. vv. 15, 21, 23). Christ alone has seen the Father (John 3:11, 32: 6:46) and known him (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 7:29; 8:55; 10:15). They are united (John 10:30, 38; 14:10-11, 20; 17:21-23).”⁵¹

There are four ways that God’s love is displayed in the Old Testament first through simple statements as seen in the book of Deuteronomy. “He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment” (Deut. 10:18). “God’s electing love for Israel (e.g., Deut. 4:37; 7:6-8; 10:15; 1 Kings 10:9; Hosea 3:1; 11:1, 4: Mal. 1:2). He’s covenant love which is always loyal.”⁵² “And he remembered them his covenant and repented according to the multitude of his mercies” (Ps. 106:45). The final display is God’s love is seen in His love for people. “Ezra in Ezra, “And hath extended mercy unto me before the

⁴⁸ Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary*. p. 29.

⁴⁹ H. W. Hoehner, "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 930-32.

⁵⁰ H. W. Hoehner, "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁵¹ H. W. Hoehner, "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁵² H. W. Hoehner, "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 930-32.

king, and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me" (Ezra 7:28).

According to Old Testament Scripture, "Many Hebrew words express the concept of love. The noun *ahaba* (used thirty times) is used primarily of human love, as seen in its frequency in Song of Songs, although it is also used of divine love (Isa. 63:3; Jer. 31:3; Hosea 11:4; Zeph. 3:17)"⁵³ The importance of being loyal in love encompasses the Old Testament Scripture. "the frequently used noun *hessed* has the idea of loyal covenantal love."⁵⁴

In the days of Abraham (Gen 11:27), stories of rescue and estrangement are at the forefront of the Scripture. These stories not only express how Abraham was to be a blessing to the nations, God's universal plan, but it also expresses how strangers were in the midst of the people of Israel, and they were to be shown the expression of love just as God loved. "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19:33-44). "Many Hebrew words express the concept of love. By far most prominent (used over two hundred times) is the verb *ahab*, denoting both divine and human love..."⁵⁵

Foreigners were to be treated with compassion and to show kindness. It did not matter who one would come to encounter, an expression of love was to be present by the people of God. "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:18). Loving your neighbor is scripturally

⁵³ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 930-32.

⁵⁴ H. W. Hoehner, "Love," In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 930-32

⁵⁵ H. W. Hoehner, "Love" In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 930-32.

based, as is showing acts of kindness and compassion. Loving thy neighbor falls in line with the law of love, which is also known as the law of Christ. This love comes directly from God because it is one of the characteristics of God.

In the 25th chapter of Leviticus, the focus turns to debt and poverty. How one should treat a fellow brother who had fallen on hard times with hospitality and not be prideful of their downfall. It teaches one not to take from the poor. “And if thy brother be waxen poor and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he is a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee” (Lev. 25: 35). “Compassion should also be shown for the mistreated; again, this doubtless means persecuted Christians. The readers should resist any tendency to shield themselves from the danger that such compassion might involve.”⁵⁶

Jesus preaches a strong sermon on love and loving thy neighbor which is the moral code of the Sermon on the Mount. It is here that Jesus teaches one on how to inhabit a faithful life that is satisfying to God by providing ethical guidance full of love (Matt. 5:3-20). “When believers love one another, it shows (1) that God abides in us-i.e., it is evidence of our relationship with an invisible God; (2) that His love is perfected in us-i.e., we display divine affection towards others.”⁵⁷ What must be understood is that “Love is not regarded in an abstract manner as a norm of value, but is about the foundational action of God in establishing a relationship with humanity that restores them in the image of God and that motivates, inspires and characterizes them to a loving relationship with others.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary* Ed. by Art Farstad. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 2208.

⁵⁷ Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Moody Publishers, 2014), 1.

⁵⁸ Pieter G. R. de Villiers, “Divine Love in the Letter to the Romans,” *In die Skriflig* 50, no. 2 (2016): 4.

God's Mission Plan

Missiology's firm origins in biblical and theological build its strong foundation. These roots outline the inevitability of theological underpinnings for the discipline. The human contexts of missionary work, including the social, historical, and religious settings, provide the ever-changing structure. "While mission activity and thinking have been part of the church since its inception, formal study of missiology did not merge until the middle ages. The earliest known efforts include more than three hundred works by Raymond Lull (ca. 1235-1315) and his development of a missionary training school at Majorca in 1276."⁵⁹ Research suggests that there are three essential concerns when it comes to missiology, its distinctiveness (nature), goal, and or the means/method of the mission.

God's mission plan describes "An approach to the discipline of theology that places mission at the center of its concerns, missional theology responds to God's missionary nature and the church's corresponding mandate to be a missionary community. God's missionary character is seen in the sending that is part of the eternal life of the Triune God and the revelation of that life in the Son's sending into the world."⁶⁰ Research has revealed that mission work has not been restricted to what the church is doing. The overall work of God in the world and outside of the church. "It is natural to commence with the issue of the motives for mission. Here the Christological aim of the synopsis must be noticed. Jesus governs all its three steps in the final commission. It is his mandate which is the basis of mission. Mission means to teach what he has

⁵⁹ A. S., Moreau. "Missiology" in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Ed. by Walter A. Elwell. p. 780-83.

⁶⁰ J. R. Franke. "Missional Theology." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. 3rd ed. (Baker Publishing Group, 2017). p.1

commanded. And it is sustained by his supportive presence.”⁶¹ The focus here is the motives and nature of missiology.

The discipline of Missional Theology concentrates directly on God’s nature as it pertains to mission work and brings into focus the missional responsibilities of the church. “God’s missionary character is seen in the sending that is part of the eternal life of the Triune God and the revelation of that life in the Son’s sending into the world.”⁶² The reality that there is an ultimate goal for the work of the mission prompts one to believe that the discipline of missiology has no end, because there will always be something else to achieve or accomplish. The church as an overall mission is essential to this research. “The church is the subject of mission – not only in the sense that it proclaims the gospel, but also in the sense that it lives it.”⁶³

The ultimate plan of God greatly involves mission work, because it allows the people to see God, to know God and to see His work through His people. “Mission is participation in the dynamic of God’s being and actions with the church being sent into the world by the Triune God as an extension of the divine mission.”⁶⁴ When mission work is involved it speaks of one that is sent. This can be displayed in the book of Psalm. God blesses Israel and this allows the people of the world to see God’s love (Ps. 67:1-7). This Psalm is a Psalm of missionary praise. “Though mighty in the heavens and on the earth, God is attentive to the needs of society’s most vulnerable, namely, the fatherless and the widowed, the homeless and the imprisoned.”⁶⁵ “The method of mission, of course will depend on the nature and goal of mission.”⁶⁶

⁶¹ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. 4th. Revis ed. Vol. 9783631560976 Peter Lang. (Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften 2012) p. 23.

⁶² Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 1018.

⁶³ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2012). p. 27.

⁶⁴ Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 1018.

⁶⁵ Daniel Durken, ed. *New Colledgeville Bible Commentary: Old Testament* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015), 790.

⁶⁶ A. S., Moreau. “Missiology” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Ed. by Walter A. Elwell. p. 780-83.

But in the Old Testament, the most noteworthy missionary message is uncovered in the book of Isaiah. He proclaims that the people of God will be an illumination for the gentiles (42:6; 49:6). This covenant described by Isaiah speaks of the care that God has for His people. The work of missions found in the Old Testament includes individuals and the community.

The Old Testament is filled with evidence of God's care and compassion for the poor. "But every seventh-year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy olive yard" (Micah 6:8). The Lord speaks to those who have and give them instructions on how to allow the poor to glean. "And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19:10).

The book of Isaiah speaks of a genuinely fast, in which one is not fasting "to make your voice be heard on high," but it is a fast "to lose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;" (Isa. 58:4-7). God commanded that the poor, poverty-ridden, and cast out be taken care of by the people of God. This act of God was driven because the people were practicing self-gratification and taking advantage of others. Their fasting was done improperly, and God needed them to show outward kindness, a form of social justice.

The act of giving, feeding the hungry, helping the homeless and aiding those who are in need is fundamentally based within the Scripture. It is a mandate from God that His people shall show those expressions of love and compassion. "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry

and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day” (Isa. 58:10).

The book of Proverbs outlines the duties of the Church or individual Christians as it pertains to the homeless, helpless, or the poor. It stresses being kind to the poor, “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again” (Prov. 19: 17). This refers to offering a helping hand and meeting their needs. Compassion to the poor is encouraged throughout Scripture but especially found in the book of Proverbs. It also suggests that having such a benevolent spirit is as offering a gift to the Lord, that He will surely reward one for.

Concerning this Scripture in Proverbs, the book of Matthew speaks as it pertains to the benefits of giving to the poor (Matt. 10:42). The children of God must be of a loving and sharing heart. “Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor” (Prov. 22:9 ESV). The charitable man is fortunate to show goodwill to others. By sharing his substance with the poor, he gains present happiness and future reward. The absence of such benevolence is condemned (Prov. 14:31a; 28:3). As it speaks of oppressing the poor and not honoring God the creator. This condemnation goes the same for the one who closes their ear to the cry of the poor. “Whoever close his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered” (Prov. 21:13 ESV). “Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse” (Prov. 28:27 ESV).

The book of Ezekiel addresses not assisting the homeless, underprivileged, and the hungry and the repercussions that follow not being obedient to the Word of God. Some benefits go along with being a faithful servant and helping those in need but there are also dangers in not being committed and submissive. In this passage, God had blessed Sodom with abundance, but

they did not feel the need to help those who were in need. She only helped herself, providing for the needs of Sodom. They did not have a concern for the needs of others, they showed a haughty and selfish spirit. “Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughter had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy” (Ezek. 16:49 ESV).

The Scripture speaks of the social and religious duties of the children of God in the book of Hebrews. “Let brotherly love continue, Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body” (Heb. 13:1-3). Every Christian must help others and act in a moral way that shines light upon Christ. These acts of kindness were to show Christian grace that every Christian show develop beginning with love. All Christians and non-Christians should be as a family, and hospitality should be shown as a show of love. “ the Bible tells the story of God’s mission in the world but also how the biblical texts draw contemporary readers into the missional community described in that story in order to equip them to engage in God’s mission in new and changing contexts.”⁶⁷

These Christian duties included but are not limited to, And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 23:22). The book of Ecclesiastes speaks of helping your brother who has fallen (Eccl. 4:10). “As such, the mission should shape all that the

⁶⁷ Brad E. Kelle. *Telling the Old Testament Story: God’s Mission and God’s People*, Abingdon Press. 2017). p.156.

church is and does. The challenge, therefore, is to move from church with a mission program to a fully missional conception of church.”⁶⁸

Research suggests that God’s mission plan is directly connected to community outreach. “Mission is seen as the out-reach activity of the church,..”⁶⁹ There is a distinct connection between the mission of Christ and His compassion for His harassed and helpless people. “According to Matthew mission is also motivated in Jesus’ compassion. From the beginning, Matthew underscores the real nature of Jesus’ Messiahship. He is “God with us” (1:23). He is with his people in their suffering (cf. 8:17) and prayer (18:20).”⁷⁰ The church as a whole is crucial to the mission of God. The book of Matthew reveals the importance of the church’s mission. “One aspect of Matthew’s Gospel for the church today is the vision of the church as a visible community of salt and light. The mission is not only verbal proclamation but healing action as well (cf. Matt 4:32;9:35), and the wholeness of creation, that is, for the total and integral liberation of human and cosmic history into the fulness of the eschatological Kingdom (Matt 10:7).”⁷¹

New Testament Foundation of Love and Compassion

According to the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* the New Testament foundation of the love of God for humans can be documented throughout Scripture. “The NT is replete with references to God’s love for humans. God’s love for humans is seen in each person of the Trinity.”⁷² “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

⁶⁸ Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 1019.

⁶⁹ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2017). p. 29.

⁷⁰ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2012). p. 24

⁷¹ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2012). p. 32.

⁷² H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

“As the Father loves Christ, so he loves believers (John 17:23). The Father’s love for the believer is assured (Eph. 6:23; 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 John 3:1). “God” almost invariably refers to the Father, with emphasis when some gift or blessing is mentioned, because the gift is usually his Son (John 3:16), or the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5).”⁷³

There is a commandment outlined in forth in the New Testament to love God and neighbor. “In the New Testament, Jesus announces a new commandment of love towards God and neighbour, love which is focused on caring for the poor, widows and orphans,...along with a essential option, the opportunity of a horizon of life able to give cohesion and unity of all human choices in relationship with God and the neighbour.”⁷⁴

The love that God showed by sending His Son Jesus, is a replica of how believers should love one another. “Because God sent his Son, believers are to love one another (1 John 4:10-11, 19). This love’s source is God.”⁷⁵ “People having experienced God’s love exhibit this in two directions: toward God and there’s (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:26-27).”⁷⁶ The foundational basis of love towards humans, neighbors, fellow believers, family, and one’s enemies is outlined within the Scripture. “The two greatest commandments indicate that people are to love others as well as God. Although few speak of people’s love for God, Scripture abounds with statements of people’s love towards others.”⁷⁷

The New Testament comprises inscriptions to churches educating them in what manner to live and by what means to treat others. This opens the door to love and compassion for those

⁷³ H. W. Hoehner "Love." *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁷⁴ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

⁷⁵ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁷⁶ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁷⁷ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

who are less fortunate. “Because God’s attributes are identical with his essence, God not only loves; he is love (1 John 3:1; 4:8, 16).”⁷⁸ “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one to another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” (1 Pet. 3:8). Serving one another no matter what state they are in is found in the Scripture. “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace” (1 Pet. 4:10 ESV). Jesus is seen showing compassion to lepers in the books of Mark and Matthew. “In the New Testament Jesus shows compassion to lepers and enjoins his disciples to care for them (Mark 1:41; Matt 10:8).”⁷⁹

The love that Jesus displayed for people can be seen throughout Scripture as an example of how humankind should treat others. “There are many reference’s to Christ’s love for people. While on earth, Christ loved Lazarus, Mary, and Martha (John 11:3, 5, 36), John the apostle, and the disciples. Jesus showed His love for every believer with His death and His ascension. The Holy Spirit’s love for believers is mentioned in Romans 15:30”⁸⁰ “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;” (Rom. 15:30). “God’s love toward people, seen throughout the Bible, is unselfish and unmerited, epitomized in love for sinners, who deserved nothing except wrath. Instead, God sent Christ to die for them (Rom. 5:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:14-21). God’s love serves as a basis for human love.”⁸¹

The mere presence of Jesus among His people is a display of love and compassion. “The same idea of his presence is also stressed in the final words of the resurrected Christ, who

⁷⁸ Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 645.

⁷⁹ Daniel Durken, ed. *New Collegeville Bible Commentary*: p.196.

⁸⁰ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁸¹ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

promised to be with his disciples to the end of the world (28:20). Jesus' presence among people takes the form of compassion."⁸²

The New Testament Scripture surrounds the LXX translation of love. "Of several Greek words of "love," only two frequent in the NT. Although not prominent in prebiblical Greek, the verb *agapan* / noun *agape* is the most common NT word for "love." This verb/noun combination is the most frequent in the LX translating *ahab/ahaba*, it is unmerited, self-giving love."⁸³

The book of James places great emphasis on helping your fellow brothers and sisters who have fallen on hard and troubled times. One can view the theological foundation of servitude within these Scriptures. "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have work? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (James 2:14-17 ESV).

Being a Christian means serving others and not just yourself. Especially when you can be a help. The Bible speaks of "doing good," to others (Gal. 6:10 ESV). Throughout life, there will be occasions to help people who are in need and one should not pass up that opportunity to lend that helping hand. "What believers are, what they do and how they relate to others, mirror what God is and does, and how God relates to others."⁸⁴

The New Testament appeals to all the people of God to come together as one, helping your brother and sister in a time of despair. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you; but

⁸² Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2012). p. 25.

⁸³ Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 1019.

⁸⁴ Pieter G. R. de Villiers, "Divine Love in the Letter to the Romans," p. 4.

that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). In this text the Apostle Paul is announcing unity to the people, to exhort them to unity. In other words, whether they be homeless, or deprived, there should be no separation. One should not treat one different because of the circumstances. There should be a fellowship among the people (1 John 1:7).

Love for one’s neighbor which is a familiar command throughout Scripture is often stated. “Paul states that love for neighbor fulfills the law (Rom. 13:8, 10). In giving the command to love one’s neighbor, Jesus made it clear in the parable of the good Samaritan that neighbors are more than acquaintances or those of the same nationality (Luke 10:26-37).”⁸⁵ The same mercy and compassion that God shows His people is the same mercy and compassion that should be displayed by His people. “Paul sees the divine mercy as extending to all people, not only to Israel. He emphasizes God’s freedom to act as he wills. In making the point that salvation is God’s free gift and that we sinners can do nothing to merit it, Paul quotes words of God: I will have mercy on whom I have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion” (Rom 9:15; citing Ex 33:19).”⁸⁶

Helping your brother or sister is in the DNA of God’s people. “And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone” (1 Thess. 5:14). This verse graphs up the total commitments of Christians towards each other in ministry. “In the NT and apostolic fathers, *eleos*, the Greek word translated as “mercy,” is used in the sense of compassion...., Also, since ethics is related to relationships, *eleos* appears where person-to-person relationships are involved, whether it is God

⁸⁵ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁸⁶ L. Morris, “Mercy” In *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid. (InterVarsity Press, 1995). p. 2

having compassion on a person, or individuals having compassion toward one another (Mt 9:13; 12:7).”⁸⁷ This is a total picture of community outreach.

The book of Proverbs speaks of what to do when one’s brother is trapped in adversity. “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born out of a time of adversity” (Prov. 17:17). Being a brother, a friend means putting others before yourself, this is the message that Christ taught “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. Greater love hath no man than this, that a many lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). “Use hospitality one to another without grudging” (1 Pet. 4:9). “People are to be concerned with other people as God is. The command is to love neighbor to the degree that one loves self. Since people are concerned about themselves, they should have that same degree of concern for neighbors.”⁸⁸

The Lord addresses a great parable in the book of Matthew that speaks volumes to those who to take out to help or serve others in a time of need. He gives detail of an unfaithful servant and the qualifications of a faithful servant who shows acts of kindness. It is not that these acts will bring one to salvation, but they display the character of God. “For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt. 25:35 ESV).

The needs of the saints should be taken care of by the brothers and sisters in Christ. When one has transformed life, you can see their works through the love that they display. Christ requires a sincere concern for those who are impoverished and disadvantaged, and our generosity must expand beyond the four walls of the church. “Distributing to the necessity of saints; given

⁸⁷ I. Canales, “Mercy.” *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Development*, edited by Ralph P. Martin, and Peter H. Davids. InterVarsity Press, 1998. p. 1

⁸⁸ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

to hospitality” (Rom. 12: 13). In the book of Galatian’s love for the fellow, the believer is expressed by the Apostle Paul. “In Galatians 6:10 Paul exhorts believers, whoever they may be, but they must also have a deep love for fellow believers...Jesus gave a new commandment: believers are to love one another as he has loved them (John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; cf. 1 John 3:23; 5:2; 2 John 5).”⁸⁹

Good tiding, helping others in their time of need or support, has benefits and it has its rewards in heaven. The Apostle Paul gives a charge in 1 Timothy. “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded; nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim: 6-17-19). Paul is telling those that have riches not to be stingy with those riches because this temptation will lead to them looking down on the people who have not. The riches that Christians have are not their own but come from God to help others, to do good work, sharing whenever the Lord commands.

For it is God’s will for His children to do good works. The good works done by His children will demonstrate the character of God and draw people towards Him in love. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10 ESV). It is the purpose of the children of God to do good works because of the new creation they are created to be. “Therefore, is any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). They are understood to be a new creation because of the good works.

⁸⁹ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

The book of James brings to the attention to his readers that “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26), here he is not talking about being saved his is speaking of the results of being saved. James here creates a road map of “faith, salvation, good works, and then reward.” These good works are laid out by Paul according to God’s blueprint which He had ordained before time. “The bond of love between God and believers is so intimate that it cannot be broken.”⁹⁰ “Love’s source is God (4:7); because of God’s love we should love one another (3:11; 4:11).”⁹¹

Commitment to God’s Word

There needs to be a commitment to God’s Word. Everyone has a choice on whether they will commit or be disobedient to God’s Word. “Normal life includes capacity for making decisions, and one is responsible for one’s choices. The choice that makes all others more meaningful is commitment to Christ.”⁹² The love of God commands one to take care of the homeless and the poor. “Through and around his Word, God radically transforms the fellowship of people to be witnesses to the Word’s impact on their lives.”⁹³

The possessions that are gained on earth should be put to work for the Lord and not stored away. Anytime, one can help they should according to the Scripture because the investment is in heaven and not on earth. "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke. 12:33-34). “First, there must be a full commitment of ourselves-spirit, soul, and body-to

⁹⁰ Pieter G. R. de Villiers, “Divine Love in the Letter to the Romans,” p. 5.

⁹¹ H. W. Hoehner "Love." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. p. 930-32.

⁹² Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 1705.

⁹³ Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. p. 381.

the Lord. We must trust Him not only for the salvation of our souls but also for the direction of our lives. It must be a commitment without reserve.”⁹⁴

The Apostle Paul leads by example in helping the weak, poor and those who were physically ill. This example is one that all the children of God must follow. "I have shown you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts. 20:35). The Apostle Paul speaks of God having mercy on others in the book of Romans. "God's relations with Israel shape for Paul the ultimate paragon of mercy. When he is examining the status of Israel (Rom 9-11) he uses the verb *eleeo*, "to have mercy," eight times and the noun *eleos*, "mercy," three times. He finds God's treatment of the nation a superb illustration of his sovereign exercise of mercy.”⁹⁵

One of the responsibilities of mankind is to do good works. Salvation does not come through or by good work, but as born-again believers, being a new creation, good works should follow. Through spiritual formation one can see good works, God prepares one for these good works. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians. 2:10). In the book of Deuteronomy God ordains tasks so that the poor are taken care of, "At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year; and shalt lay it up within thy gates... for the stranger, fatherless and widows" (Deut. 14: 27-29).

There is a great mandate through the Scriptures on giving. The people of God should be givers, and this giving should come from a pure heart. The generous soul shall become rich with

⁹⁴ William MacDonald. *Believer's Bible Commentary*. p. 798.

⁹⁵ L. Morris, "Mercy" *In The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. p. 2

God “You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake” (Deut. 15:10 ESV). The lesson here is when one gives of his own free will and he will receive blessings, but when one does not or give grudgingly poverty awaits him. Another parallel speaks of the fact that the people were instructed to give liberally to the needy, so that their hearts would not turn to evil.

The Lord gives out a call to the whole world, not just the church but for every individual, for social justice. “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (Micah. 6:8). The book of Matthew displays Jesus as the great missionary with great compassion for the helpless. “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9: 36). Missionary work goes beyond the four walls of the Church.

Jesus gave His disciples instructions as they were sent out into the world. These instructions not only emphasized on the Word of God going forth but also on acts of compassion for those who are hurting and in need of healing. “And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give” (Matt. 10: 7-8). The journey that the Lord sent the disciples on they would not need anything extra and whatever else they may have needed would be supplied for them by their brethren on the journey. This is a clear picture of helping your fellow man. Which should be a characteristic of the Christian.

The book of Matthew continues to teach love and compassion for the people of God. Setting moral examples of how things should be across the world among the people. “Give to

him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away” (Matt. 5:42). It is clearly understood that the world has a fixation for material possessions and assets. Meaning that they want to hold on to every little thing that they have instead of helping others and sharing what they don’t need.

The message in the book of Matthew places this theological foundation in perspective as it pertains to helping those who are less fortunate or have fallen on hard times. “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:40). Performing these acts of kindness are beneficial and display the characteristics of the Lord. The Scripture also states that if one does not do these acts of kindness and grace then they have not done them unto the Lord either. These acts of showing compassion and love not only to fall under the umbrella of friends but also acts of kindness and grace should be shown to one enemy.

According to the Scripture, if one is willing to concentrate on the treasures of heaven and be content with the necessities of the world and be more willing to give, they will have treasure in heaven. According to the Scripture, one can say that the one who is asking for help needs genuine help but sometimes it hard to figure if they are faithful and true, but it is better to help someone who may be deceitful then to pass by someone who needs help. So, it’s best to help everyone that you can. Jesus is clear in His commandments in the book of Matthew as it pertains to love. He speaks on how one should “love others (Matt. 22: 35-40).”⁹⁶

The book of Luke describes specific ways in which the people of God could prove their sincerity. Overall, they ought to love their fellow citizen, and openly share apparel with them. They were also to give food to the poor. “He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two

⁹⁶ Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary*. p. 144

coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise” (Luke 3:11). These Scriptures were to teach the people of God not to be selfish by showing measures of selflessness. It implies that one must assist the poor corresponding to their capability. The landscape of religion is to do good, indicating a charitable compassionate spirit. This obliges one to dissent themselves, such as Christ forsake all and became poor to save all.

There is a story in the Scripture that pertains to a guest list that the Pharisees had compiled, but it seems as though they had left off the guest list the underprivileged community. Here Jesus advised His believers to welcome guests who could offer a modest promise of repaying the favor. This act facilitates one’s mindset to be precise with concern to giving and receiving. When one provides without expectation, they trust God to bless and compensate. What usually transpires when an invitation is sent out, friends and relatives are invited, and if they have some high-class friends, they will also get an invite. These people are on the invite list because of the hope for repayment. “But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:13-14 ESV).

The book of Luke outlines a terrific story of compassion and love when it comes to helping your brethren in a time of despair, titled The Parable of the Good Samaritan. There was a man who fell into the hands of robbers, who beat him and took everything that he had. The robbers left this man in the street to die. Beforehand Jesus was tempted by a lawyer to answer a question, in which Jesus answered with a question and then he proceeded to tell this parable of how many people passed this man lying on the street unable to help himself and none helped him. Not the priest, the Levite, but a certain Samaritan who was not a friend of the Jews stopped to help and Jesus proposed the question just who was this man’s neighbor? The reply was the

man who decided to help the man lying in the street in need. Because it was, he who had a truly compassionate heart for the hurting. It was the least expected who decided to lend a helping hand (Luke 10: 25-37).

Selflessness is a great aspect of Christian. This characteristic displays the compassionate heart of the people of God. Being blessed to be a blessing to someone else is scripturally based. The Word of God speaks in 1 John about being able to help someone that is in need. “But if anyone has the world’s good and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children let us not love in word or talk but indeed and in truth” (1 John 3: 17-18). One of the key elements of this Scripture is the word “deed,” because with love being an action word, one would need to show love by doing a good “deed.” And the Scripture speaks of showing an expression of love, by putting others first, being humble and obedient to the Word of God. Knowing that their reward is in Heaven.

This act of compassion and love is the foundation in which community outreach is designed. The Word of God teaches as it relates to the Godly call to commitment. The Lord God provides shelter and comfort to His people as an example of how the children of God should provide these same attributes amid adversity (Psalm 91:1-16). The selfless act of the Christian is to take on the burdens of others who are having a difficult time in life.

When John speaks of “laying down one’s life” he is talking about the greatest sacrifice that one could give. “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16). This implies that our lives should be in a repeated motion of giving on behalf of other followers and being ready to die for them. Even thou dying for your brother may not be required but displaying brotherly love shall be shared. When Jesus said in the book of John, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one

comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6 ESV), not only was He showing the way to salvation, but he was also saying follow my lead of love and compassion.

The book of James gives instructions about how one is to be viewed in the eyes of God. It lists some things that are of noble character and should be displayed by Christians. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27 KJV). Many times, people cannot get to governmental programs for help and it’s up to the Church to become that reaching hand. It is in this mode the Father is seeking a hands-on type of godliness in which every Christian would show an act of kindness and grace.

The goal of a transformed life is gained by these acts of grace and kindness. The transformed life demonstrations love between believers in such a way that the person will be moved to help even the brethren who suffered financial loss. There needs to be a sincere concern for the poor and needy. “Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality” (Rom. 12:13). There are and always will be people who need, and people will always be unemployed, someone will always need assistance. True men and women of God will be willing to give a helping hand.

Conclusion

The Scriptures clearly state that the poor will always be around. So, there will always be an opportunity to lend a helping hand. There will always be a chance to show benevolence, kindness, and love to someone in need. “For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore, I command thee saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and thy needy, in thy land” (Deut. 15:11). There should never be a time when one passes up the opportunity to do outward service. The Scripture command the people of God to be a helping

hand to their brother. If something is a burden then it is too heavy for one person to bear, and your fellow Christian brother should lift some of that heavy load from your shoulders. This goes along with the law of love and the law of Christ. “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2 ESV). The Scripture addresses acts of love, commitment, and community outreach. “If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, if he is thirsty give him water to drink” (Prov. 25:21). These Scriptures provide a road map displaying the characteristics of God that the people of God are supposed to share because they were “made in the image” of God. (Gen. 1:27). The Scripture that brings everything together comes from the book of Matthew. It speaks of God giving a good gift to his children, so the children of God should also give good gifts. This opens the door for the golden rule. which paints the picture of the golden rule to be outlined. The method to check whether an action is helpful to others is to ask ourselves if we would want it ourselves. “Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12). The theological foundation of community outreach can be found throughout the Scriptures Old and New Testament. Being committed to God will bring upon a spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit. This transformation will allow the people of God to express the agape love, which is spoken of in the Scripture, bringing about compassion for their neighbor. This commitment to God’s Word brings about a transformation that brings about the spirit of community outreach.

Theoretical Foundation

There is a logical and volitional fondness having its bases in veracity and purity called love, and it is exercised in free preference to choose. When depicting God, it is the precision of divine nature that He eternally communicates. The approach that pursues the supreme good in a loved one, entails giving oneself to another. the person who is loved. The chief stimulus for this project is entrenched in the words of Christ: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Prov. 19:17). It is the mission of the children of God to give a helping hand to people who are in need, this type of benevolence is stated in the Scripture (Deut. 15:7-11; Prov. 14:21, 31; 22:9; 28:27). When one gives to the poor or those which live in poverty, it is giving unto the Lord, because God blesses those who bless others. Because God will pay back those who give and bless others out of the kind of their heart (Matt. 10:42).

The overall theoretical foundation circles around love. Being kind to people is a display of God, because "God is love: (1 John 4:8). Countless Scriptures inspire a greater desire to prepare for a complete task in loving others as Christ did while on earth. This is because love is a duty and is aligned with the character of God. The nature of God is love and that is what the children of God must display. The value of love, compassion, and, kindness, should enliven all apologetics (1 Cor. 13).

Contemporary Theory of Love

Love is characterized as a powerful affection for or tenderness or dedication to individuals. It suggests intense keenness or profound devotion and may pertain to a variety of relationships. What differentiates love from affection or attainment is the strength of love being

considerably more powerful. Love can also be seen in a much broader sense to mean the aura of compassion. This modern-day description is applying today. “Love is often extolled as the source, substance, standard, and goal of Christian ethics...Ferreira holds that Kant and Kierkegaard both interpret the obligation to love the neighbor as universal in scope and unconditional in stringency...”⁹⁷ Research suggests that personal love is the foundation of the universe seen through a biblical worldview.

Throughout history, researchers from a multiplicity of disciplines have surmised on the nature of love. It was C. S. Lewis who dedicated an entire book to a symposium of forms of love. Lewis a religious theoretician speaks of four facets of love. The definitive love category is a charity, a selfless love that has no expectations or reward. Love is one of the highest philosophical sentiments known to human beings. There are various forms of love, but most individuals seek their expression in an amorous liaison with a well-suited partner.

The expression of love by God and humankind outlines and demonstrates the fundamentals needed for community outreach. “The charity is a genuine expression of humanity and a fundamental element in the achievement of authentic human relationships. The people, the beneficiaries of the divine love and subjects of charity, they are called to make themselves instruments of efficient spreading of God’s love.”⁹⁸

Contemporary psychologist hypothesizes that love is made up of three distinct classifications. These categories include attachment, caring, and intimacy. Love also is known as

⁹⁷ Simmons, Fredrick V. "Introduction: A Conjunctive Approach to Christian Love." In *Love and Christian Ethics: Tradition, Theory, and Society* edited by Simmons Frederick V. and Sorrells Brian C., (Georgetown University Press,2016). p. 1-16.

⁹⁸ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

a neurological condition. The attachment is involved, the brain can discharge a set of chemicals called pheromones. Love is also regarded as a survival apparatus that fosters safety and sanctuary. Philia is a form of love that is non-sexual but is seen as a deep bond between individuals. “In Kittel’s *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (1977), philia is defined as liking or caring, as of gods for men, of friend for friends, the love that is given to all kinds of human beings a love from which a man can excuse himself, not an irresistible urge or frenzy.”⁹⁹

Pragma would denote a sense of maturity when it involves love. There is also philautia, which denotes self-love. The Greek Philosopher Aristotle suggests just as many other psychotherapists that one must have a genuine care for themselves, to care for others.

One presently resides in a world steeped with teaching and psychoanalysis on the need for having a good self-persona, which correlates to an ingrained love of oneself. “There is no consensus in Christian circles on the issue of cogency of self-love in living the Christian life. Scripture does not present us with a clear-cut command to love ourselves...It is important within the present-day context to determine the nature of an acceptable understanding of self-love.”¹⁰⁰ Research suggests that self-love can hinder Christianity and be an abscess to the church. “Nygren (1982:217) contends that Christianity does not recognize self-love to be a legitimate form of love and that Christian self-love moves in two directions, namely towards God and towards neighbor

⁹⁹ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour: Towards an Integrated Self-Loving Reading,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* (Sept 2016): 4.

¹⁰⁰ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour: p.1

and that self-love could easily result in the obstruction of our love of God and for our neighbor.”¹⁰¹

“The difference between a healthy self-love and a distorted self-love lies in the ability to tell reality from fantasy and the ability to empathise and to love others (Vaknin 2003:5).”¹⁰² The Scripture paints the picture of a healthy self-love relationship in Matthew (22:37-39) when Jesus introduces the greatest moral commandments. Though often there is a void of understanding. “Many have understood this second commandment as including a command to love ourselves. However, this is a misreading of what it says. We are not commanded to love our neighbor and ourselves, but as ourselves.”¹⁰³

First, the love of God should be conveyed with one’s full being, after, one should love other people just as they love themselves. Every Christian has a calling on their life to demonstrate truth and love. Love is a very important human emotion. Throughout time many intellectuals have surmised on the spirit of love. Bringing to the forefront many unique types of love, Christian love, parental love, religious love, self-love, true love, even friendship love. “The Christian commandment of love contains two parts: loving God, which comes first in order, and loving fellow humans, or ‘your neighbor’, in second order.”¹⁰⁴

Loving oneself and loving one’s neighbor is the very question that Jesus answered. “Jesus’ answer indicates that he sees his statement on love-love of God and neighbor – revealing

¹⁰¹ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 2.

¹⁰² Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 3.

¹⁰³ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ An Van Raemdonck, “The Politics of Christian Love: Shaping Everyday Social Interaction and Political Sensibilities Among Coptic Egyptians,” *Religions* 10, no. 105 (2019): 6.

not only the main point of the law and the prophets but its presupposition, its basis. The essence of the divine will is expressed in these two commandments, as Hill (1972:307) says, and this essence hinges on the love of God and neighbor.”¹⁰⁵ With this statement at the forefront it, “immediately cut off any interpretation of as yourself as referring to the fact that it is natural and normal for humans to love themselves and that this becomes a kind of criterion for the love to be expressed in the terms of the neighbour.”¹⁰⁶

The Christian display of love is complete. “Christianity equals a universalized love and, in this respect, differs from all other religions, implying that it is also of a superior type.”¹⁰⁷ Love also involves a transformation. “Love remains with humanity without end and characterizes human existence in its completeness and fullness. To be transformed in glory is to be and remain in the everlasting conditions of love.”¹⁰⁸ In the field of biology, love is noted to be a neurological condition, which also contains chemistry. Selfless, loyal, and compassionate intention and devotion in the direction of another person is the contemporary description of love.

In the creation of humankind in His own image, God has made available the ability for one to know the factual and ethical value and they must care for each other as a result. “The powerful perception of the differentiation of the sexes and marital love as an enriching gift derives not only from the creation narrative (Gen 2:18-25), but even more so from Song of Song, which celebrates the strength of passionate love...”¹⁰⁹ Research suggests that when it comes to

¹⁰⁵ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ An Van Raemdonck, “The Politics of Christian Love” p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Pieter G. R. de Villiers, “Divine Love in the Letter to the Romans,” p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ Silva Moises, In *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. (Zondervan 2014). p. 2

the community, “love is recognized as sitting at the root of social community life: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev 19:18). Love in this perspective means loyalty and commitment towards one’s neighbor, beginning with full acceptance. This facet is exemplified by the social legislation, which is partially concerned with the rights of aliens, the poor, and others in special needs (19:34; 25:35).”¹¹⁰

Love is an ardent devotion or commitment that one must develop through a maturing process. Commitment is an essential part of love. The action of love must be experienced and not just defined. Love is a doctrinal virtue, by which we love God and our neighbors as ourselves, it appears inaccessible until we face it enfleshed, or seeing the acts of benevolence, kindness and self-sacrifice. Love is free but it may cost. The enigma of love is that it is free. “In Kittel’s *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (1977), agape is described as God’s special love for an individual, and the noun agape expresses the love that makes distinctions, choosing its object and holding to it...a free act, definitely chosen by the subject.”¹¹¹ “Love of God and love of neighbor are quite unique. Love of God is exhibited by acts of meekness and worship that grow out of admiration for God. Love of neighbor is manifested by acts of kindness that grow out of concern for the neighbor’s need. (p.647).”¹¹²

The Scripture portrays the perfect picture of God’s love. The Gospel according to Mark brings to life the theoretical foundation of love, when the scribes were trying to reason with Jesus. “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord

¹¹⁰ Silva Moises. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. (Zondervan 2014). p.2

¹¹¹ Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 4.

¹¹² Hannelie Wood, “A Christian Understanding of the Significance of Love of Oneself in Loving God and Neighbour” p. 6.

our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandments greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31). “First John 4:8 indicates “God is love,” while verse 10 explains how that love is displayed: “in this love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Thus, God’s love may be defined as “that perfection of the divine nature by which God is eternally moved to communicate himself.”¹¹³

This is a wide-ranging synopsis of what the children of God ought to demonstrate constantly. This is the type of love that is ordered by Christ himself. This agape love comes after a transformation of the believer by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus answers this question, He establishes the nature of God is above all. Jesus reaches back into the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy and lays the foundation of love that these Jews could understand since their daily study included the laws of Moses. (Deut. 6:4). It allowed them to see that God's covenant of love must be continuing. “Love lies at the core of the Christian faith and its notion of both God and the human being. Though, the increasing field of theological anthropology has yet to fully avail itself of philosophy’s and theology’s revamped devotion to the theme of love.”¹¹⁴

The book of Romans speaks of fulfilling the law of love, which makes it relational to others, not to conform to the world but through love fulfill the laws of Christ. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). This

¹¹³ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014), 198.

¹¹⁴ Julia Meszaaros and Yvess De Maeseneer, “In the Image of Love: Key Voices for Theological Anthropology,” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 78, no. 1 (2017): 1-10.

type of agape love is displayed in action not only to the deserved but also to the underserved. This type of love reveals itself in many ways, but one way is giving. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Christ gave His life for the Church because He loved the church. The untransformed mind could not display this type of love.

According to Scripture love should be selfless and sacrificial with no restrictions, and it should be directed to God and towards others. Four references are made as it pertains to the people of God loving others. The love of neighbors (Matt. 5:43) "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:" (Jas. 2:8). One of the signs of a true believer is the love shown for another believer, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34-35). Family love is portrayed throughout the Scriptures. The book of Genesis speaks of love as a sacrifice, referring to the love of a child, such as Abraham loved Isaac (Gen. 22:2). Then there is the kind of love in which a man loves his wife Col. 3:19). The fourth reference refers to loving your enemy, (Matt. 5:43-48). When one is transformed by the Holy Spirit you are filled with God's love and one openly and willingly help and serve others.

Love motivates service, it causes one to do the right thing in all situations. The book of Corinthians is sometimes called the love book and it outlines the importance of love. At the end of the twelfth chapter, Jesus says that He will show a better way, and this better way is a way of love. "And now abide faith, hope charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (1 Cor. 13:13). It is this agape love of the believer that transforms into good works by the people of God. "The Greek phrase agape interpreted "love," is commonly used to denote God and His

response to humanity...agape indicates a reasoned-out love, rather than an emotionally based love, one that loves the object regardless of the worth of the object and even though the love may not be returned.”¹¹⁵

This transformation comes through the Holy Spirit, it enables the Christian to have an outer focus to the needs of others. Being transformed takes one beyond the church walls in the form of serving. This spiritual discipline is an important asset to the Christian walk. These acts of service should manifest because of our love for God. The people of God should love God and have a love for others while serving. The Christian life is a life of transformation and the transformation takes place in one’s life and it instantly becomes apparent in how one lives. Those who are transformed are transformed by the Holy Spirit in their outer nature.

The book of the law Deuteronomy outlines the duties of love as it relates to the law. “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all they soul, and with all thy might” (Deut. 6:5). The connection is made between the law and love in the book of John. “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). This type of agape love is a true sign of obedience to the law, God’s commandments. “God’s love creates the realities among human beings, that is the basis and motivation for love between people. The combination of the command to love God (Deut 6:5) and the command to love one’s neighbor (Lev 19:18) appears only in Mark 12:28 and par...Jesus’ interpretation of the second command in the parable of the Good Samaritan implicitly extends love to include everyone (Luke 10:37; cf. 7:47).”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014), 198.

¹¹⁶ Silva Moises, In *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. (Zondervan 2014). p. 2.

Research dictates along with Scripture that love is the real ingredient that sustains relationships. “According to the teaching of Jesus, love is the synthesis of the entire Law. Love is the real substance of the personal relationship with God and with the neighbour, is the principle of human micro-relationships (with friends, family and small groups), as well as human macro-relationships (social, economic and political relationship).”¹¹⁷ The true form of solidarity and brotherhood can be found in the mandate to love. “The love of neighbour, manifested in the form of unity and brotherhood towards individuals should be encouraged and spread progressively more into the world and acutely engraved in the human consciences, exclusively in the context fashioned by the increase of the migrant flows and the accentuation of social inequalities.”¹¹⁸

Contemporary theories of Compassion

Compassion is looked at in several views theoretically. It is seen as controversial, and/or unreliable when it comes to making assessment decisions, or principles. Compassion can be viewed as a form of sadness and love for another. It can be defined as the emotion that evolves in observing another’s distress and that inspires an ensuing yearning to support someone in a time of need. Compassion can also be described as empathic distress for others.

According to the Scripture, the children of faith are to always help the poor. “And you shall not strip your vineyard bare neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19:10 ESV).

¹¹⁷ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

¹¹⁸ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

When one is involved in community outreach, they have an opportunity to show God's love, compassion, kindness, and grace, and according to Scripture, this should always be done. "So then, as we have an opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10 ESV).

Research suggests outlines the reach of God to the poor to show compassion. "The OT idea hessed (Bultmann, 479) is to be understood in the context of a covenantal agreement between two parties, a greater with a lesser party, usually God and Israel. Given the likelihood of covenantal default, the stronger party, showing hessed, provides resources to the weaker party for the sake of preserving the covenant."¹¹⁹ God's compassion is shown throughout Scripture. "in Psalm 136:1 God's mercy delivers, it reaches down to the poor, it is compassionate grace, and it elicits thanksgiving from those who are blessed."¹²⁰

Research provides recordings of Jesus showing compassion, just as the people of God should show compassion to their fellow brothers and sister. "Mark records that Jesus had compassion on the crowds,...He began to teach them (Mk 6:34), The passage shows that mercy and compassion is just not a material benefit such as healings. Mercy extends to the spiritual care of people. After the teaching, Jesus miraculously provides food for the crowd of five thousand."¹²¹

Mercy and compassion are shown in the book of Luke within the parable of the prodigal son. "When the father from a distance sees his son returning, he is filled with compassion (Lk

¹¹⁹ I. Canales., "Mercy." *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Development*. (InterVarsity Press, 1998). p. 1.

¹²⁰ I. Canales., "Mercy." *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series*. p. 1

¹²¹ S. Nicholson., "Mercy." *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. (InterVarsity Press, 2003). p. 2.1

15:20).”¹²² Compassion is by no means purely a feeling; it continuously requires action to help those in need. Research suggests that the world must be a place of compassion, especially when it involves relationships, if one is a child of God, displaying the character of God. “If this is the character of the God who dwells among them, then Israel must be formed into a community that can embody this life-giving compassion, mercy, and faithfulness in the world.”¹²³

True agape love manifests itself in the life of the believer. It guides one's life in the way of moral and ethical standards, especially when it refers to helping someone out who is in need. Virtue refers to the demonstration of good conduct that a person displays. Love is considered one of the three theological virtues. Christian compassion is occurring when the people of God realize the agony of others and lend a helping hand to assist. The foundation goes back to the Old Testament book of Proverbs. "Open thy mouth, Judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy" (Prov. 31:9).

The foundation of Godly compassion is based on action, not just words of comfort or encouragement. To have compassion implies mercy, it encircles the feelings of sympathy and empathy for others. Compassion comes from a gentle heart, a godly heart, one that is compelled to help its fellow brother. "When Jesus saw the crowds of people, he felt sorry for them. They had trouble in their minds. They had nobody to help them. Jesus thought these people are like sheep that have nobody to help them" (Matt. 9: 36 EASY). “The Gospels never describe Jesus as

¹²² S. Nicholson., “Mercy.” *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. (InterVarsity Press, 2003). p. 2.3.

¹²³ Brad E. Kelle., *Telling the Old Testament Story: God's Mission and God's People*. p. 87.

having mercy without doing something to help. Rather, if mercy is present, then some action is provided to alleviate the suffering of those in need.”¹²⁴

There lies a community of people that need daily care and compassion and it is up to the children of God to step forward and lead the way exhibiting Godly compassion to all, especially those of the household of faith. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). There will always be an opportunity to help the poor, downtrodden, and poverty-ridden neighbor. Kindness towards others is not to be limited to the Gods chosen but it is to be extended to all who will receive. The people of God should do good in every situation. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5: 16).

The theoretical foundation of how one should treat others can be found in the book of Matthew. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: or this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). This Scripture lays the foundation on how one should treat others, just as God shows one compassion, so should the people of God show compassion. If there was transformation among the people, this type of compassion would transform all over the world. This golden rule of treating others as one wish to be treated is biblically-based. The people of God should be willing to lend a helping hand in a time of need. Being helpful toward one's fellow man who has fallen upon a crisis. Never turn a blind eye to someone who is in need.

¹²⁴ S. Nicholson., "Mercy." *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. (InterVarsity Press, 2003). p. 1.

Doing the right thing or doing what is right when it comes to helping the homeless or aiding those who are in need is doing the right thing according to God's. Just as the Samaritan neighbor who in a time of need had compassion for a man who had been beaten and robbed. When so many others had passed him by and helped. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he saw him, he had compassion on him," (Luke. 10: 33). The other Jews had passed this man by without offering a helping hand. But the Samaritan who was not a friend of the Jews stopped to give him the Godly attention that he needed. To have true godly compassion one must suffer with, to put yourself in someone else shoes.

When one loves and has compassion towards others there is a certain concern that they will have for their neighbor. There will be a yearning to help their fellow brother or sister in Christ. "Bear ye one and another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). This is referring to coming to the aid of someone who has fallen on hard times, in trouble, by trying to help them by any means necessary. The people of God should always be prepared to lend a helping hand to those in need. The Scripture passage pertaining to the good Samaritan is a prime example of helping those in need without expecting something in return. "The parable of the good Samaritan records that the Samaritan was moved with compassion when he saw the beaten man lying on the side of the road (LK 10:33). The story then describes the Samaritan's caring actions, which went above and beyond expectations."¹²⁵

The mandate of compassion is traced throughout the Old and New Testament. "In the OT mercy (in the sense of lovingkindness) is a central theme; the covenants between God and Israel was an illustration of mercy, being awarded to Israel freely (ps. 79:8-9' Isa. 63:7). Insofar as the

¹²⁵ S. Nicholson., "Mercy." *The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. (InterVarsity Press, 2003). p. 2.3.

covenant was rooted in divine love, mercy was an ever-present value of the relationship. Yet divine mercy extends outside the breached covenant in its promise and compassion to Israel.”¹²⁶

Contemporary theories of Commitment

Being committed comes with being devoted to a specific cause or person, also taking on obligations to that cause or person. At times commitment comes with a promise or agreement. Being in a relationship involves commitment, love, honesty, and trust. This brings security to the relationship. Commitment is a dedication to loyalty. Sticking to a cause and/or not giving up on the cause of person. God displayed a commitment to His people after the flood. This provides a roadmap for humankind to follow God’s example of commitment. “God remembered Noah, all those alive, and all the animals with him in the ark” (8:1). True to the broad scope of God’s intentions for creation, the new beginning after the flood emerges not only from God’s commitment to humankind but also from the Creator’s concern for the animals.”¹²⁷ This foundation was only the beginning of God’s mission to restore through commitment.

Being committed means forsaken oneself while caring for others. “The Oxford English Dictionary reports that the distinctive contemporary meaning of commitment as a promissory self-involvement, expressed in reflexive grammar (‘I commit myself’),...”¹²⁸ Being committed not only serves as a pro-social behavior but it also brings organization to oneself. “Commitments organize personal life, produce social distinctiveness, teach a sense of purpose, and generate agendas of personal significance and value; and when extremely cultivated they can entail

¹²⁶ Craigie, P. C. "Mercy." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, by Walter A. Elwell. 3rd ed. Baker Publishing Group, 2017.

¹²⁷ Brad E. Kelle., *Telling the Old Testament Story: God’s Mission and God’s People*. p. 52.

¹²⁸ Rodney J. Hunter, “‘implicit Religion as Commitment Process: Insights from Brickman And,” *Implicit Religion* 7, no. 1 (2004): 20-36, <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=Isdar&AN-ATLA0001894441&site=ehost-live&scope=site..>

personally aligned systems of deep moral and spiritual meaning with important social consequences.”¹²⁹

Meeting the needs of humankind, and the community denotes commitment outside of the church realm. “To meet these needs, people are involved in charitable organizations, religious or not. Those people and organizations committed to the defense of human rights, for development and against poverty, for justice and peace, work for a culture of life.”¹³⁰

Commitment requires onto to loyal to the Word of God. One must express love and compassion for all. Throughout the Scriptures, the word commitment paints the picture of God's love and how the people of God love and be committed to His Word. If one is committed to the Word of God, then they will obey the commandments of the Lord. "Let your heart, therefore, be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his status, and to keep his commandments, as at this day" (1 Kings. 8:61). Being committed means being committed to God and striving to do his will in our lives and be prepared to a good hand of gesture in a time of need.

Commitment is an action that is taken in response to God and His Word by His people. One that is committed will prove to have godly agape love and compassion towards others no matter their situation in life. There can be no preferential commitment by the people of God. Commitment is not a statute that one can pick and choose when to be committed. There needs to be a total commitment when it concerns God's Word and deeds. This commitment lies at the heart of God, it is the groundwork of our relationship with God. Just as God is loving and

¹²⁹ Rodney J. Hunter, “Implicit Religion as Commitment Process: Insights from Brickman And,” *Implicit Religion* 7, no. 1 (2004). p. 22.

¹³⁰ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.,” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

compassionate the people of God have an opportunity to be loving and compassionate, aligned with an open heart ready and willing to help someone in need.

The existence of Christ is a precise correlation to God's mission, love, compassion and one being committed to His Word. The presence of Christ in circumstances of vulnerability, adversity and poverty-ridden situation reveals the need for community outreach. "A number of occurrences and sayings in the first Gospel put emphasis on the astonishing fact that the messianic king and son of David had come in lowliness and poverty. The most renowned of these passages is the parable of the last judgment (25:31-46), according to which Christ identifies himself totally with the most miserable among our fellow humans."¹³¹

The development of community outreach activities displays commitment. "In this sense, the prosocial behavior presumes the advancement of activities based on the sense of gratuitousness, the logic of giving and genuine solidarity. This places one at the assistance of the poor and listening to the excluded. While the Bible mentions the necessary responsibility and the intrinsically religious character of welcoming the stranger and the poor."¹³² The participation in community outreach displays a commitment not only to the neighbor, but it also displays the love of God. "The Old Testament proposes the love as a union brotherhood and solidarity, which is based on the alliance of God with the chosen people. The interactive and social ethic of the

¹³¹ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. (2012). p. 33.

¹³² Nadia-Elena Vacaru, "Social Action, Commitment, and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.!", *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

Old Testament is championed and driven by a strong sense of community. The fraternal love has a theological motivation: serve the human means love the God.”¹³³

Commitment plays an integral part in God’s mission plan of restoration. “The Bible’s opening stories in Genesis 1-11, which form the first movement of the larger OT story; have revealed the need for God’s mission and the nature of that mission as God’s commitment to engage as a covenant partner to restore creation.”¹³⁴ The restoration process reaches into the church as Christ displays, commitment, compassion, love, and missiology. In this story the poor and needy are seen as bears of Christi’s presence: “Anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me” (25:40; NEB).”¹³⁵

¹³³ Nadia-Elena Vacaru, “Social Action, Commitment and Love of Neighbour - A Solidarity for Migrants.,” *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 5* (January 2018): 99-106, [doi: 10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2](https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2018/2.2).

¹³⁴ Brad E. Kelle., *Telling the Old Testament Story: God’s Mission and God’s People*. p. 55.

¹³⁵ Johannes Nissen. *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives*. p. 33.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Intervention Design

The intervention design comprises identifying the desired improvement that needs to take place at Harvest House of Hope. These improvements include a commitment to community outreach, scriptural teaching and sound doctrine preaching on compassion and God's desire for His people when it comes to mission services. The separation between the generations at Harvest House of Hope causes a slight challenge to the church's unison but also has an immediate impact on the church's demographics. A survey of the church membership in 2018 showed that 70% of the membership were youth.

The first step of this intervention plan will be to enhance awareness of scriptural references pertaining to Harvest House of Hope's commitment to community outreach. This will also include calling a stakeholders meeting of the core leadership of the Harvest House of Hope. This stakeholder meeting will be addressed in two phases. First, all the stakeholders will be called and informed of the meeting place, time and purpose. Secondly, the meeting place and time will be placed inside the bulletin as follows: Stakeholders meeting location 1525 N. D. Street. San Bernardino, CA 92405 at 7:00 pm. Then the meeting will be brought to the attention of the congregation, through the bulletin and during weekly service.

The purpose of bringing this information to the congregation will be to inform and instruct them of God's desire as it pertains to those that are poor, homeless, and/or neglected. To bring the congregation under one umbrella of information that will enable everyone to become aware of the issues that are at hand in the community. Thus, allowing the congregation to peek into what is coming up next for the Harvest House of Hope as a whole, and understanding what

goals the church will be working to accomplish together. Those goals would include educating the church on how situations such as homelessness occur. Showing respect, donating, volunteering, reaching out and being an advocate.

There will be a pre-intervention period that the entire church can participate in. This is called corporate prayer. This concentrated prayer period will be for the guidance and direction of the pastor and the core leadership of the church. The designated time for every member of Harvest House of Hope to commence incorporate prayer will be 6pm daily. This pre-intervention corporate prayer will go on for three weeks.

Stage 1

The first stage of intervention will require ten weeks of teaching biblical nature. During this period the Holy Scripture will be dissected in the areas of community outreach, missionary services, and compassion according to the Scripture as it relates to the people of God. This informative teaching will occur during Bible study and the sessions will be one hour long from 6:30 pm-7:30 pm and held on Wednesday nights. Also included over the next ten-weeks will be biblical-based sermons that relate specifically to the context discussed at Wednesday night Bible study. They will be of the thematic topic for the weekly sermons.

This first stage of intervention will also take place for the members of Harvest House of Hope who are under the age of 18, which makes up 70% of the congregation. Youth intervention will take place during this first stage and will take place on Tuesday nights from 6:00 pm-7:00 pm at the Harvest House of Hope. During these ten weeks sessions, the youth members of the congregation will be advised on the importance of community outreach according to the Scripture. At the end of each sitting there will be a question and answer session in which the

youth will be able to communicate any information that was helpful or reveal what they did not understand during the session. This will allow for open discussion among the youth and the instructor. The youth will also be given a questionnaire so that the stakeholders can get insight on their attitude, behavior or views towards the learning sessions as it pertains to the responsibility of the church as it relates to helping those that are in need.

Stage 2

The second stage of intervention will consist of focus groups. All willing members of Harvest House of Hope will participate in a focus group. Within the focus group, the members will be led in a guided discussion as it relates to the biblical groundwork and the obligations of the church in community outreach. After obtaining such information the members will be about to discuss and air out any differences that they may have or preconceived notions with the project. This allows everyone to have the desired input if they so choose.

In this second stage of intervention, the focus groups will be threefold. (1). All members collectively participating in the focus groups together. This is to show unity in the church congregation and leadership. (2). There also will be a focus group that just contained the adult members of Harvest House of Hope. Allowing a more advanced discussion to go forth. (3). The youth will also have their own focus group led by church youth pastors. This will allow them to speak openly among their peers. Which gives them healthy and more comfortable freedom of speech. The focus groups were designed this way so that everyone can have a viewpoint and feel like they are a willing participant in the projected outcome.

Stage 3

The closing stage will include a post-intervention and pre-implementation corporate prayer. This corporate prayer will lead the church into the implementation portion of the project. After all the information has been gathered, through communication, teaching, questionnaires, focus group meetings, implied learning, only then will implementation take place. This implementation will include four community outreach events that will be scheduled at various times of the year. Let it be noted that of the four community outreach events, one will be specifically geared toward the youth of Harvest House of Hope leading the event.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

Implementation of the intervention design will include scriptural teaching, sound doctrine preaching, and training in the field of community outreach. Monitoring and maintenance will also be a part of the process. The intervention will take place over a ten-week period at the Harvest House of Hope 1525 N. D. Street. San Bernardino, CA 92405.

Week 1: Teaching pertaining to giving aid to your fellow man will come from the book of Deuteronomy. “For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore, I command thee, saying Thou shalt open tin hand wide unto thy brother, to the poor, and to thy needy (Deut. 15:11). Here the emphasis will be placed on the fact that the Jewish people of the day always took care of their own, and the Apostle Paul also instructed everyone to be a “cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7). This was important because the promises of God are attached to one freely and fully giving aid, “The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself” (Prov. 11:25).

After the Wednesday night teaching session, there will be an assessment of the lesson. Which will include a question and answer period geared toward their viewpoint on the historical-grammatical approach of the Scripture? The major emphasis will be placed on, “What is means to have a giving heart.” This assessment will be done weekly using the same format but with different emphasis.

Weekly Assessment

Title: _____

Scriptural references: _____

Lesson: _____

- Informative/helpful
- Non-informative/unhelpful

Sermon: “An Appeal to the Hart” will be the sermon topic for the first week of intervention stemming from (Deut. 15:7-11). It will be her that the Scripture will be expounded upon referring to how Moses made an appeal to the hearts of the people to be filled with the Spirit of generosity. This enabling them to be free from the “love of money” (1 Tim. 6:10). The author of Hebrews reminds one to be content, and not to be a lover of money, being able to give freely. “Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He, Himself has said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5).

Week 2: Teachings from the book of Job will be the focus of week two's weekly Bible study. "Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him" (Job 29:12). Here bringing to the attention to the congregation that Job was a "perfect, and upright," (Job 1:1) in the eyes of God, because of the way he treated the poor and the needy, he was spoken of good throughout the city and enjoyed God's favor.

After the Wednesday night teaching session, there will be an assessment of the lesson. Which will include a question and answer period toward their viewpoint on the historical-grammatical approach of the Scripture, including the genre and literary context? With the major emphasis being placed on doing good deeds for those who are in need.

Sermon: Good Deeds will be the topic of this week's sermon, coming from (Job 29:12), expounding on how Job did good deeds and although tried by the fire he was also giving a double blessing. During this sermon, many topics relating to good deeds will be the source of exegesis. Particularly Paul's teaching to the Galatians. "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do up" (Gal. 6:9 ESV). This sermon will encourage the members of Harvest House of Hope to keep striving to do good deeds because God will reward.

Week 3: This week teaching will stem from the book of Psalm. "For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy and shall save the souls of the needy" (Ps. 72:12-13). This week will concentrate on the heart of God for all people. Not just the ones who go to church on Sunday morning. After the Wednesday night teaching session, there will be an assessment of the lesson. Which will

include a question and answer period geared toward the congregation's viewpoint? The major focus will be placed on God's desire for the needy poor, and underprivileged.

Sermon: Can you Hear me Now? This week's sermon will focus on hearing the heart of the people. Here leading the congregation to hear the cry of those in need, just as God hears their cry for mercy. The Scripture emphasis will be from the book of Romans. The Apostle Paul lays a firm foundation about helping others. The Apostle reveals that it is Jesus who first set the example on earth and it is this example that the church must continue to display. "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself." (Rom. 15:2-3).

Week 4: In week four there will be a continuing theme pertaining to the heart of God. These weeks teaching will stem from the book of Psalm: "Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked" (Ps. 82:3-4). This will stand as a reminder that God wants them to be champions of social justice. This session will open the congregation up to more Scripture pertaining to aiding those who are "hungry" in "trouble" or "poor" (Isa. 58: 10-11; Deut 16:11). After this week's assessment, the congregation will be challenged to cook or purchase a meal for someone in the community who is hungry, in trouble or poor.

Sermon: Down but not out. Week four's sermon topic will be geared at bringing to the attention of the congregation that though some may be homeless and downtrodden, they are not out, because they have an eternal helper in heaven. But also, that they are supposed to help those who have been afflicted and/or have fallen on hard times. (Ps. 82:3-4) will be the scriptural bases for this week's messages. The congregation will be opened to more Scripture

references to aid those who have been distressed. “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay him usury” (Ex. 22:25).

Week 5: This week’s Bible study will focus on how to obtain the blessings of God by being righteous in His eyes. “He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor” (Prov. 22:9). This lesson will be about showing compassion and gaining present-day happiness and impending rewards. It will stress making a conscious effort to go out of their way to help someone. At the end of the week, 5 session an evaluation will be taken to examine the progressive nature of the class.

Sermon: The Parable of the Good Samaritan. This week’s sermon will come from the book of Luke, who gives an outline description of The Good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 25-37). The main focal point that will be examined is how God can change our hearts towards people who are not exactly like us. During this week’s message, the researcher provides a handout that describes a scenario placing themselves in the shoes of the “wounded man who fell among thieves.” (Luke 10:30).

Week 6: In this week’s Bible study lesson the church will move into the New Testament book of Matthew. “For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:” (Matt. 25:35-40). This signifies that no-one knows who they are helping at any given time. It surely could be an Angel of the Lord. “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb. 13:2). The researcher will hand out a questionnaire to obtain the congregations’

viewpoint on the compassion of God vs. the compassion of a man. An open discussion will be held after all questionnaires have been reviewed.

Sermon: “Help I’ve Fallen, and I can’t get Back up.” In the six weeks, hospitality will become the major focus. Here the researcher will stress the point that it is God’s desire that Christians show hospitality to strangers and or any believer who needs it. References will be made to the book of Genesis (18:1-15), Where Moses entertained an Angel. The research will continue with the theme of compassion, inserting Scripture references accordingly. Major emphasis will be placed on the teaching of compassion from the book of Colossians. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience” (Col. 3:12 NIV). Other Scripture references (Ex. 33:19; Isa. 30:18).

Week 7: This week’s Bible lesson will be on remembrance. “Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do” (Gal 2:10). This will be a time to bring to the remembrance of the congregation God’s desire for them to remember the poor, which He made clear through the voice of James, John, and Peter. The researcher sticking with the theme of compassion, also embraces a sense of commitment on the behalf of the congregation to help those in need, just as the Scripture instructs, because it is the heart of God.

Sermon: “Look” will be the title of this week’s sermon message. To remember all the church needs to do is look out of the window of the church, their own house, or even when they are driving down the street. They will see the vast number of homeless, hurting, and less fortunate people in the community. The foundation for the sermon message will stem from

(Gal. 2:10). The researchers understanding that it is not always easy for one to display compassion, especially when they are not aware of the circumstances that lead to the state in question, and/or the displacement. Here research will open the discussion as it pertains to the true Christin character.

Week 8: This week's Bible study will focus on community outreach. "But when thou maketh a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:13-14). This week the lesson will zero in on the needs of the community at hand. Because helping people that one does not know takes a great deal of kindness and a show of compassion. The researcher will incorporate additional Scripture references pertaining to being committed to showing kindness and compassion to others. (Eph. 4: 32; Gal. 6:2 & 1 Pet. 3:8).

Sermon: The Invitation will be the title of the week 8 sermon message. This week at the closing of service there will be a challenge put forth to the congregation to invite someone into the church for a glorious feast that we will soon be planning. This glorious fest will be the first of four community outreach events that will take place at the Harvest House of Hope.

Week 9: Will reveal the concept that doing nothing is also a sin. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, the fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughter, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Ezekiel 16:49). This teaching will reveal that God blesses you so that you can bless someone else. Not so that you can monopolize your blessings and have no social conscience. The research

here will include additional scriptural passages that will aid in the interpretation of this week's lesson. "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother has a need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from his, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but indeed, and in truth" (1 John. 3: 17-18).

Sermon: I Didn't Know, will be the topic of this week's sermon. This will be based on the story of Sodom, and how their uncaring attitude for the needs of others was their sin and ultimate ruin, along with their detestable acts. The researcher will produce additional Scripture passages that deal with the ignorance of Scripture. When this information is revealed to the congregation, the veil of ignorance will have been removed. The congregation will now be aware of the sin nature. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:18). Additional Scripture reference (Hos. 4:6; Matt. 7:21-23).

Week 10: The final week of intervention will focus on love. "Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt is perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21). This week's teaching will engulf the idea of loving your neighbor. In the text, Jesus exposes one for not loving according to God's character. Stressing that the unwillingness of the man to share his belongings shows that he has no compassion. At the conclusion of the tenth week of scriptural enlightenment, there will be an evaluation given to the congregation to determine the effectiveness of the teaching. The researcher will move into the action stages of the project from this point.

Sermon: Follow Me, will be the title for this final week's sermon using the Scripture: Matt: 19:21. Pinpointing that if one wants to be a true follower of Jesus than they must display the heart of God, especially to their neighbor. Following this last intervention session, of teaching and sermons, a call will be given to following the pastor as he/she follows Christ to the love field of community outreach.

After ten weeks of intense teaching and studying on one's individual and the church's committed responsibility as it pertains to community outreach the members of Harvest House of Hope will have developed a solid understanding of what God expects from the church in relation to community outreach, and the first community outreach event can be organized.

Community outreach training

Training in the field of community outreach will begin after the congregation has completed the teaching phase. The training will include the members of Harvest House of Hope physically going out into the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA and observing the needs of the community. For one week, beginning on the Monday following the last Sunday morning intervention sermon. The members of Harvest House will meet at the church location at 5:00 pm for preparation. While at the church and beginning with prayer, the direction will be given as it pertains to the specific area to be canvased by the congregation.

Under the direction of the leadership, the training exercise will be placed into motion. Using a four-block radius to the East of the church location, the congregation will begin to walk, hoping to engage those who are in need. They will be carrying waters to hand out, donated by the congregation, along with hygiene supplies, also donated by the congregation, and church

pamphlets explaining God's plan of salvation. These pamphlets will also include the address and phone number to the church helpline for those who need immediate assistance.

After the congregation has covered their one block radius, they will head back to the church to discuss what they observed. How many supply bags they handed out and how many people they encountered and/or what they could have done better or differently. This will allow them to evaluate first-hand the conditions of those who are homeless, poverty-ridden and disadvantaged. Afterward being able to come back to the church to discuss what they had witnessed. This will also allow for open communication as it pertains to the needs of the unfortunate and the church's responsibility to those needs. While the Harvest House of Hope will be closing with prayer, they will also look to arrange a similar training session on the next day.

The following day being Tuesday, the church will meet at 5:00 pm at the same location to prepare to canvas the community once again. The training period will begin with opening prayer. This time the church and leadership will take a different route. They will canvas one block heading to the West of the church. During this training session, the church members will carry with them the designated amounts of water, gloves, first aid kits, and hygiene supplies.

While covering this route to the West, the congregation will stop to help every person in need who are willing to accept help. If one does not desire to be given water, pamphlets or hygiene supplies, the church will advance to the next person while praying silently for the soul of the person who did not desire assistance. On this route, the congregation will conversate with those who wish to tell their story of how they may have ended up in this condition. After pounding the pavement for one hour the congregation will head back to the church location. Here

they will engage in prayer for those in need and for the overall project to be a success. Along with discussing what they had just observed and how they can better serve the community.

On Wednesday night the congregation will again meet at the church to prepare to go out into the inner-city in hopes to have a better understanding of their situation. Opening with prayer and before outlining the suggested route designed by church leadership. The group will canvas the North area on this outing, covering one block. In hope to encounter those who may need assistance. In this training session, the congregation will carry with them a supply of perishables donated by the congregation. Along with water, and hygiene supplies, to hand out to those in need.

While taking the time to walk and speak those of the inner-city who have found themselves in need in order to gain insight on their situation. The congregation will also extend an invitation for them to come to the church and fellowship. After the area has been canvased the congregation will return to the church location where they will engage in corporate prayer for what they just witnessed and the continued direction of the project. Afterward, having an open discussion on what happens and what they believe how the Harvest House of Hope can contribute to helping the inner-city homeless community.

On Thursday night the members of the church will meet and strategize about the direction they will take for this training session. Beginning with prayer as always by the leadership, a suggested plan will be presented to the congregation. The church will now canvas in the South direction from the church. This will allow them to have covered all four directions. The message that the church will carry out is that of God's love.

On this journey, the congregation will carry with them the needed supplies that may be needed for someone who is homeless or displaced. Water, perishable food, and hygiene items, in hopes of passing them along to those in need. Traveling in a one-block radius to the South of the church location, the congregation will seek to observe situations while being trained on how to assist. When the hour task has been completed, the congregation will return to the church location to continue in prayer and guidance.

On Friday night the final night of training for the congregation, following opening prayer. The leadership will set out to become involved with the center of the community. After already traveling in all four directions, the church will now direct their attention to the center of the community. Directing their attention to those who inhabit the center of the community. Realizing that sometimes they are left out.

During this final canvas period, the congregation will proceed in prayer as they encounter those from the inner-city. On this journey, the church will bring its usual supplies donated by the church. In hopes that they can help someone in need and show the love of God to them while completing their task at hand.

These phases of training will allow one to open the lines of communication between the members of Harvest House of Hope and those who fall into the category of homeless, poor, poverty-ridden and disadvantaged in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA. This will identify the needs of the population. The youth of Harvest House will not be involved in the communication process. The monitoring of this training will take place by the stakeholders. Then after careful evaluations, then maintenance will take place so that the strengths and weaknesses of the

program, along with the area of improvement can be measured, which will lead to empowering the members of the Harvest House of Hope.

Implementation

After the training is completed, the project will be set to be implemented into the community. This will include four phases of community outreach events directed by the Harvest House of Hope leadership. A community outreach event is an opportunity for the Harvest House of Hope congregation to go beyond the four walls of the church and reach out to the community's needs. These community outreach events were designed so that action could go forth and a spiritual transformation among the congregation could be visibility seen. These four events will be voluntary, and no member of the church should feel obligated to participate. The Harvest House of Hope is seeking a measurable outcome of 2/3 of its membership participation.

Major events to support the community can become costly. In order to be prepared for this large task funds would need to be raised by the Harvest House of Hope. A fundraising campaign within the church will begin in January 2020, so that all the needed supplies can be obtained before the November start date. These supplies will include but are not limited to food, hygiene gift bags, tables, chairs, plates, etc. Beginning in September 2020 Harvest House will send out a team twice a month before each Harvest event to pass out flyers and speak to the community about the outreach program that is taking place in the upcoming months. This will be done two months prior to each event.

Harvest Fest: The first of the community outreach events sponsored by Harvest House will be held on November 21, 2020, around the Thanksgiving holiday. The location for the event will be 1525 N. D. Street. San Bernardino, CA 92405 at 5:00 pm. Good tidings should be done

year-round, but it is especially nice to help feed the homeless during the holiday season. The Harvest Fest will consist of more than just feeding the homeless, Harvest House will also supply them with much needed sanitary/hygiene supplies while ministering to their souls.

The Harvest House staff will pull from the storage area and set up approximately 75 chairs and 10 tables in anticipation of a great turnout. From the collected donated funds by the congregation, the food, supplies and hygiene materials will be purchased. The mothers of the church will handle the purchasing of the needed materials for the Harvest Fest event. There will be an attempt to have ten turkeys donated. The men of the church will oversee cooking the first meal. The menu will include but not limited to, turkey, dressing, ham, vegetables, cornbread, and salad. The beverages will include, juice, and water. The hygiene packs will consist of a toothbrush, toothpaste, wash rag, soap, mouthwash, comb, and brush.

On November 21, 2020, Harvest House members will arrive at the church location for set up and preparation for Harvest Fest. After corporate prayer, they will commence to having everything in place to open the doors of the church by 4:30 pm. This event will be open to the public. Both the adults and youth volunteers of Harvest House will participate in Harvest Fest.

Opening with prayer the Harvest House event will begin at 5:00 pm. Then the feeding of the homeless and less fortunate community will commence. Everyone will be seated and served by the Harvest House of Hope staff. After each person is finished eating, they will be handed a hygiene package, prayed for and informed about the next Harvest House community outreach event.

After Harvest House completes the first community outreach event there will be an evaluation period, to determine the effectiveness of this new approach to community outreach for

Harvest House. This will be used to gauge outcome variables that will be evaluated, then another stakeholder meeting will take place to determine the direction of the project.

New Year's Harvest will be the second community outreach event sponsored by the 5 Harvest House of Hope. This event will take place on February 20, 2021, at the Harvest House of Hope 1525 N.D. Street. San Bernardino, CA 92405 at 5:00 pm. This New Year event will be hands-on for the youth of Harvest House. They will be involved in event planning from the beginning. The reasoning is because they also were involved firsthand in the training process. Though the no youth under the age of 15 participated in the communication phase of the training, those over the age of 15 were trained in the art of the salvation prayer.

For the New Year Fest, the youth are to gather clothing, and hygiene supplies for the homeless families in the community and proceed to pass them out at the church to whoever showed up. The youth are to obtain the donated clothing from their own closets that they are no longer wearing or able to fit, with the permission of their parent or guardian. Also, they are to ask their parents, guardian or family members for any article of clothing that they are willing to part with so that they can provide for homeless families in the community.

Upon gather the clothing for youth and adults, the Harvest House of Hope you will set up the fellowship hall of the church with the clothing. Separating them between adult and youth, men and women clothing. The hygiene packs will be given to the youth from the storage collection area. Where they have already been collected and donated prior to the first community outreach event.

The youth and other volunteer members of Harvest House will meet at the church location at 4:00 pm to prepare for the New Year Fest. They will open with prayer and then begin

their set up. At approximately 4:55 pm the doors of the church will be open to the outside public and the community outreach event will be underway. During the event, the youth will be behind the tables as the homeless family guest can choose an outfit while being handed a hygiene bag on the way back out the door. The youth will prepare to serve 20 families with outfits and hygiene supply kits. While offering words of encouragement and praying spiritually.

After the article of clothing has been distributed and the hygiene kits have been passed out, the youth will lead the remaining congregation and volunteers in corporate prayer. Moreover, after the event, an evaluation will take place between the stakeholders and the youth to assess the effectiveness of the project. This will lead to reassessing the event towards a positive outcome.

May Harvest Fest will be the third community outreach event sponsored by the Harvest House of Hope. This event will take place on May 22, 2021, at 5:00 pm. The location will be at the church in San Bernardino, CA. This event will be an adult-only sponsored event. There will be no children involved in the setup, planning or distribution part of this project. The only involvement that the youth will have is continuing to incorporate prayer along with the church for guidance, direction, and a successful outcome. The May Harvest Fest will be geared towards assisting families in the community who have been displaced and are poverty-ridden. During May Fest, the adult members of Harvest House of Hope will make themselves available to assist families in need of food, survival supplies, toiletries, as well as coats, blankets, and/or tents for shelter.

The needed supplies will come from various avenues. First, there will be no cooked food involved in this event. The food that will be given away will come directly from the Harvest

House food pantry. Bags perishable groceries, bread, can good, cups of noodles, and more will be handed out to displaced families as needed. The survival supplies will be bagged up from the storage area. Toiletries will be brought with donated funds from Harvest House to hand out to displaced families at May Harvest Fest. All coats and blanket will come from the homes of members of Harvest House and their families. A portion will be purchased from the goodwill. Harvest House of Hope is a 501 c 3 not for profit organization that will also seek coats and blankets donated to the organization for the event. Having to purchase a few tents may be an option for Harvest House in order to bless someone who is in dire need of temporary shelter.

The adult members of Harvest House will meet at the church location at 4:00 pm to commence in prayer and worship. This will also be a time of setting up for the church, to be sure that the area is in order to perform the duties set forth before them. After prayer and set up is complete, Harvest House will open its doors to the community. The volunteer staff of Harvest House will assist those in need by handing out needed supplies, food, blankets, and pamphlet information as it pertains to the church. Some refreshments will also be served. The refreshment will be supplied by the core leadership of Harvest House. They will include, water, orange slices, and energy bars.

Depending on the condition of those that walk into the church, blankets will be hand out on an as-needed condition. The same goes for the few tents that Harvest House can purchase. They will lookout and assets the need to decide who shall receive the tents. This process will be made simpler because of the training done by Harvest House of going out into the field. Because it is always possible that they will see someone who they engaged during the training.

This will be a time that those who are in need, not only of material things but also of information that they may come in just to speak with a member of Harvest House. Before May Harvest Fest, research will be done to locate other places that help those in the community who are of need, so that they can be directed to other agencies that support. This will take place for approximately one hour. Harvest House will be prepared to assist 25 families with food and supplies and countless others with information. Following this event, an evaluation will take place between the stakeholders and the adult members of the church to assess the direction of the project.

Summer Fest will complete the cycle of events for Harvest House, on August 21 at 5:00 pm at 1525 N.D. Street. San Bernardino, CA 92405. Summer Fest will include all-volunteer members of Harvest House who desire to participate. This final event will be the grand finale. Harvest House will attempt to partner with other organizations in the neighborhood and gain the assistance of the City of San Bernardino, CA to block off the street leading to the church so that they may have a private area with no traffic to feed 200 needy individuals and families in the community.

Considering the size of the event planned Harvest House leadership will speak with those businesses in the community. In the same block as Harvest House, there is a medical supply office, another church called "*Glory to the Lamb.*" A sunglass outlet, and a children's clothing small outlet. Harvest House being a 501 3 c will also be prepared to write letters for a donation from the event.

The staff of Harvest House after ascertaining what needs to be done will now go into action meeting at the church at 3:30 pm. Here they will begin corporate prayer, and then proceed

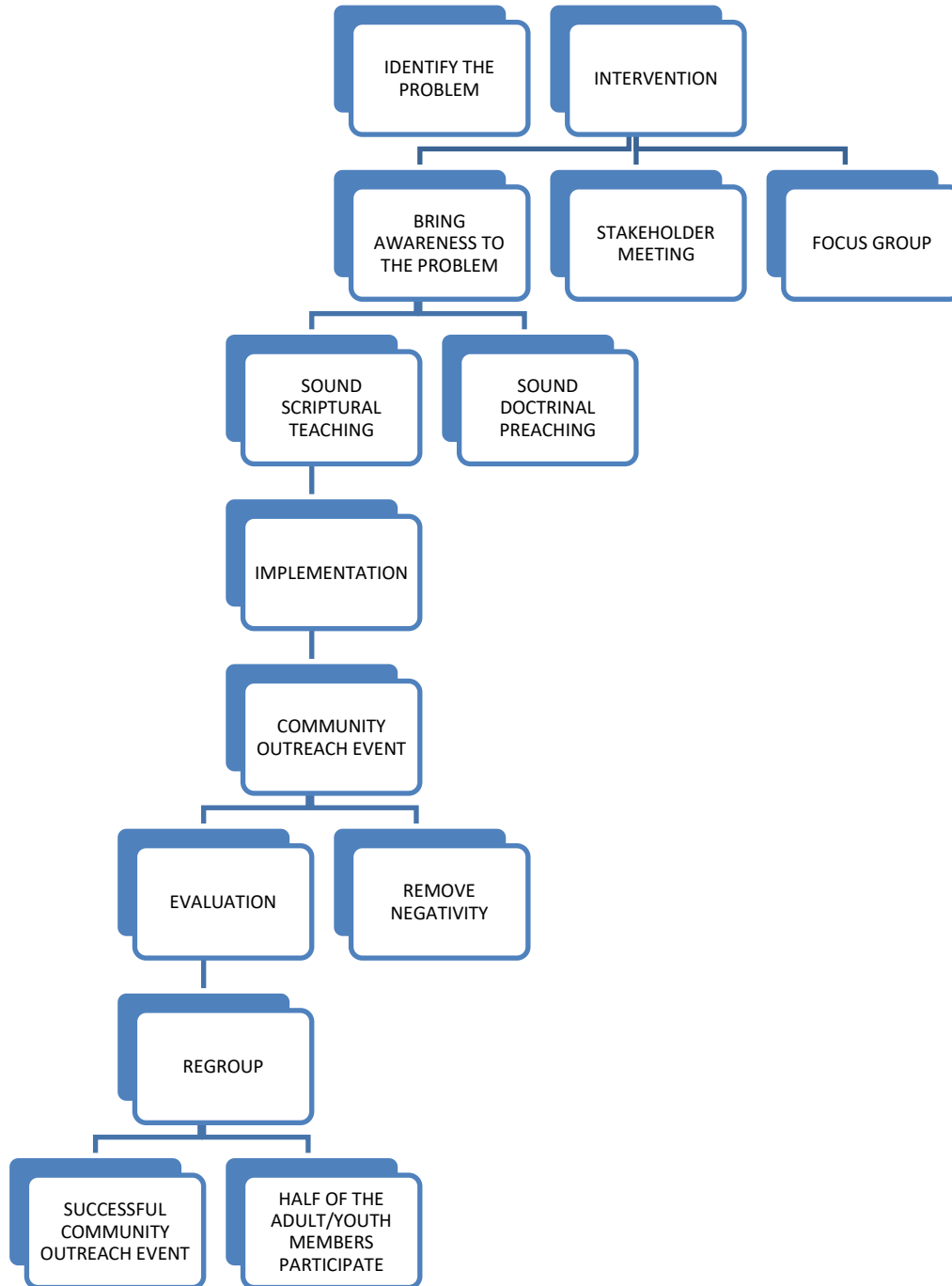
to set up the fellowship hall in the proper format to receive the guest. The outside of the church will be utilized in the fourth project, giving Harvest House more accessible room to operate. There will be two staff inside the church, one at the door, and three staff members outside, including the pastor.

The menu will include hotdogs and hamburgers that will be cooked on the outside grill. Chips, water, and juice will also be included. These food supplies will be furnished by the Harvest House of Hope and come from their benevolent fund. Which is used to help those in need. Music will also be included in the festivities.

A final evaluation will take place after the fourth Harvest Fest, not only documenting the overall numerical volunteer outcome but also the spiritual transformation of the membership towards community outreach.

Table 3.

Intervention Design Chart



Event Evaluation form

Program Title _____ Date _____

Location _____

Theme: Circle one: Education Social reform Fundraiser Community outreach

Final total cost of programming _____

Event Co-Sponsor _____

Goals of the program: _____

KEY

- 1. Strongly Agree 2. Moderately disagree 3. Unsure 4. Strongly agree 5. N/A**

	Statement	1	2	3	4	N/A
1	The program goals were met					
2	The location was adequate					
3	The time allocated for the program was adequate					

4	The event was advertised					
5	The handouts (flyers) were useful					
6	The turnout exceeded expectations.					

Weakness of this

Strengths of the programs

Additional Comments

Chapter: 4 Results

This chapter will be designed to compute the findings of the study. Here the researcher will present the outcomes of their investigation. When gathering primary data for the thesis project: questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews will be the primary sources. The study will also call for participation observation tactics to be performed as well, seeing that the study is based on members of Harvest House of Hope partaking in community outreach events. To measure the effects of the intervention, based on the projected outcome the methodology used will call for a mixed method which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative. The reasoning behind using both qualitative and quantitative methods is because the results of the thesis research project need to answer how many members are actively participating and why.

When gathering data for the thesis project, the triangulation method will be used. The three methods for gathering data will be interviews, questionnaires and focus groups. By using the triangulation method, it will allow one on one or face to face interaction with the participants, which will bring a more intimate relationship between the research and the participants, while using questionnaires will allow the participants to answer freely and privately with no bias.

In the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA is the setting for this thesis project. In the poverty-ridden, neighborhoods of this once up and coming place is where the Harvest House of Hope ministry was founded in 2017. The initial founding location was at the home of the pastor in San Bernardino County, before finding a local building in October 2018. The building was a prime establishment for Harvest House of Hope because the beginning membership only included the pastor and his family.

San Bernardino CA is a city with a strong history of population growth and established business ventures such as the foundation of the McDonald's corporation. This long-standing franchise was established on May 15, 1940, and still stands today as a McDonald's museum located at 1398 N. E. St, San Bernardino, CA 92405. Gold was even discovered in the San Bernardino mountains. The city of San Bernardino had such a rich and prosperous beginning. The city now is an area overflowing with homelessness, displaced individuals and families, walking the streets with shopping carts filled with clothing, and other belongings that this underprivileged community holds so dear. A city where it is normal to see families living out of their cars and in tents, boxes, and on the side of the road.

The Harvest House of Hope membership sits right in the heart of this community and has worship service every Sunday at 11:30 am until 1:00 pm. Harvest House also have prayer meetings and Bible study on Wednesday nights from 6:00 pm till 7:00 pm. Along with Youth Intervention at 5:00 pm. Every week the members of Harvest House drive through their community, have their services, and proceed to their homes. Not having a care in the world about what's going on right under their noses inside their community. The children play inside a gated fence that separates them from the outside world of darkness, confusion, and chaos.

The make-up of Harvest House includes the local pastor and his family, a Hispanic husband and wife team. They were the very first members of the church. An evangelist and her family, who travels over an hour away to worship with Harvest House. Then there is another local couple who attends often. Together with this group of four families, 25 people make up the totality of the Harvest House of Hope congregation.

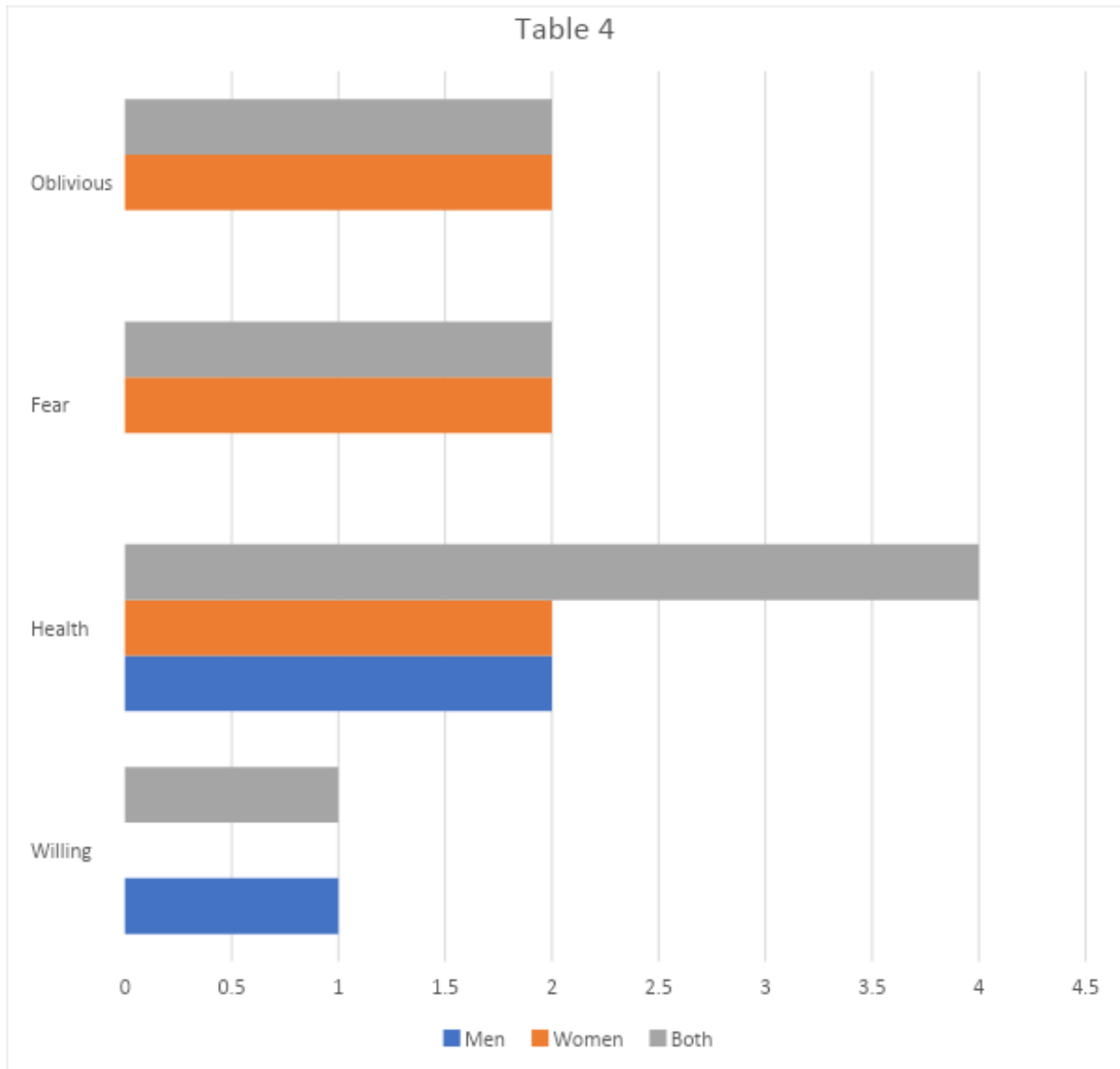
Adult results

Before the ten-week session being held at Harvest House of Hope that were geared towards installing a positive mindset towards community outreach, interviews will be held with all 25 members individually to gauge their views as it pertains to participating in community outreach. Harvest House had nine adult members who were interviewed. Three of the adults that were interviewed were men and two of the men (2/3's) stated that they desired to participate in community outreach, but their physical bodies would not allow them to become active participants. The pastor was the lone male adult participant in the study who was eager to lead the outreach charge.

Harvest House of Hope has nine adults and six of them are women. Out of the six adult women, 33.33% (2 out of 6) revealed that their health was the cause of them not being a willing participant in community outreach. They both were suffering from back injuring due to an auto accident, in separate cases. The four remaining women also gave opposing views on why they did not participate in community outreach. Two of the four (50%) revealed that they feared that they would become infected by some unknown disease or catch something because of the way most homeless persons lived on the streets. There was a major issue concerning how unsanitary they were, with not having a place to wash or clean themselves. So, they had no desire to go out into the community to participate in community outreach. They saw this as a sure way to become ill. Not taking into consideration of the safety measures that can be in place. The remaining two adult women declared that they just didn't know enough about helping or serving to understand how they could be of help to someone or family who was in the state of homelessness.

When calculating the results of the nine adults together 44.444444% (4/9) revealed that they could not participate in community outreach because of health issues pertaining to their bodies. The calculations also revealed that two out of the nine adults (22.222%) adults revealed that they did not desire to be willing participants because of fear that they would catch some unknown disease from the homeless community because of their uncleanliness. While another (2 out of 9) 22.222% of the adults revealed that they just did not know enough about being participants in community outreach events to be active in such a mission. That they needed to learn more about what the Scripture said about being a helper to those in need. Also mentioning that the teaching and training were a great help to them. There was also the one willing participant (1/9) who was willing and able to participate in community outreach. That represented 11.111% of the adult congregation.

Adult Results



Youth Results

The youth were involved in an interview session just as adults. The sixteen youth members of Harvest House of Hope were also interviewed individually so that the researcher could understand their mindset when it came to be willing participants in community outreach. The breakdown for the sixteen -youth included three teenaged girls, two teenaged boys, eight girls under twelve, and four boys under ten. This makes up the youth department in its entirety for the Harvest House of Hope.

The three teenaged girls are very mature with great grade point averages, in school. They are very active in their school extracurricular activities, such as sports, cheer, drama, and band. All come from good family backgrounds and are extremely involved in church activities. They display a zeal for Christ and are eager participants in inhouse church activities. There are also two teenaged boys at Harvest House. They are pretty much involved in church activities. Both are outgoing and adventurous, love to be in charge and organize new programs. They both stem from single-parent homes. Their love for the Lord and the church is unquestionably at their ages.

The eight girls under the age of 12 were a different process and took different measures to come to conclude the results. They were outgoing, creative, mostly upbeat and very intelligent. They were attentive to the project and were eager to help. The eight girls showed solid commitment and displayed an aura of spirituality. One could say that at this young age they held a pure evangelism spirit. The final group of youth at the Harvest House of Hope was a group of young boys under the age of ten. This was a group of active young men with no fear of the unknown. They did not always understand or comprehend the scriptures, but they enjoyed the environment in which they were in and looked up to their peers.

When interviewing the three teenaged girls (100%) 3 out of 3 of them all stated that they were afraid to go near the homeless community because they were dirty and had foul odors. They also mentioned that they were afraid of catching some sort of disease or something. The desire to help with mission work was present. They had sympathy for those who were homeless, underprivileged, and poverty-ridden and wanted to do whatever they could to help and support if it did not mean getting close to them or having any kind of physical contact. The teaching on safety first had little or no effect on the three teenaged girls. Their vision and or perspective views controlled their actions.

When interviewing the three teenaged boys one hundred percent (100%) of them had no problem participating in community outreach. They understood that there was a need for support to the homeless community and that someone needed to step in and do something to help. So, they were eager to lend a helping hand and way they could. They were the first to volunteer to hand out a flyer and to serve the food. These young men were willing participants of the mission. They were inspired by the teaching and mentioned that it led them to desire to do more to help and support those who were less fortunate than themselves.

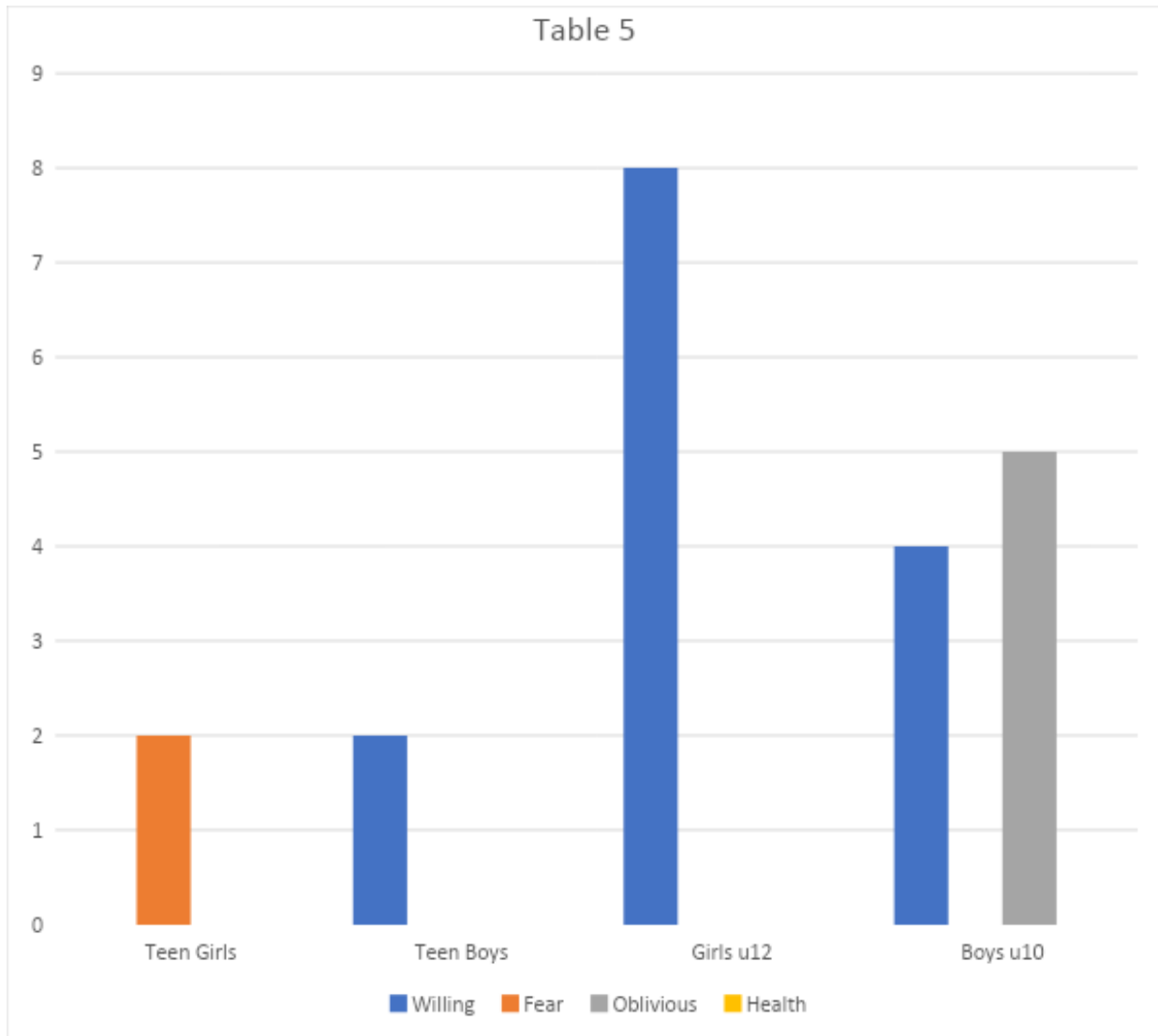
The younger generation of girls which make up 50% of the youth department at Harvest House of Hope had no fear of participating in community outreach. They desired to help, get food and clothing. They wanted to pass out flyers and serve in the kitchen. They believed the teaching was inspiring and led them to want to do more for the community and help those who did not have what they needed in life to survive or just had it and lost it. They were not concerned with the smell of odor, or why some people ended up in their situations. They only knew that

these people needed help and that somebody should help them. They also referred to the teaching by saying that it was the church's responsibility to help those in need.

The younger boys displayed similar results to the younger girls. The younger boys made up 25% of the younger generation. They also saw the need for them that were less fortunate and understood that it was up to someone to do something about it and that the church should be doing something. They were willing to take on the responsibility to help in any way they could. No matter what the task they eager willing participants in the community mission project were. They mentioned that they were glad to be taught about what the Bible was saying about helping others because they knew thy someone should be doing but did not know who was supposed to and did not understand why no one was doing anything. Their desire to become a helping hand increased through the work of the ministry.

The concluding results pertaining to the youth were that 87.5% of them wanted to participate in community outreach events. While 18.75 % of the youth department at Harvest House of Hope was against participating in community outreach.

Youth Statistical Results



The next phase of results was calculated from the questionnaires handed out by the researcher to the members of Harvest House of Hope during the adult and youth teaching sessions. The feedback form revealed questions as it pertained to the lesson that was taught about the biblical view of community outreach, commitment, and compassion as it related to helping others and their responses. The objectives were to see if the related teaching provided enough information to lead the participants to have a greater understanding of the biblical principles of community outreach.

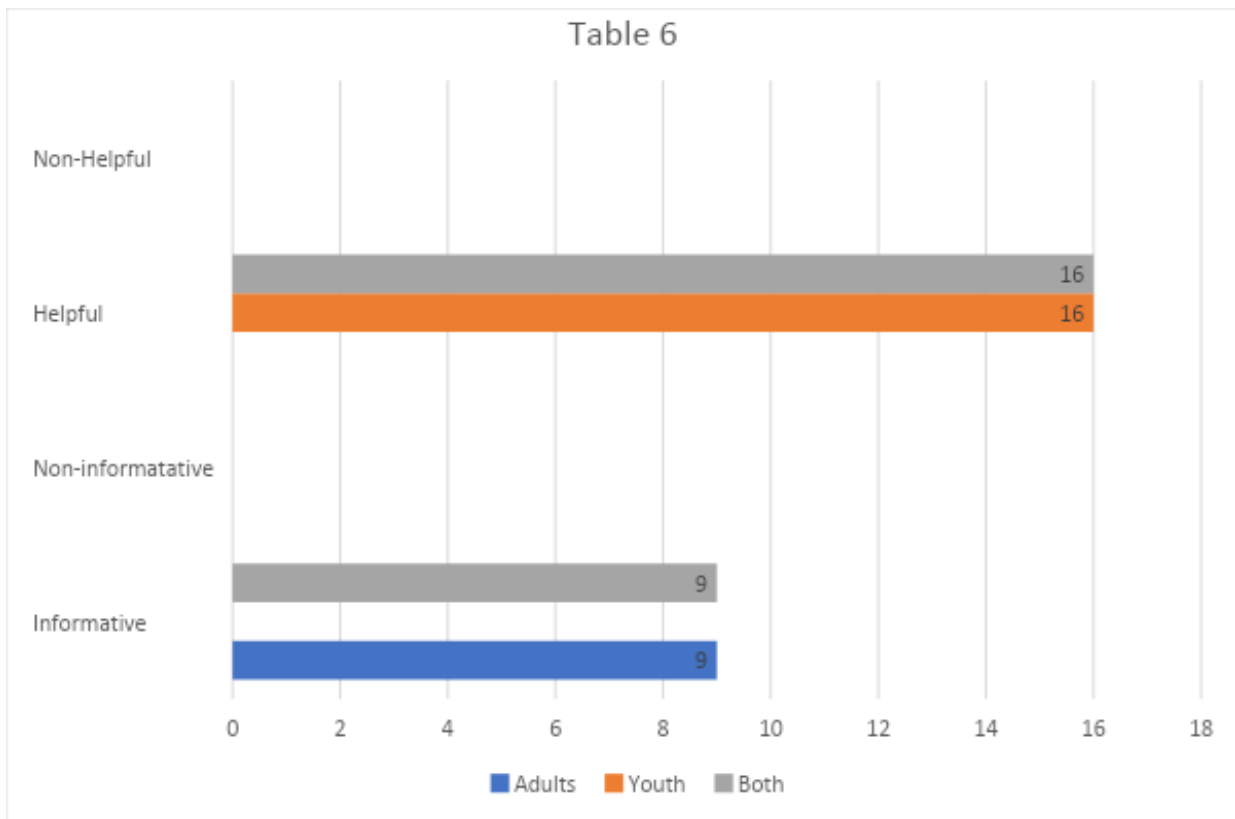
Adult Results

There were nine adult participants of Harvest House of Hope who took part in the teaching session each week and answered the questions pertaining to the project questionnaire. Out of the nine adult participants (100%), nine out of nine declared that the information provided was informative. Not only was it informative it was much-needed information because many believed that it was the duty of other agencies to help and support those in need, in the manner that was needed as it pertained to the homeless community. Explaining that they left the weekly sessions with a greater understanding of the Word of God in reference to the duties of the church. Stating that this is information that they can pass down through generations and begin to teach others.

Youth Results

There was a separate questionnaire provided for the youth members of Harvest House of Hope. Out of the sixteen youth members of Harvest House of Hope, 100% (16/16) declared that the information they received during the weekly sessions was a helpful tool. The information gave them a clear understanding of the biblical viewpoint pertaining to community outreach.

They believe that the way the sessions were taught simplified the outlook and painted a clear picture of what should be done and who should be doing. They even suggested that there should not be any excuses for the church not to help and support those in the community because they have learned that it was the duty of the church.



Focus Groups

The research held focus groups to help gauge the overall production of the four community outreach events. These focus groups were also designed to build or upgrade the local services that are offered by the Harvest House of Hope, pertaining to outreach missions. The researcher held three separate focused groups. The first focus group was held with the nine adult members of Harvest House. The second focus group was geared toward the youth members of Harvest House, while the final focus group was a combined session. The results of the focus groups were calculated and revealed at the stakeholders' meeting.

Adult Results

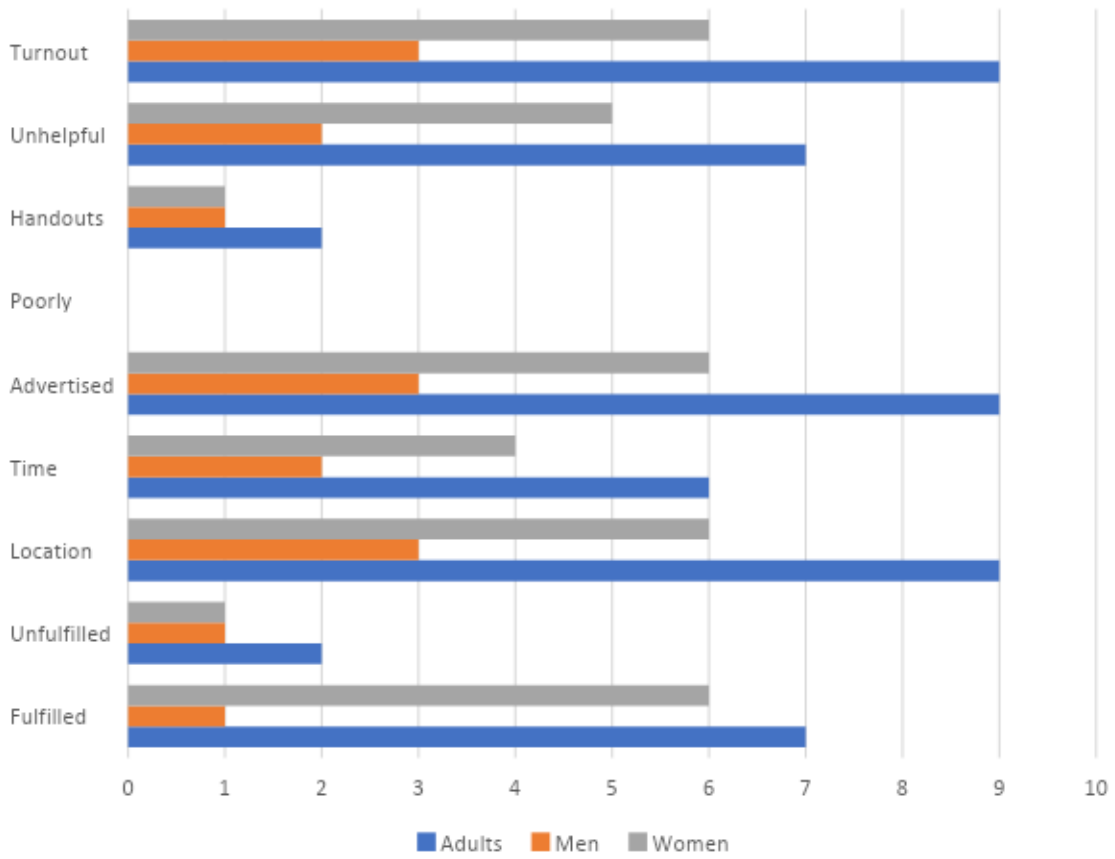
The focus group results revealed that of the nine-adult membership of Harvest House of Hope, seven of the nine (77.888888%) believed that the program goals were fulfilled. They believed that Harvest House of Hope set out to provide support to the community in San Bernardino, CA and was able to do just that. They provided food, clothing, information, and should love and compassion to those in need. All the adult members (100%) believed that the location of the program was adequate. This was because, the location was right in the heart of the city, where they could visually see that help was needed. Believing that serving in this location would benefit the city and the church.

As it pertains to the advertising component of the community outreach mission, 100% (9/9) members of Harvest House believed that the mission service events were advertised well. They believed going out into the community was had the greatest impact on the turn out of the events. Six of the nine (66.6666667%) of the adults believed that the time allocated for the programs were adequate. Stating that everyone needed help no matter what day, time or season

that it was. But there were some that suggested that the outreach missions should not have been around the times of holidays because many organizations were having different programs to assist those in need. That we would have better served the community and helped a greater number of people if the programs were held in different seasons.

The greatest discrepancy was among the adult members of Harvest House surrounded the perception of education. Only two of the nine (22.222222%) members of Harvest House believed that handing out written information was a helpful tool. The concern was their ability to read or comprehend such material. This brought on the greatest debate among the members. To sum up the results of the adult membership, 100% of them believed that the turnout exceeded expectations.

Table 7



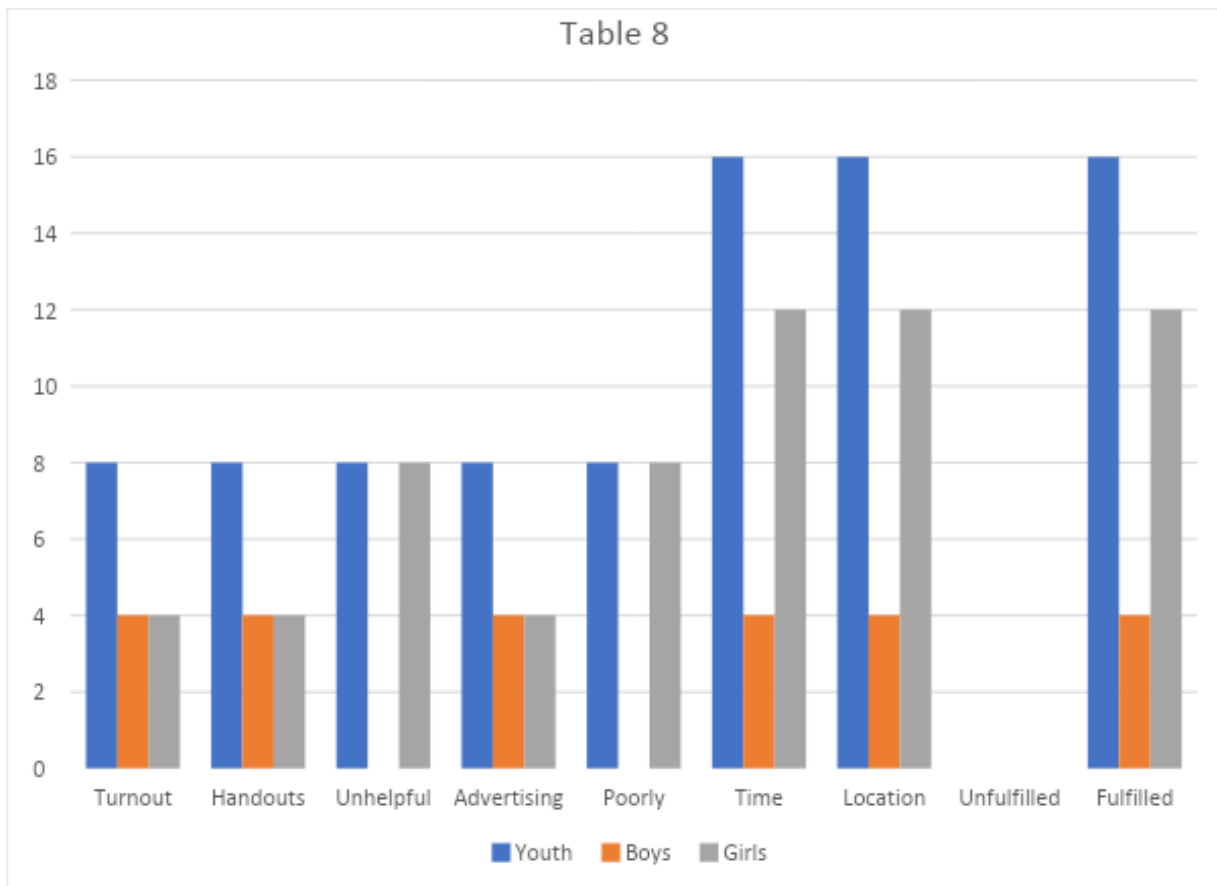
Youth Results

The focus group held with the youth of Harvest House of Hope revealed the following results. Sixteen youth voluntarily participated in the focus group sessions. The results state that all sixteen (100%) of the Harvest House youth believed that the program event goals were met. Stating that they set out to help and assist those in need and that was accomplished by the events that took place. One hundred percent (100%) of the youth also believed that the location was satisfactory for the event programming. They believed that helping those around the community was right because these were the people that they see every day or all throughout the week. There was also a (100%) agreement when it came to the time allotted for the event programs. They see no discrepancy between having programs during holidays or that conflicted with another agency's program. But did also suggest next time partnering with another agency to make the events bigger was a good idea.

When it came to advertising results, is where we find the largest split between the youth participants. There was only 50% of the youth at Harvest House that believed the program was advertised well. Mentioning that it would have been helpful if the events would have been advertised on the radio or even social media. Although they, as in the homeless may not have social media accounts, someone may have seen or heard about the advertisement and told them about it. This would have started a chain reaction of people telling other people which would have drew a greater crowd and the church would have been able to assist more people in need.

There were only fifty percent (50%) of the youth that believed the handouts were a helpful tool to use for the community service mission events. As it pertains to the overall turnout

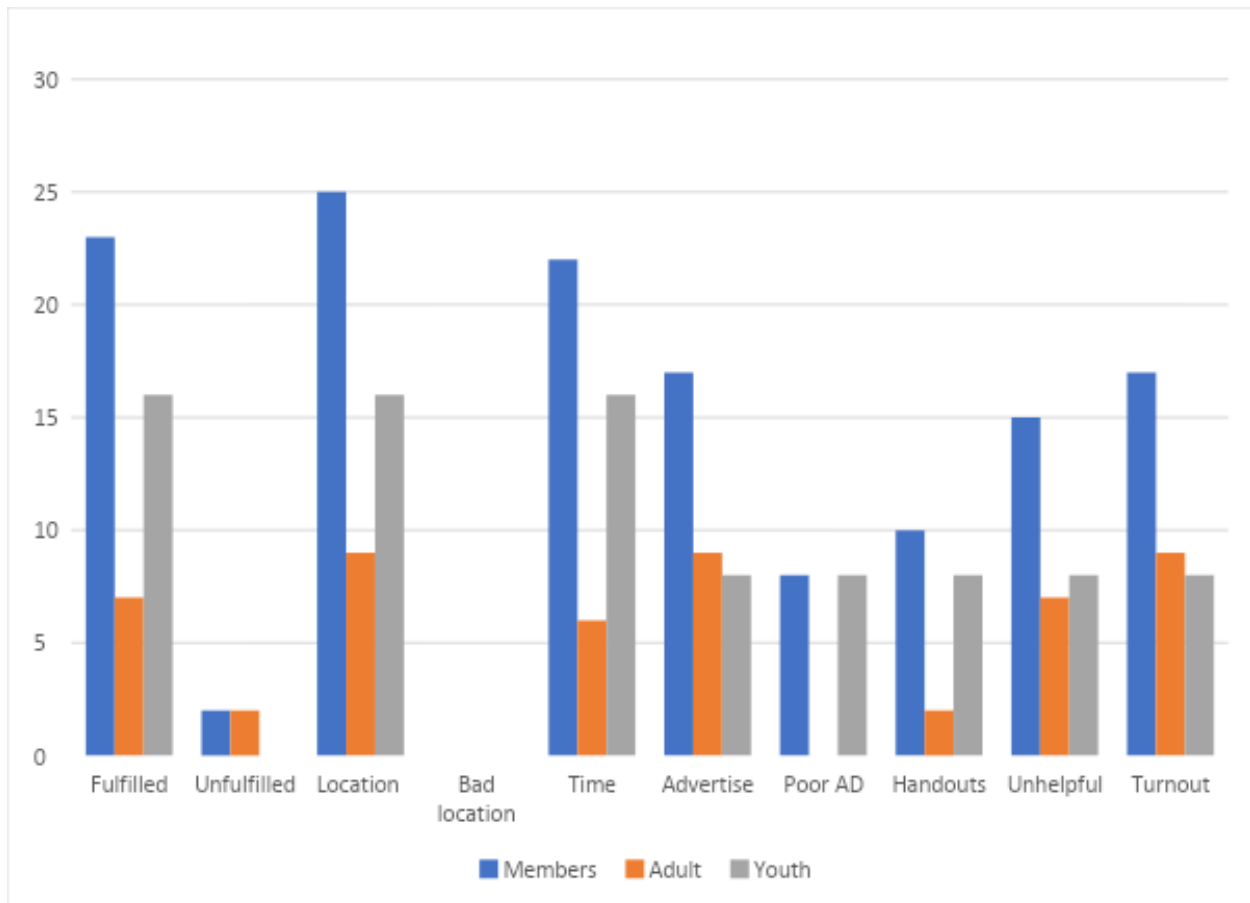
of the event, only 50% percent of the youth believed that it was a great turnout, while the other 50% believed that it could have been much better.



Combined Results

The combined results of the community outreach program events were as followed. The Harvest House of Hope consists of twenty-five (25) members. Out of all 25 members of Harvest House, twenty-three (23) members (92%) believed that the program events goals were fulfilled, while two believed that they were unfulfilled properly. As it pertained to the location of the events everyone agreed, one hundred percent (100%). They all believed that the location was adequate for the events.

The time results varied. Only eighty-eight (88%), 22 out of 25 of the members of Harvest House believed the time to be adequate for the project events. Only 40% (10/25) of the membership believed that the handouts were worthy of such an event. Then there were 68% (17/25) of the membership that held on to the fact that the advertising aspect of the event program was helpful to the cause. Finally, 68% of the congregation saw the turnout to be great for the event.



Conclusion

The project proposal outlined and designed for this Doctor of Ministry study was to educate the men, women, and children of Harvest House of Hope located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA on the value of mission services, in hopes to drive them towards the spirit of community outreach. According to the results of the members of the adult congregation, the intervention plan did indeed yield the expected results, as it pertained to educating the members on the value of mission services. One hundred percent of the adults and one hundred percent of the youth believed that the education aspect of the project was successful in providing them with

much-needed information as it pertained to the mission of the church in these matters. Although other obstacles stood in the path of being committed and driven towards the spirit of community outreach.

The unexpected results geared around the health of the adult members of Harvest House of Hope. With as few as nine adult members and four diagnosed with health issues, the reasoning became clearer. Their nonparticipation did not stem from the lack of desire to participate in this form of mission services but leaned on their physical ability to become an active participant. This new information shines a light of discovery to the Doctor of Ministry study. Because it brings to the forefront evidence that the issue of these four participants was not having the burning desire to participate in mission services, but rather their health issues kept them from participating.

There were a few (2/9) that had no desire to participate in this form of mission services. Though this no desire did not rise from no compassion, it arose out of fear. Fear that they would be a victim of circumstance and catch an unknown disease. Then it can be established that the education on the safety aspect of doing mission services, with gloves, and mask, did not appeal to them.

The educational portion of the program did leave a burning desire for the members of Harvest House of Hope to engage in community outreach mission.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

The concluding chapter of this Doctor of Ministry study is designed to answer the question, “Which direction should research partake, now that this information has been pertained?” How do the conclusions of the study equate to the data assembled from preceding conclusions or the published work evaluated in the literature review? Other questions will be answered as well such as, “What was learned by the researcher during the implementation of this project? In What Manner may the outcomes relate to other situations? What information was revealed during the study that triggers the need for future research?”

Future Direction of Research

The project proposal outlined and designed for this Doctor of Ministry study was to educate the men, women, and children of Harvest House of Hope located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA on the value of mission services, in hopes to drive them towards the spirit of community outreach. The goal of the project is to identify the issues that are hindering the members of the Harvest House of Hope congregation from participating in community outreach. Now that the information has been obtained, the researcher should continue the research by building upon the foundation that has been laid, as it pertains to participants in community outreach by a religious institution of similar magnitude in an environment settings as the Harvest House of Hope.

By continuing the research, the researcher will conduct an in-depth exploration of religious institutions in the inner city and the environmental impact on its congregation, as it pertains to mission services. Resuming the research, will open additional venues and allows the researcher to form collaborations, and gather significantly more data. This process of building

will establish a complete well-rounded conclusion. Collaborations will bring new and fresh resources and different types of sources will become available.

The greatest limitation to the study that led to future research being necessary was the lack of information pertaining to the reasoning behind one's desire not to participate in community outreach. The size of the Harvest House of Hope membership being 25 was another limitation of the study that will lead to future research. Especially since all 25 members do not attend weekly service constantly. The limited number of participants in the study only a limited number of clients could be served. The length of time that the Harvest House of Hope has been established was another reasoning that further research will be needed. This is because an agency with a longer track record in the community knows the community, the surroundings, the people, their needs and desires.

Conclusion Study vs. Literature Review

The conclusions of the study equate to the data assembled from preceding conclusions or the published work evaluated in the literature review significantly. The results of the literature review assert that future research is needed for this type of study dealing with spiritual transformation: Community Outreach and the Harvest House of Hope, in San Bernardino, CA. This future research allows one to build and develop knowledge to this field of study, while also increasing public awareness of the cause. When you CoBuild new information are revealed that could expand one's knowledge of the subject matter. That

The research of Jill L. Snodgrass dealt “directly with community outreach programs in the Los Angeles, CA area, an area that serves a high volume of the homeless community.”¹³⁶

The same could be said about the San Bernardino, CA area, with its increase of homelessness activity in recent years. “Snodgrass research also relied on a small number of participants (16),”¹³⁷ just as the project study for the Harvest House of Hope, who had a total number of (25) participants in the project study. “The participants in Snodgrass’ study were not members of a church congregation. Her research participants stayed in a 90-day emergency shelter program for the homeless.”¹³⁸

The other similarities between the project study and the Snodgrass report was the plan implementation. “Snodgrass put in place a system of question and answer. The participants knew that they were able to have a question and answer session with the research. This is the same implementation process used with the project study, with its use of focus groups and interview sessions. There was one major conclusion to the Snodgrass study that was strongly related to the project study, being that the responsibility of the church.”¹³⁹

Both, Snodgrass and the researcher agreed that it is the “responsibility of the church to assist and serve those who are in need and that are doing without.”¹⁴⁰ The poverty-ridden, underprivileged, and homeless community was indeed the responsibly of the church. Many organizations could handle the responsibility, scripturally the church was responsible. “Snodgrass research speaks of the responsibility of the Christian.”¹⁴¹ Within the context of the

¹³⁶ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹³⁷ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹³⁸ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹³⁹ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹⁴⁰ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹⁴¹ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

project, the researcher based the initial information from the Scripture as it pertains to serving the community. The Scripture lets one know that “the poor will always be among us,” (Mark 14:7). “Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God” (Prov. 14:31 NIV).

“Jill L. Snodgrass and Jennifer M. McClure came to the same conclusion that concurred with the project researcher. That community outreach is a way that organizations such as churches focus on their communities.”¹⁴² This allows them to build and support the community they represent. “The concluding factors in the Snodgrass and McClure study suggest that more research and study is needed, and more programming need to be put in place, new systems, and new building structures.”¹⁴³ Which is the same conclusion brought forth through the project study. The one major conclusion between the three entities is that the church holds the responsibility to put effective programs in place that will be beneficial to the community.

Common conclusions can also be found surrounding the research project. That being, Snodgrass, McClure, Hans and Sam Albertson’s research model, along with the research project all models involved “faith-based agencies.”¹⁴⁴ “Jennifer M. McClure’s approach brought forward the most noticeable conclusion comparison because she outlined many of the programs put in place to support the homeless, poverty-ridden, community, such as shelters and food banks.”¹⁴⁵ Harvest House of Hope’s research led to the implementation of its food program.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 341-66.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 341-66.

¹⁴⁴ Oh and Albertson, *Don't Walk by*, p. 112.

¹⁴⁵ Oh and Albertson, *Don't Walk by*, p. 111-115.

The key to McClure's "research was the display of prosocial behavior among those who participated in community outreach."¹⁴⁶ The outcome from the proposed project deals with spiritual transformation and producing the mindset to be a willing worker in a much-needed community. These conclusions although produces a need for further study equates with each other and provides a foundation to build upon. Prosocial behavior is built off action. Putting forth an effort in order to cause a reaction. The project studies' mission was to develop a situation that would cause the members of Harvest House of Hope to act.

Mikaelian in his research also brings up the point of spiritual formation when he speaks of the limitations for people in the church to change their thinking and/or behavior. "He doesn't believe that there will be any change in a person's behavior even if they are studying within the church."¹⁴⁷ This conclusion by Mikaelian is in direct contradiction of the researcher's goals. "Mikaelian's conclusion suggests that spiritual education does not lead to spiritual transformation,"¹⁴⁸ while the researcher is counting on that same spiritual education to be the tool that leads the congregation into spiritual transformation guided by the Holy Spirit.

While Mikaelians researched concluded just the opposite, there were similarities found between McClure's research conclusion and the anticipated outcome of the project. Both, "McClure and the Researcher believed that is a change of behavior was going to occur. McClure's prosocial behavior model suggest that a changed behavior will occur when one

¹⁴⁶ Oh and Albertson, *Don't Walk by*, p. 111-115.

¹⁴⁷ Mikaelian, *The Transformative Learning Experiences* p. 172

¹⁴⁸ Mikaelian, *The Transformative Learning Experiences* p. 172.

participates in helping others.”¹⁴⁹ When doing something that will benefit the whole, such as volunteering, or caring for others. These actions can be categorized as prosocial behavior.

The projected outcome of prosocial behavior is a noticeable change in behavior. The anticipated outcome of spiritual transformation is a fundamental change in the person. Which includes their interpretation of life, its purpose, and meaning. These projected outcomes equate directly with the projected study and is a commonality between the two. It needs to be noted that none of the changes in behaviors are based on a reward system. Prosocial behavior is produced by a willingness to help, a sincere concern for others, and willingly doing something to help or benefit another. These are the same changes that a Holy Spirit lead spiritual transformation would accomplish. There would be a selflessness change that would take place among those who are transformed by and through the spirit.

Continuing with the outcomes of prosocial behavior and spiritual transformation, Snodgrass and McClure also provide statistics that were found to be equal to the data assembled by the researcher when they disclose that community outreach events should take place to help those in need. This was also brought about during the teaching session by the researcher. Bringing to the attention to the congregation that one of the major responsibilities of the church is to reach the lost and give support to individuals that are in need. It being the church’s responsibility to help those who cannot help themselves.

Although Stella D. Potgieter’s research takes her on the path of “the role of the church with community outreach being the ultimate mission, she also speaks of an internal growth.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 341-66

¹⁵⁰ Stella D. Potgieter, “*Communities: Development of Church-Based Counselling Teams*,” p. 1-8.

Concluding that the work put in doing community outreach, brings growth, not only to the community but also in oneself. This is the spiritual transformation the researcher is referring to that comes from participating in community outreach. The conclusion of the researcher and Potgieter aligns together concluding to discover the same outcome.

One of the greatest commonalities between the project data and the published work evaluated in the literature review was the importance of outreach. Snodgrass and McClure placed vast importance on the need for outreach to serve the community. The emphasis surrounded faith-based organizations and their campaign to establish services to aid those in need.¹⁵¹ The Harvest House of Hope placed great emphasis on the need to perform community outreach to be a help to the homeless, poverty-ridden, people in need of a helping hand. The goal of Harvest House in this scope aligned with the concluding research of Snodgrass and McClure.

One of the more significant conclusions of the study by the researcher is the reliance on the Church to be at the forefront battling for those in need. Throughout the study the researcher's dependence on the Scripture was evident through the implementation and methodology, providing data. "Johan Van der Merwe concluded in his research that the church is indeed the driving force to fight poverty."¹⁵² "Also, Kristin Colberg came to a similar conclusion when researching the mission of the church. While Colberg's mission aligned with McClure and Merwe's as it relates to the mission of the church, her research conclusion led her to dig deeper in the past and present timeframe of the church."¹⁵³ This also unified the researcher's conclusion pertaining to the church's mission and/or the role of the church.

¹⁵¹ Snodgrass, *Spirituality and Homelessness*, p. 307-17.

¹⁵² Johan van der Merwe, "The Local Church" p.1-7.

¹⁵³ Kristin Colberg, "Ecclesiology Today and It's Potential to Serve a Missionary Church," p.23-36.

Negative Conclusions

The results of the study concluded that one of the reasonings the members of Harvest House of Hope, did not participate in community outreach and helping others such as the homeless was a sense of fear. Not necessarily a fear of being harmed but fear of catching some sort of disease from those in the homeless community. Even though the teaching covered safety hazards and preventive measures. This sense of fear was birthed from the negative characteristics placed on the homeless.

Though there are many reasons according to Oh and Albertson that may cause one not to become involved in community outreach, the common factor that aligns with the project study is fear. This conclusion caused a widespread or gap between those who desire to participate in community outreach and those who do not care to participate. Researchers, “Oh and Albertson concludes that fear of the unknown is one of the reasons that many participants stay clear of doing community outreach. Their research surrounds why people do not want to join in or participate in community outreach and/or help the homeless.”¹⁵⁴

The fear factor claimed two out of nine adults (22.222%). Accounting for the four women participants two out of 4 (50%) revealed that they were in fear of the homeless community. The fear factor affected five of the 25 members of Harvest House, that 20% of the membership unwilling to participate in mission services because of fear. It is fear that equates the project model and the published literature review. The main reason according to Oh and Albertson that causes people not to participate in community outreach is their time. The non-participants simply

¹⁵⁴ Oh and Albertson. *Don't Walk by*, p. 114.

do not have enough time set aside to show support to such a cause. Time was not a factor that was brought to the forefront by the researcher. The members of Harvest House of Hope did not bring up the issues of not having enough time to participate in community outreach.

Firmin, Markum, Stultz, Johnson, and Garland, brings to the forefront the issue of disinterest. "They suggest that the church a had a genuine disinterest in the needs of others."¹⁵⁵ It was nothing against the church and its mission as they saw it. They just believed that it was more at stake then to help the less fortunate. While holding to the thought that new ideas and tactics need to be displayed and put into place for the poor and impoverished. Disinterest did not play a factor in the research study project. Oh and Albertson also speaks of a sense of disgust is a factor of why many do not participate in community outreach. Suggesting that the participants did not desire to be around those who are less fortunate, poverty-ridden, and/or homeless.

Among the researcher's participants, 3/3 of the teenaged girls interviewed stated that they were afraid of the homeless community. This fear was produced because they believed that it would be easy to catch some sort of seas. It was a form of disgust to be around them and not get a stench connected to them that could lead them to obtain some sort of disease. This was also revealed by Oh and Albertson as one of the reasoning that no-one desired to participate.

The pain of the physical body was the major negative factor from the research study. Two-thirds of the adult men revealed that it was pain that deterred them from being a willing participant in community outreach. As pertained to the adult women, 33.33% (2/6) revealed that their health was the issue that kept them from participating in community outreach. There was

¹⁵⁵ Michael W. Firmin et al., "*How College Students*" p. 75.

not published information recorded that suggested pain being the reason for no participation. Further research is need. Another 33.33% of the women revealed that they simply did not have enough information for them. There was a total of (4/9) 44.444444% of the nine adults all together who did not participate because of health issues.

More information being needed was a major comparison between the published literature review and the concluding results.

Implementation Discovery

The most prominent discoveries throughout the implementation period surrounded the examination of the target audience's needs and what will be a good time to meet those needs. Taking the Harvest House of Hope congregation outside of the four walls and into the community allowed the researcher to grasp their initial response upon encountering the homeless community. It also allowed the stakeholders at Harvest House of Hope to comprehend the readiness of the congregation to host such a large event. Harvest House was able to regulate control of the cost and customize the needs of the project. By doing so, it produced a relaxed atmosphere that enabled all to work on one accord and accomplish the goals set out for the mission services.

One of the most protruding discoveries was developing communication strategies. Being fluent with the congregation and the target audience allowed for one to ascertain essential improvements and gain much-needed information at the right time. This discovery period allowed Harvest House to establish teamwork. Being able to coordinate all the activities and implement the activities allowed the building of relationships.

Outcome and Other Situations

The changing of the outcome of this project study to other situations would depend on what those situations were and how they were conducted or connected to the overall goal of the project. If the desired project was of similar fashion and in a parallel situation, such as the same neighborhood, and the same original cast then the results will more than likely be similar. Depending on if the same amount of people participated in the project, with the same mindset. Many of the same factors would need to be present to obtain a favorable similar outcome.

However, the outcome would be extremely different if the environment was changed. Such as if the project study took place in a suburban area and not the inner-city. The process would be extremely different because then it would take some travel to the inner-city areas to reach a mass number of those in need of assistance. Then that would mean a longer preparation period, and route planning. The outcome would be different if the project was established by a church that more than 25 members. Because a church with more members, such as one hundred or more members would require more volunteers and, they will be able to help or assist a greater number of homeless, poverty-ridden and inner-city participants.

The Harvest House of Hope all-volunteer staff consisted of 25 congregation members of a faith-based institution. Nine of the 25 were adult members, and sixteen of the members were children. Four of the nine adult members revealed that they were unable to participate in the walking portion of the community outreach because of health issues. Peradventure the Harvest House of Hope had all healthy adult volunteers available then they would have been able to cover a greater area and help a larger number of people.

Out of the nine adult members, two of them did not desire to participate because they did not have the knowledge or wisdom to handle such a task. They did not know enough about serving the community and/or performing mission services. The methodology used in the project study allowed them to gain that knowledge. In a different situation, someone with updated information concerning mission services could have been more involved in the planning process. They would have been more eager to help or assist in the task at hand.

According to the outcome, only one of the nine adults was enthusiastic about being a willing participant in community outreach. The Harvest House youth entailed most of the congregation and played an essential part in the project study. Without the eagerness of the youth to participate Harvest House would not have had enough volunteers to accomplish their implemented goals. Out of the sixteen youth, thirteen were willing participants.

The major outcome that effected the thesis regarding spiritual transformation was the educational portion of the program. This was geared toward leaving the 25-member congregation with a burning desire to engage in community outreach. Using the same outcome in a different situation where physical labor and a mass number of participants are not needed to complete the task. Harvest House could have had 100% participation.

Because as the outcome results revealed many of the congregation members had legitimate reasons for not being willing participants. Although all the members of Harvest House of Hope agreed that the educational portion of the project study did accomplish its goal. Everyone still was not able to be willing participants in certain portions of mission services.

Many situations will cause the outcomes to turn out different in different situations. The cultural differences in the neighborhood would have cause communication problems, which

would have lead to a change in the intervention method. One would have had to have previous knowledge of the client's belief system. Prior knowledge of the issues at hand would have changed the situations. A different demographic setting would cause the outcomes to be different. The outcomes would vary depending on or if the demographic change was within the congregation or the client. Either or neither would have stayed the same because the population structure would not have been the same.

The outcomes would have been different if more of the congregation would have been adults, or all women or men and not mostly children. If the congregation would have been all youth, then that would have brought on a change of outcome in a different situation. With more of the congregation would have been adults more could have been accomplished financially. Especially if they would have been of the working class. Having more of an adult membership would have changed the dynamic of the planning process. Not only that it would have created a wider networking base, which could have allowed Harvest House to gain added support for the project.

The planned proposal would have changed if the congregation would have been upper class, and financially stable. This would have even affected the donation status. The members of Harvest House, although they were using their own finances, they would have been able to provide, more supplies to those in need, after they received the donations. Being in another tax bracket would even bring higher political favor around the city or state and more people would have gotten involved in the implementation of the project. This could have even brought about media coverage which could have boosted the donation process and brought more people to the

church to volunteer as well as become members of the congregation after they have seen the good works of the church.

What Triggered Further Study

The goal of the study was to gain a greater understanding of why the member of Harvest House of Hope failed to be willing participants in community outreach. To reveal what was the cause of this nonparticipation. The project proposal outlined and devised for this Doctor of Ministry study was to educate the men, women, and children of Harvest House of Hope located in the inner-city of San Bernardino, CA on the importance of mission services, in hopes to drive them towards the spirit of community outreach. To use education as a motivating tool to jumpstart people to desire community outreach. To trigger one to be eager to lend a helping hand, because it is morally right and spiritually uplifting.

The need for further study was triggered by the different outcomes that were produced from this Doctor of Ministry project study. Many of the outcomes were unexpected, unforeseen, and unpredictable. The goal was to get 2/3 of the congregation of Harvest House of Hope to be willing participants in community outreach. The unexpected trigger was the reasoning that some of the congregation were not willing participants in mission services. The biggest triggers were health reasons. Some of the adult members of Harvest House revealed that their nonparticipation was because of their health. While also stating that they could help in different ways but could not do anything that resembled physical labor.

The reasoning that the health of the adult membership triggered further study for the project is because if the health issues were removed would the desire be present to participate. There are many unanswered questions because of the health reasons, because of the size of the

membership, and/or the demographic breakdown of the members. What would the outcome be if all the members were healthy? What if there were more members of the congregation? How would that affect the outcome? The other major trigger revealed within the project study was fear of the unknown. What if they would have been educated on mission services? How would that have changed the willing participation rate? What if no fear existed? Then the outcome would have been different. What if there were no limitations?

Then the reasoning behind the congregation not being willing participants would have already been revealed. Since there are limitations there is a further need for the study. The size of the membership at Harvest House of Hope triggered a further need for study. Was it the small membership that caused the outcome? Would the outcome change with a larger member number? The minimal length of time that Harvest House has been established triggers a need for further research. Did not knowing the community's needs alter the outcome of the project? What about not having a relationship with those in need, such as the homeless, cause feared behaviors toward them? Further research is needed to answer these questions.

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APPENDIX A

Doctor of Ministry

Application for Candidate Status

DATE		
NAME		
LIBERTY ID		
LIBERTY EMAIL		
Thesis Proposal Title		

DMIN 830 Instructor Endorsement: _____

Date: _____

Doctor of Ministry Director Endorsement: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project Proposal

Approval Form

Researcher's Name: Kevin Strickland

Title of Thesis Project Proposal: Spiritual Transformation: Community Outreach and the Harvest of Hope in San Bernardino, CA

Thesis Project Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sorin V. Sabou

Thesis Project Faculty Mentor Approval Signatures:

_____ Thesis Project Faculty Mentor
Date

_____ Doctor of Ministry Program
Director Date