

Liberty University School of Divinity

**Leadership Development:
Creating a Culture of Developing Leaders in the Church**

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

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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Addressing the issue concerning churches needing an effective leadership development process that encompasses everyone from the new convert to the church leadership team is the focus of this thesis. The purpose of this DMIN thesis is to address the problem of the leadership development deficit by implementing a process that will engage more than 30 percent of the average attendance. For this research, the main focus is primarily engaging people who are already Christians and are on board with the vision and mission of the church to assume a leadership role and responsibility. The focus of the project is to implement a change in the church that will increase the number of leaders who will either lead or co-lead connection groups. In doing so, they will create an environment where growth will occur organically. The necessary change was implemented by instilling a leadership development process that successfully acquired new leaders and encouraged current trained leaders to host connection groups that were either core groups or groups of their interest. Coupled with the training was a survey leaders filled out rating the church in different areas for effectiveness. The survey provides a small amount of insight and continuity into areas of the church that may need some or better leadership development. The result of this research offers pastors and lay leaders a glimpse into a system that could assist them in building long-term leaders within their church.

(236 words)

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Abbreviations

ESV *English Standard Version*

Chapter 1: Introduction

Leadership is a word that people will frequently associate with a position and power. Dr. John Maxwell says, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.”¹ In today’s world, leadership is being defined by how it is engaged. Margaret Diddams and Glenna C. Chang teach authentic leadership,² Aubrey Malphurs advocates for strategic leadership,³ and James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner teach transformational leadership.⁴ No matter what the type or style of leadership, a person or organization uses, influence is the common denominator in all of them. When a church can influence people to join a cause, mobilize them to use their time, treasures, and talents to pursue the vision and mission, it is an excellent display of leadership.

Unfortunately, the church as a whole suffers from the lack of healthy, intentional, and authentic leadership. George Barna teaches the primary reason the church is dying is due to the lack of leadership.⁵ Leadership in the church today has become critically passive and lacks authenticity. Leaders are afraid to speak up or take specific actions in fear of retaliation or making a spectacle of themselves. Passive leadership started in the garden when Adam ate the fruit Eve picked and gave to him, knowing well God’s instruction.⁶ Since Adam’s weak

¹ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 13.

² Margaret Diddams and Glenna C. Chang, “Only Human: Exploring the Nature of Weakness in Authentic Leadership,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (2012), 593-603.

³ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 17.

⁴ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 153.

⁵ George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura, Ca.: Regal, 1997), 18.

⁶ Gen. 3:6 English Standard Version (ESV). Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the English Standard Version.

leadership decision, humanity has spiraled downward in sin, which has tainted leadership not only in the church but in secular organizations as well.

The effect of Adam's decision has created a need for today's church to conduct a self-examination and get back to leading people the way God intended. The church is not a monarchy where the pastor leads everything, and likewise, it is also not an organization that should result in a Sunday morning social club. Churches need to have an intentional leadership development plan for every person that comes through their doors. Michael Fletcher teaches that everything a church needs to reach its city is already in the house.⁷ Every person who walks through the door of the church is a kingdom advancer. Every person has gifts and natural talents God has given to each of them. It is the responsibility of the pastor to ensure the people fully understand their giftings and assist them in understanding how they are to use those gifts and talents to reach the world.

Fletcher continues to teach that the real job of the church is to build people, not the other way around.⁸ Scripture supports Fletcher's statement, in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The church is acting out precisely what Fletcher states. People listened to the disciples and then broke bread in their homes, sharing what they had and worshipping God. God added to their numbers daily those who were being saved.⁹ The apostles were engaging the people to do ministry, and that is when God added to their numbers. The process of developing leaders does not end since God is continuously developing leaders over a lifetime.¹⁰ Robert Clinton states,

⁷ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership: How a Leadership Development Culture Builds Better Leaders Faster* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2018), xvii.

⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁹ Acts 2:42-47.

¹⁰ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs, Co: NavPress, 1988), 25.

“Effective leaders increasingly perceive their ministries in terms of a lifetime perspective.”¹¹

Once leadership development ceases, growth will no longer occur, and this is true for both individuals and organizations. The most critical test of a person’s leadership in an organization is what happens when that leader is not present.¹² The importance of investing in and building people is essential as it will allow for the organizational church to continue.

Leadership development, when done correctly, will affect every aspect of a person's life. Developed leaders will naturally take pride in their physical well-being as well as their mental and spiritual.

Ministry Context

The ministry context in which the author is conducting his research is significant in that it will be unlike most churches in the country. The church playing host to the study is demographically a military community church with an average age of fifty. The significance of this demographic is that it would be easy to assume that leadership development would not be a problem, and the church would flourish. Leadership development is especially challenging for a church to thrive around a military installation, considering the dynamics of a military family. The church needs to be intentional and authentic about leadership development because the typical military family endures events such as lengthy deployments leaving a spouse home, usually with children. The changing of duty stations is another element that is consistent with the military. Not only are people going because the military is moving them to a new duty station, but new people are arriving and may be looking to settle in a church as quickly as possible. A dynamic

¹¹ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 22.

¹² Oswald J. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), Word Search, Chapter 19.

that any church around a military installation faces is that most soldiers are only with them three to four years before the military moves them again.

Spout Springs Church is in Cameron, NC, located in the eastern part of the state known as the inner coastal plains. The church resides in Harnett county, geographically one hour south of North Carolina's capital, Raleigh, and twenty miles north of Fayetteville, NC, home of Fort Bragg army installation. Conveniently, Spout Springs Church's location is two hours west of North Carolina's beaches and two hours east of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The thirteen-year-old church welcomes six hundred attendees on any given Sunday. The church began with a man who had a desire to plant a church, and after much prayer and perseverance, he was afforded an opportunity in Cameron, NC. The church started in a tent where a handful of people attended. A short while later, the church purchased an old modular that was previously a doctor's office. The church grew exponentially, requiring a much larger space. God answered their prayers and blessed them with up to thirty acres, incrementally donated to use as a permanent site. The church moved the modular to the new land and purchased a permanent tent structure building, which they outgrew rapidly. After much research and consulting, the church purchased plans for a state-of-the-art auditorium. Unfortunately, the plans gained no traction because the people felt a gymnasium would be a better use of money as it would better serve the community. Today, the church meets in the requested gymnasium.

The makeup of the church, as far as demographics are concerned, is ever-changing at best, due to the military influence. As a whole, the ethnic group that makes up the majority of the members is Caucasian, with African Americans making up the second-largest group leaving Hispanics to round out the top three groups represented at the church. Even with the church's

average age hovering around fifty, there are a considerable amount of young families and children that make Spout Springs Church their home church.

Historically, the church model was to engage people to fill positions or tasks at the church. As tradition holds with most churches, Spout Springs Church implemented ministries such as men's ministry and woman's ministry and allowed leaders to run them but offered no training or mentoring for the leaders. As Spout Springs Church grew to over two hundred people in attendance, they realized that they needed a better system to equip and mobilize the members.

Currently, Spout Springs Church has two identical Sunday services and a first Wednesday service that is a potluck style get together. At the first Wednesday service, each month, baptisms are conducted along with a teaching and communion. The Sunday morning services are a standard service a person would expect to experience: a time of worship, a giving talk, a meet and greet, a sermon, a response time, and a closing with announcements that make up the elements of service at Spout Springs Church.

When a person enters the doors at Spout Springs Church, a team member greets them and shows them around then assists the visitors in checking their children into children's ministry if they wish to have them attend. Next, the visitors are handed off to a person who will enter their information in as a guest. Each guest is presented with a gift and then escorted into the worship center. Once inside, the guests get details of the service. If the visitors are not Christians, a chance for them to receive Christ is available at the end of every service and during the response time. The process Spout Springs uses to bring people to Christ is not intrusive or embarrassing. The process consists of picking up a blue bag located at the front and back of the worship center. The blue bags contain a Bible, a small devotional type book, and a pamphlet that a trained leader will use to walk a person through the Gospel. The trained leader will record the salvation on a

card and put it in the executive pastor's inbox. The new Christian is notified of the next baptism and is encouraged to attend. It is at this point that the process hits a dead end since the mentoring portion of an effective leadership development process is nonexistent for the new Christian.

The church conducts step classes that are designed to integrate people into the church, similar to that of membership classes in other churches. Step one is an overview of the church to include the history and current functions. Step two focuses on the individual and how they should conduct themselves not only as Christians but as partners in the church. Step three allows the prospective partner to take a more in-depth look at each spiritual gift and personality trait to determine which of the ministry areas would be best suitable for them to serve. Step four is a class where the new partners pick a ministry and meet the heads of that ministry. The ministries that are available to serve in are the first impressions team, the worship, and the tech team, children's ministry, youth, and the prayer team ministry. In addition to these ministries, new partners are also encouraged to attend the Connection Group Leaders Training. Connection Group Leaders Training prepares partners to lead a connection group of their choice.

Within the past year, the church leadership decided to change its leadership development model from individual ministries, which are growing but not being productive, to free-market connection groups. The individual ministries, such as women's and men's ministries, are a necessity for the church. Unfortunately, when the groups grow beyond a manageable number, it becomes more work to keep the system running well, and Spout Springs Church has realized that they are at that point. Not only have the groups become large and unmanageable, but there is no room for others to become leaders. Typically, as is the case with Spout Springs Church, there is a small group of leaders that get together, and they plan and coordinate everything for the ministry. Accompanying the bottleneck in leadership is the lack of effective ministry. The larger the

group, the more excluded some people will feel and will not add their input or seek out a leadership role. Moving to a free-market model will allow for more people to become leaders and to encourage them to get involved in building relationships, engaging in discipleship, and participating in outreach. The outreach will consist of projects that are designed to reach the community at the connection group level.

Currently, Spout Springs Church has conservatively fifteen leaders and five ministries. The hope is that after a year of utilizing a carefully monitored free-market connection group model, trained leaders will make up twenty percent of the Sunday morning attendance. Moreover, the connection groups will engage no less than thirty percent of the same averaged attendance. Addressing the issue of the lack of intentional leadership development must become a priority if the church is going to continue to pursue its mission and vision effectively, keeping in mind that the right people will lead to the right result.¹³ The effects of the lack of leadership development are a decline in attendance and financial support, both of which Spout Springs Church is currently experiencing.

The church holds the view that every person is responsible for their spiritual development. To some extent, this view is acceptable because, ideally, each person who professes to be a Christian should be self-motivated to seek out guidance in their spiritual development as it pertains to their specific circumstances. However, teaching people how to read their Bibles, how to pray, and how to better understand the concepts within God's Word is an integral part of the discipleship process that will equip them to walk closer with their maker. Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey state, rather emphatically, that discipleship needs to occur within

¹³ Bud Wrenn, *Innovative Planning: Your Church in 4-D* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2008), 102.

the confines of a healthy, active local body of believers.¹⁴ The passage of scripture that addresses disciple-making in the Gospel of Matthew is particularly relevant to this study. Jesus instructs his disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."¹⁵ Jesus uses two action words that support the view that spiritual development is more than personal responsibility. The words Jesus uses are "make" and "teach," which in the Greek means to instruct and to impart knowledge to someone.¹⁶ The clear conclusion is that spiritual development requires both a teacher and a student, and discipleship should not be seen in the light of teaching oneself how to develop spiritually. The church, more specifically, the pastor, is charged with equipping the people for the work of the ministry, instead of people learning on their own, particularly if they are new Christians.

An incorrect view of personal spiritual development has crippled the growth of Spout Springs Church. Current volunteers who are mature Christians are getting overworked. Christians who are not yet spiritually mature either because spiritual development is not intentional, or they refuse to engage in spiritual development are not actively seeking to aid the church in any manner. When people come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, they are, at best, confused as to how to develop spiritually. The church's Step classes, Sunday morning services, and first Wednesday services do not provide a structure for new Christians to grow

¹⁴ Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is--: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2013), 186.

¹⁵ Matt. 28:19-20.

¹⁶ Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford, 2005), 113 & 251.

spiritually. The current services also fail to train, equip, and mobilize both the new Christian and the veteran Christian in ministry.

The author is in a position to create and implement a leadership development process that will engage both the new and seasoned Christian. The author connects to the research in the capacity of a discipleship pastor, which allows for individual shepherding of new leaders into ministry. The tasks assigned to a discipleship pastor include ensuring that discipleship is happening within the ministries at the church, making sure the ministries are compliant and encouraging the leaders in their walk.

The group that the author will work with have been attending the church for at least a month or have completed the church's step classes. Gender and ethnicity are not considered to be a factor at this time but will remain as secondary information for future use should it be needed. The author will be tracking the age of all participants if for no other reason than to see if there is a correlation between age and the acceptance of personal responsibility for spiritual and leadership development within the church. The author has a limited amount of financial resources to use but has access to many people who will assist in the research. Having people willing to aide in the study is helpful in that when the research has concluded, they will continue to improve upon the system in place.

Problem Presented

The problem is Spout Springs Church of Cameron, NC, needs an effective leadership development process that encompasses everyone from the new convert to the church leadership team.

When Spout Springs church started, it faced the challenge of adequately engaging the military community. The church lacked proper staff, until just recently, who had experience

dealing with the military. The senior pastor, the executive pastor, and the worship leader all came from different states, and none of them is prior military. It is the understanding of the military and how people within that walk of life function that is paramount if a church is going to reach them. Not fully understanding the military lifestyle is not a stand-alone reason for the lack of an effective leadership development process at Spout Springs Church. The issue concerning their lack of a leadership development process is three-fold. First, is the church not being presented or run as a leadership training center. The church does not function as an institution that is designed to develop leaders who advance the kingdom of God. A church must move from informing people to equipping people.¹⁷ Leaders should not pick just anyone to fill a position, but they need to actively seek out and invest in people who possess the spiritual maturity to lead others. Second, the current leadership team runs the church favoring introverts and not the church as a whole, which has resulted in a lack of timely decision making and a passive leadership style. Lastly, the current administration does not function as a team, which results in broken communication, confused standards, and double work. The overall results, as of current, is a decline in church attendance, finances, and spiritual effectiveness.

Failing to present the church as a leadership training center that develops leaders that not only advance the kingdom of God but also to walk into the calling God has for them; along with conducting church from an introverted mindset and not engaging the church as a whole cultivates a church that is a complacent and lazy and as a church that fails in carrying out the Great Commission. When the church operates outside a unified body of Christ, it diminishes the task of advancing the kingdom of God. Considering Matthew's words, "From the days of John the

¹⁷ Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, and Robert E. Coleman, *DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church to Make Disciples Who Make Disciples. Exponential Series* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 98.

Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.”¹⁸ The conclusion is that the church’s responsibility is not only to reach the lost but also to develop leaders. Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”¹⁹

Looking at what Spout Springs Church has in the way of people and systems the author’s goal will be to implement a system that would reach the lost, shepherd new or seasoned Christians, equip the saints for the work of the ministry²⁰ and lastly, mobilize the equipped saints to reach the lost. The system would be cyclical, thus allowing more leaders to handle the ministry and free up the pastors to continue their work as pastors.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMIN thesis is to address the problem of the leadership development deficit by implementing a process that will engage more than 30 percent of the average attendance.

The benefit of having 30 percent of the average attendance properly developed as leaders is multifaceted. One significant benefit is the advantage of godly leaders producing other godly leaders. Having a cycle of leaders that produces leaders creates a community of leaders. The church benefits from this cycle as it will always have leaders in the pipeline waiting for a chance to serve, thus negating the need to ask for volunteers continuously. Another benefit the church derives from creating godly leaders is organic church growth. “People will always follow an

¹⁸ Matt. 11:12.

¹⁹ Matt. 28:19-20.

²⁰ Eph. 4:12.

active vision”²¹ is what Fletcher teaches his leaders. When the church creates an environment of developing leaders who serve, it naturally attracts people who desire to make a difference not only in themselves but also in the community. Lastly, a benefit of producing leaders is the fact that those leaders will lead better marriages, be godly co-workers, raise the next generation and be people who will step out in faith to fulfill the calling God has on their lives. All of this will happen because the church was obedient in equipping and mobilizing leaders.

Basic Assumptions

Qualitative research will be conducted by this author in which the following underlying assumptions are to be understood. First, Spout Springs Church will stay operational during the conduction of the research. As long as the doors to Spout Springs Church remain open for service, the research will continue. Understanding that the leaders of the church will do everything they can to provide services and maintain day to day operations, but should they fail, it will impact the research dramatically.

Second, the church will continue to attract visitors through the life of the research. Conducting the research will require the need for human subjects to study. In the case of this research, the anticipated participants primarily involve attendees who have been attending no less than one month. Attracting new visitors to the church will supply new leaders within the leadership development process.

Third, the participants involved with the research will be either non-Christians or professed Christians. As obvious as the statement may seem, the author of the research finds it necessary to delineate against the people who either do not know or have no interest in

²¹ This author was part of Michael Fletcher’s ministry mentoring small group where Michael taught this principle.

Christianity at all. For this research, all people will either be Christians or non-Christians who are afforded the opportunity to give their lives to Christ. Furthermore, only the Christians and the new Christians will be encouraged to participate in all the steps of the research.

Fourth, the participants will be willing to follow along with the intended process that will eventually plug them into a ministry. As a doorway to the ministry, the people approached cannot be forced into any system. The entire process must remain at the willing participation of the person involved. Steps to ensure the participants stay motivated and encouraged will be in place, but in the end, it will be the willingness of the participant that will create validity in the research. Should an individual choose to discontinue or drop out of the leadership training, they will not be included in the results of the research.

Definitions

Within research, there are many terms in which people are familiar with or think they fully understand the meaning behind. The goal of clarifying certain words and terms by defining them is to present a refined research project. It is understood that certain words and terms carry with them different meanings within a context. Carefully defining the most commonly misunderstood words and terms will lend to the overall significance of the research results.

Church – Church is defined as the Christian organization as a whole just as Jesus established it, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”²² The Church is an organism that Jesus implemented that carries a mission of overcoming darkness and liberating people from darkness.²³

²² Matt. 16:18.

²³ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, 17.

Discipleship – Disciple-making or discipleship is the biblical training that results in the equipping and mobilization of a Christian.²⁴

Evangelism – The Greek verb *euangelizo* means “I communicate good news.”²⁵ The good news that is being communicated is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and people are forgiven of their sins.

Leadership – In its most uncomplicated form, leadership is the ability to influence people — an influence, which can be either intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect.²⁶ Leadership in the church is no different from leadership in the business world. The church tries to influence people to lead a life that follows Christ and influence others to do the same.

Leadership Development – Having the willingness to increase personal level effectiveness.²⁷ The church is not just a place where people go on Sunday and hear a message about God. The church is an organization that is designed to increase the level of effectiveness in people. When people raise their level of effectiveness, they are more likely to influence others for the Gospel.

Shepherding – Shepherding is the lifestyle of a pastor that entails teaching, overseeing, and leading the people God has entrusted to him.²⁸

²⁴ Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 5.

²⁵ Alvin Reid, *Introduction to Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 9.

²⁶ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 11.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁸ John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 24.

Spiritual Development – A term that identifies the regular habits for spiritual formation.²⁹

Habits that help with spiritual development include devotions, prayer, meditation on scripture, and fasting. Together these practices aid in a person's daily walk as a Christian.

Limitations

While conducting qualitative research on leadership development within the church, the understanding is that the number of participants is a variable that cannot be predetermined or controlled. Furthermore, the willingness of the participants to follow through the process may also render results inconclusive. Should a participant openly admit they are not a follower of Jesus Christ, the author will attempt to present the Gospel, but the decision ultimately resides with the person. If the person chooses not to receive Christ, they will not be included in the research.

The success of the research is dependent upon other limitations that could prove difficult in the accomplishment of a sound project. Researching a predominantly military church brings its challenges such as deployments and other military duties that could interfere with the establishment of the leadership development process. Understandably this challenge is a hurdle that can be worked around and addressed later on with proper record keeping.

Delimitations

For this research, the author will be collecting data every Sunday from both services conducted at Spout Springs Church. Every person who visits or attends Spout Springs Church is a consideration for the research project. Acceptance will depend upon if they are of an age to acknowledge their willingness to take part in the leadership development process. The ethnicity

²⁹ Kevin W. Mannoia, and Larry Walkermeyer, *15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007), 43.

and gender of a person are not going to weigh in on the research except for the Hispanic leadership development process within the provided Hispanic service.

Due to the short period of the research, the author will inquire with people who have previously completed or are enrolled currently in the step classes. Accomplishing this will aid the researcher in procuring results from the established leadership development process at different stages.

Thesis Statement

If an effective leadership development process is implemented, then Spout Springs Church will experience numeric growth in both Sunday morning services and the number of people involved in ministry.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

An effective leadership development process that encompasses everyone from the new convert to the church leadership team needs to be on the agenda of every church. For a church leadership team to successfully implement a leadership development process, they must realize there are many pieces needed to make it successful. The first piece needed for a successful leadership development process is an onboarding process. Every church should have a process that invites people to become influencers at their church. It is critical to keep in mind that leadership development is not just getting a person to lead in an area because that area is essential to the success of Sunday morning. Instead, the church's Sunday morning success should be a by-product of training people to be godly leaders. Robert Clinton makes the case that leadership is not something that a person does, it is who they are, and the leaders in the church should be actively seeking people whom they can invest into to raise their level of influence.³⁰

The next step for a church after establishing a reliable onboarding process is to have a system that brings healing to a person from their "yesterdays." When people come to Christ, they are broken sinners, and they need help cleaning out all of that hurt and pain. Even people who have been Christians for a time will need some cleaning up from time to time.³¹ It is necessary for these reasons, for a church to have a connection group, a class or counseling set up that will walk people through their hurts and their pains and emphasize the healing power of the cross. Clinton states that spiritual and leadership authority flows from a person.³² The last thing a

³⁰ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 15.

³¹ Chris A. Hodges, *Vision to Grow*. Grow Leaders Conference, Birmingham, AL, July 30 – August 1, 2019.

³² Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 15.

church would want is a person exercising authority in a ministry position while carrying all their hurts and pains. The results of that action will only reap more hurt people.

The third piece to a successful leadership development process is an equipping track to keep people accountable for learning and growing. The equipping track must contain both spiritual leadership development and character leadership development elements along with heavily mentored practical experiences. No matter what specific model a church utilizes, the critical ingredient, according to psychologist Ronald E. Riggio Ph.D., is to remain consistent and to stick to the program.³³ Lastly, the leaders need to be mobilized or sent out to hone their skills and to allow God to develop them further as leaders through his process.³⁴ The church should remain diligent in its mentoring efforts to the leaders they mobilize, to ensure a minimal risk threshold to both the leader and the people entrusted to that leader.

Two questions that arise amongst leadership experts are whether or not people are born as natural leaders, or are they made. Secondly, does a leadership development process start with the natural or spiritual qualities first? J. Oswald Sanders and Michael Fletcher would argue for both; leaders are both born and built, and yes, the leadership development process starts with both the natural and spiritual characteristics. Should there be a need to put more emphasis on either the spiritual or character leadership development, the default should be to develop the spiritual elements of leadership. Richard Clinton teaches that a development process starts with cultivating a relationship with Christ, which produces godly character.³⁵ Both the spiritual and

³³ Ronald E Riggio, Ph.D. "Can Leadership Be Developed?" *Psychology Today* (Sussex Publishers), accessed November 18, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/cutting-edge-leadership/200904/can-leadership-be-developed>.

³⁴ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 25.

³⁵ Richard Clinton and Paul Leavenworth, *Starting Well: Building a Strong Foundation for a Lifetime of Ministry* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 1998), 5.

the character formation of the leadership development process are integral when it comes to the development of a leader. Furthermore, leadership development needs to encompass all aspects of leadership to include spiritual leadership development, character-driven leadership development, and the development of leaders within a culture.

Spiritual Leadership Development

Spiritual leadership development, like any other discipline, develops over time and should not be rushed since there is no reason to hurry through building a solid foundation. There is no "fast forward" way to produce leadership maturity, either spiritual or character-based.³⁶ Some of the spiritual leadership qualities that most pastors tend to agree upon include humility, integrity, and discipline.³⁷ These qualities are not just for use in an area of ministry but in a leader's life as a whole.

The intimate details of 'how' to carry out the process of spiritual leadership development within the context of the church is vaguely addressed among leaders. At best, leadership experts will provide a general outline or a process that can be duplicated, leaving out the intimate details that are paramount to sound spiritual and leadership development. By not addressing the specifics of spiritual growth, pastors may be inclined to choose to engage in passive leadership and thereby failing to develop the next generation properly. J. Oswald Sanders presents compelling stories concerning why leaders need to be reproducing other leaders, along with great examples of leaders who replicated other leaders. However, he provides no plausible system that

³⁶ Gene A. Getz, Bob Buford, and Brad Smith, *Elders and Leaders Gods Plan for Leading the Church – A Biblical, Historical and Cultural Perspective* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2003), Word Search Bible, Chapter 3.

³⁷ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), Word Search Bible, Chapter 8.

a church or another leader could use to reproduce godly, spirit-led, spirit-filled leaders.³⁸ There are, however, leaders in the church that stand-by a biblical model for leadership in the church and point to Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus. The argument these leaders make is that a pastor's primary function in the church is to equip the people for ministry.³⁹ Unlike J. Oswald Sanders, Geiger and Peck present sharp biblical outlines and theological examples that shadow a leadership development process and are enough to stir up a person to want to make changes. Unfortunately, like J. Oswald Sanders, Geiger and Peck do not provide their readers with a clear understanding of the intricacies of how to become a better leader. Geiger and Peck give a shell of a leadership development pipeline but seemingly omit the intimate details required by leaders in the implementation into an organization.⁴⁰

When it comes to developing leaders on a spiritual level, there is a common thread that weaves itself among the teachings of seasoned leaders. The pointed fact that a leader must start with a devotion to Christ before anything else is the most agreed upon fact among leadership experts.⁴¹ Geoff Surratt teaches that there is no substitute for a leader's time alone with God.⁴² The writers of *Discipleshift* breakdown spiritual development into three parts, "My part, their part, and God's part."⁴³ All spiritual leadership development must start with Christ because there is an expected resistance from the spiritual warfare that rages against the efforts of the leader.⁴⁴

³⁸ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, Chapter 20.

³⁹ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2016), 153.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 200.

⁴¹ Richard Clinton and Paul Leavenworth, *Starting Well*, 64.

⁴² Geoff Surratt, *Ten Stupid Things That Keep Churches from Growing: How Leaders Can Overcome Costly Mistakes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 149.

⁴³ Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, and Robert E. Coleman, *DiscipleShift*, 59.

⁴⁴ Richard Clinton and Paul Leavenworth, *Starting Well*, 62.

Spiritual leadership development is not just for the individual; it also affects the people and organizations the individual supports. When leaders set their mind to grow as a spiritual leader, they become an asset to their friends and families and their local church. Aubrey Malphurs believes that if people within the church are declining or plateaued in their spiritual development and growth, they are, in essence, responsible for the decline and struggles of the church as a whole.⁴⁵

The foundation of spiritual leadership development is a fervent prayer life, a devotion to scripture, and the art of living a life of total surrender and humility. As far as obtaining a fervent prayer life, the applications are many to which Dave Earley offers to up and coming leaders who wish to increase their influence. Earley starts by instructing leaders to make time to pray.⁴⁶ Donald Whitney places more emphasis on prayer as he teaches that people should not only make time for prayer, but it should be understood that prayer is expected.⁴⁷ Whitney makes this statement based upon the many times Jesus says, “And when you pray...”⁴⁸

Among the wise counsel Earley provides about prayer, he instructs leaders to pray for those whom they serve and to teach them to pray.⁴⁹ A leader should not expect that the people who follow them know how to pray. The most effective spiritual warfare weapons a leader has is prayer, and he would be mistaken not to teach the people who are in a battle with him how to use the weapon. John Piper admonishes leaders to take time out of the day and pray about praying,

⁴⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 9.

⁴⁶ Dave Earley, *Prayer: The Timeless Secret of High-Impact Leaders* (Chattanooga, TN: Living Ink Books, 2008), 17.

⁴⁷ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2014), 80.

⁴⁸ Matt. 6:5, 6:6, 6:7, 6:9, Luke 11:9, 18:1

⁴⁹ Dave Earley, *Prayer*, 33&53.

asking God to do something radical through prayer.⁵⁰ The truth of the matter is that when it comes to spiritual leadership development, the closer a leader walks with God, the more effective their leadership and ministry. Prayer is the base on which a leader establishes an intimate relationship with God. Prayer establishes communication with God, whereas reading the Word of God establishes God's communication with the leader.

The next piece to developing spiritual leadership is a devotion to reading the Scriptures. As a leader who is developing other leaders, establishing accountability is paramount when it comes to reading and studying God's Word. The Bible is the handbook for life; a leader needs to know where to turn to for counsel, encouragement, and wisdom, not just for themselves but also for the people they are leading. Whitney writes that there is no substitute for reading the scriptures and that the intake of scripture is the most transforming practice which people can engage in. Since the Bible is the number one way God speaks to his people, a leader would prove to be ineffective without reading and seeking God's counsel daily. If a leader wishes to be godly, they need to know God, and the only way to get to know God is to read his word.⁵¹ The average church will encourage a congregation to read along in a Bible-in-a-year format, which proves worthy when small group studies gather to discuss the content. For the person who is seeking to elevate their level of influence, just reading through the Bible in a year is not enough. Spiritual leadership development means taking the time to read, study, pray over and dissect the Word of God. A leader not only reads the Bible but allows the Bible to transform them from the inside-out, and for this reason, spiritual leadership development must accompany mentoring, which establishes accountability.

⁵⁰ John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 57.

⁵¹ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 22-23.

The last needed element for spiritual leadership development is living a life of total surrender and humility. Should a person decide to enhance their spiritual leadership, it should be done full-heartedly. The cost of becoming a spiritual leader must be taken into account so as not to come up short.⁵² There is a priority of pursuit that a leader needs to follow, and it will, at times, be tested, and surrendering to God in all things is the first step in this endeavor. God must hold the utmost priority in all aspects of a leader's life without fail. If a leader attempts to lead without having surrendered all to God, the chances of success are futile since, but with God, all things are possible.⁵³

Walking in humility is the act of understanding who God is in relation to all of humanity. Knowing that God is above all and that his son is the incarnate Christ.⁵⁴ When spiritual leadership develops from the mindset of surrender and humility, a leader will live to serve people, which is the epitome of leadership.

Developing spiritual leaders is work, and becoming a leader is also work. Without mentoring and accountability, an up and coming leader will naturally fall back into habits of laziness.⁵⁵ Even in secular teachings of leadership development, mentoring carries a great deal of weight in the success of the developing leaders. Mentoring is both a formal and informal process that engulfs a leader in beneficial hands-on training. Mentoring in and of itself is not significantly effective if the mentor fails to provide valuable feedback in the way of

⁵² Luke 14:27-30.

⁵³ Andrew Murray, *Humility, and Absolute Surrender* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 2005), 110.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁵ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 32.

assessments.⁵⁶ Moving away from the spiritual development of leaders to the development of a leader's character is the next step. The character development process does not proceed after a leader develops spiritually; on the contrary, it should coincide with all leadership development.

Character-Driven Leadership Development

The leadership development process must begin with cultivating an intimate relationship with Christ; doing so should address most of the character flaws a leader may possess.⁵⁷

Character leadership development should never be looked at as an add-on or a secondary training as it holds the same weight as spiritual leadership development and should be addressed simultaneously. Just as spiritual leadership development is an ongoing process, so is the development of a leader's character. Maxwell teaches that a leader's character growth will determine their personal growth. For this reason, the testing of a leader's character will be a daily endeavor, and leaders and mentors need to take this development process seriously.⁵⁸

Leadership development is more than just equipping a person for a position; it is creating an environment that welcomes and reproduces shepherding.⁵⁹ Conducting leadership development in an environment that nurtures growth and leader reproduction, leaders and mentors must make an intentional switch from informing about leadership to equipping leaders with the necessary tools needed to be successful.⁶⁰ Leaders need to be cognitive of the fact that

⁵⁶ David Day, "Leadership Development: A Review in Context," *The Leadership Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 581-613, accessed September 26, 2019, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1048984300000618>.

⁵⁷ Richard Clinton and Paul Leavenworth, *Starting Well*, 5.

⁵⁸ John C. Maxwell, *The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth: Live Them and Reach Your Potential* (New York, NY: Center Street, 2014), 144.

⁵⁹ Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, and Robert E. Coleman, *DiscipleShift*, 101.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

leadership development goes beyond leadership training and that development is the primary function.⁶¹

Leadership experts such as Bill Henard caution pastors about their level of leadership but seemingly misses the mark on informing pastors about what leadership actually looks like at the different levels.⁶² Not unlike J. Oswald and Geiger and Peck, Henard lacks the specific ‘how’ in the overall leadership development process. Henard argues that the adage *everything rises and falls on leadership* is not always the case and that servant leadership disproves the leadership principle.⁶³ Counteracting that point are other professionals such as Michael Fletcher, who presents the principle of empowering leadership and Kevin Ford, who offers different types of leadership tactics, such as tactical, strategic, and transformational, and advocates for them within the church.⁶⁴ Both Fletcher and Ford seem to acknowledge within their separate writings the adage everything rises and falls on leadership. Henard’s argument that leaders must be servant leaders does not negate the leadership principle that everything rises and falls on leadership. He fails to see that the overall process of leadership includes many different tactics, principles, and activities which affect the rise and fall of that leadership. These components sink to the responsibility of both, in this case, the church and the developing leader.

Whether a church is utilizing servant leadership, empowering leadership, or transformational leadership, the bottom line is the leaders involved with the leadership endeavor need to have the biblical character if the church is going to be successful. That character needs to

⁶¹ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 15-19.

⁶² William David Henard, *Can These Bones Live?* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2015), Word Search Bible. Chapter 5.

⁶³ Ibid., Chapter 1.

⁶⁴ Kevin Ford and Ken Tucker, *The Leadership Triangle: The Three Options That Will Make You a Stronger Leader* (Garden City, NY: Morgan James Pub, 2014), 23.

be assessed from time to time.⁶⁵ One way to test the character of the leaders in any organization, especially the church, is to introduce change. Since all leaders are supposed to be equipped for change, the test will reveal who is really on board and who may have an agenda.⁶⁶

In the end, the church either becomes a kingdom advancing, leadership developing organism or not. Regardless of the outcome, the leaders of the church are held accountable.⁶⁷ There is no evidence that the church is going to cease to exist outside of Christ's return, so the primary function of the church should be to encourage people to utilize their gifts for the work of the ministry.⁶⁸ From the people who are willing to use their gifts for ministry, the church can start the process of identifying potential leaders. Churches need to find the right leaders that they can develop and keep for more than just a season to maximize their overall effectiveness.⁶⁹

Developing Leaders within a Culture

Implementation of development tactics into a leadership development process would make the leadership learning process more valuable and productive. For example, Ford teaches that a strategic leader will ask why five times because strategic leaders are curious leaders.⁷⁰ The main question that remains unanswered is how a leader would know when to be a strategic leader or when a situation calls for a leader to be strategic. Ford explains the different tactics in full

⁶⁵ Brian Croft and Harry L. Reeder, *Biblical Church Revitalization: Solutions for Dying & Divided Churches* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2016), 70.

⁶⁶ Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), Word Search Bible, Chapter 10.

⁶⁷ Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, 16.

⁶⁸ Leslie Scanlon, "Pastoral Pipeline: Will there be enough Ministers to Serve the Presbyterian Church?" *Presbyterian Outlook*, accessed September 18, 2017. 12, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1939740050?accountid=12085>.

⁶⁹ Bud Wrenn, *Innovative Planning: Your Church in 4-D*, 133.

⁷⁰ Ford, *The Leadership Triangle*, 41.

detail but fails to provide a vehicle that will take a leader to the next level. Ford seems to be addressing seasoned leaders and is merely providing another venue for leaders to hone their current leadership skills. In the same way, J. Oswald Sanders provides insight into spiritual leadership, and Geiger and Peck give a biblical argument for church leadership, and Henard addresses servant leadership. Ford does, however, offer leaders three methods of honing their skills in all of the mentioned leadership avenues.

Michael Fletcher addresses the topic of leadership development in the church utilizing much of the tactics that Ford teaches. Fletcher discusses a strategic leadership principle where everything that a church needs God provides within the people that attend.⁷¹ Fletcher also uses a tactical leadership development process that encompasses people and not a system. Fletcher, Geiger, and Peck's leadership development processes are similar in that neither contains copious details. However, Fletcher does provide a good outline for a reliable program. Fletcher believes that the primary job for leaders is to develop people into leaders then build the church, which coincides with the heart of Geiger and Peck's teaching on church leadership. A consensus among the authors is that in no way should a leader build a church to develop leaders; the leaders must come first.⁷²

Multiple books and writings address the problem of churches not having an effective leadership development process that encompasses everyone from the new convert to the church leadership team. Even in the secular world of leadership, some lessons and methods could be adopted into the church setting. A good example is Dr. Aldo Civico's four steps to developing authentic leadership: explore yourself as a leader, encounter situations that will draw a leader out

⁷¹ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, xvii.

⁷² Ibid., 13.

of their comfort zone, empathize with people, and lastly, engage with other people and other leaders.⁷³

No matter what the process of leadership development looks like in an organization, there is a strong push for leaders to conduct the process from a transformational point of view to develop people within any cultural setting effectively. In essence, the main idea is utilizing transformational leadership development as opposed to a transactional or laissez-faire leader. The transformational leadership style has proven to stimulate the interests of the followers, along with generating affirmative acceptance and awareness toward a presented vision and mission. Also, transformational leadership raises motivation and self-interest, resulting in the followers doing more and going above and beyond for the good of the group.⁷⁴

The church needs a system that addresses both the unsaved newcomer and the seasoned Christian alike. The process should be simple and not intrusive or evasive to anyone. It should revolve around developing the leader in both the spiritual and character development within the context of the culture they are reaching. Furthermore, the process needs to take the newcomer on day one and start something that will motivate them to live a life that multiplies leaders within the church. The church needs a system that reproduces, equips, and mobilizes its leaders.

Theological Foundations

Leadership starts back in Genesis with God giving Adam the commandment to subdue and have dominion over all the earth.⁷⁵ Mark D. Vander Hart labels this action as the dominion

⁷³ Aldo Civico, "Psychology Today," *Psychology Today* (blog), May 13, 2014. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/turning-point/201405/4-steps-develop-authentic-leadership>.

⁷⁴ Deanne N. Den Hartog et al., "Culture Specific and Cross-Culturally Generalizable Implicit Leadership Theories: Are Attributes of Charismatic/Transformational Leadership Universally Endorsed?" *The Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 223-224. Accessed September 26, 2019, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2269943.

⁷⁵ Gen. 1:26.

mandate when he provides an in-depth study on the covenants in the Bible.⁷⁶ God created Adam and then put him in charge, and in doing so, God implemented the first leadership development process. Today, it is not possible to create someone as God did, but it is possible to develop people into leaders. Throughout history, the process of leadership development has changed; for instance, the kings of old would have a successor who, once the king died, would take the throne. The idea of handing down a position of authority has validity to it as it would seem the preceding ruler would mentor his predecessor. When studying the lives of the kings and rulers in the Bible, the fact remains that while the concept of succession leadership is coherent, the system is not perfect. The perfection of handing down knowledge and authority is only as good as the intentions of the next in line. Unfortunately, the motives and hearts of men are perpetually skewed by sin, thereby rendering any perfect leadership development process fallible.

Within the New Testament, there is a model of leadership development that Jesus uses that builds upon the previous model of handing down information. Jesus, in his last three years of ministry, demonstrated a leadership development process that portrayed him as an intentional leader developer. Jesus approached men and said, "Follow me," an action that carries the historical significance of when rabbis would tell a young boy to "follow me" if the boy had the potential to be a rabbi.⁷⁷ The term "follow me" in the Greek means to join as an attendant or to accompany, and since Jesus was considered to be a Rabbi, when he said, "Follow me," the recipient knew what he meant. As Jesus continued his ministry, he developed the twelve men he

⁷⁶ Mark D. Vander Hart, "Creation and Covenant: A Survey of the Dominion Mandate in the Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 6 no. 1 (1990): 3–18, accessed September 26, 2019, <https://search-ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000887083&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

⁷⁷ "Rabbi and Talmidim." *That the World May Know*, accessed September 7, 2019, <https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/rabbi-and-talmidim>.

called into leaders. These men are the chosen ones whom Jesus will entrust the kingdom of God.⁷⁸

In short, the process Jesus used consists of the following components:

Model - He did it.⁷⁹

Mentor - He did it, and the disciples were with Him.⁸⁰

Monitor – The disciples did it, and He was with them.⁸¹

Motivated – The disciples did it, and He was in the background encouraging them.⁸²

Multiply – The disciples did it.⁸³

There was no written plan or classes to attend, the disciples learned through Jesus' example and his intentional instruction. These same principles can and should be applied to the leadership development process within the church today. John Maxwell labels this process as the law of the picture, and it is on the premise that people do what people see.⁸⁴

Today, when a church implements a biblical leadership development process, it has to grasp two fundamental truths. The first is a clear understanding of what the church is and its intended role here on earth. The word church comes from the Greek word Ekklesia, which translates to a public assemblage summoned by a herald.⁸⁵ A less formal definition describes the

⁷⁸ Luke 12:32.

⁷⁹ Mark 1-2.

⁸⁰ Mark 3:13-15.

⁸¹ Mark 6:7-13.

⁸² Mark 16:15-18.

⁸³ Acts 6:1-7, II Tim. 2:2.

⁸⁴ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 155.

⁸⁵ Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 2nd ed. Baker Reference Library. (Grand Rapids, MI: Carlisle, Cumbria, U.K: Baker Academic; Paternoster Press, 2001), 246.

church as the “called out ones.” The first use of the word *church* is when Jesus spoke to Peter, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”⁸⁶ When Jesus spoke these words to Peter, his vision was to grow a church, to herald people together for a cause, and through this effort, the church would spread and become stronger, so strong that even the gates of hell would not prevail against it. God intends for all churches to grow because growth is essential as long as heaven and hell are realities. The church is the body of Christ; a living organism and all living things grow as long as they are healthy. Starting with a better understanding of the church and its inception is essential because it is the foundation for the rest of this research. In short, the church is designed to be a catalyst for leadership development. The process of not just becoming a Christian but going out to the ends of the earth permeates scriptures from cover to cover.

The second truth that needs to be understood is that God has a vision for the church. The Psalmist wrote, “If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.”⁸⁷ Since God is doing something that the church is supposed to be seeing, the implied task is to seek him, and if the church attends to what God is revealing, there is a blessing. Referencing the primary mission of the church has many different terms, such as advancing the kingdom of God, spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and making Christ's name known throughout the world. For the most part, the church understands the mandate that is before them. It is *how* the mandate gets carried out that churches act upon differently. If the church is a center for developing leaders, and God gave the church a

⁸⁶ Matt. 16:18.

⁸⁷ Prov. 29:18, The Message.

mandate to grow, it can only make sense that God would provide a theological foundation to the process.

The theological process that God implemented can be traced back to the book of Exodus as the Hebrews were about to be delivered from the Egyptians through Moses. God told Moses,

Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.⁸⁸

God makes his plan emphatically known to Moses, and this plan flows throughout scripture.

God’s system of building leaders starts with, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians,” where he is saving his people from the burdens of slavery. Today, people face different kinds of bondage, such as burdens of lust, guilt, and greed, the list is endless, and God is seeking to save those who are slaves to these sins.

Once God has brought people out of their burdens, he wants to set them free. "I will deliver you from slavery to them." God has no intention of keeping people as slaves; he desires for people to live free from the things that would oppress them. Not only deliver them, but he is going to do it in a manner that brings redemption, "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment." The acts of judgment are not against them but against the Egyptians who had them enslaved. Lastly, God states, “I will take you to be my people.” Even though the word church is not mentioned, the implication is being heralded out into an assembly. God chose the Israelites to be his “church,” his people.

The Old Testament leadership model that God displays is simply a model of getting people sanctified, meaning to save them from their bondage. Next, God delivers them, a freedom

⁸⁸ Ex. 6:6-7.

that has life and redemptive qualities. God promises to bless the people and keep them as his own. God accomplishes all of this through the people whom he calls and mobilizes.

The same leadership development process that God uses in Exodus is seen throughout the scriptures but in different terms. In the New Testament, Jesus tells his disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."⁸⁹

Jesus echoes the actions of his Father in the Great Commission. When he says, "Go," the participle, *πορευθέντες*, is used as an attendant circumstance to the main verb that follows. A proper grammatical rendition of the verse is, "As you are going about your day doing whatever it is that you do, make disciples." The main verb is the aorist imperative, *μαθητεύσατε*, to make disciples. Therefore, disciple-making, the process of making Jesus known to people, is the intended task; "As you are going along, make my name known to make disciples."⁹⁰ For people to become disciples, they would need to repent, turn from old ways, and live a new life. In essence, they would have to be delivered and set free from their sinful lives. Jesus continues with his commission with two more participles to describe the process of making disciples, stating that the disciples are to baptize people and teach them all that he has taught them. The act of baptizing is a symbol of a transformed life, and when the disciples take the time to teach other people, they are equipping the people to do what Jesus has instructed. Within that instruction is the commandment to go about their daily living and make other disciples. Pastors today have been passively and probably unwillingly backed into a corner concerning the commandment of

⁸⁹ Matt. 28:19-20.

⁹⁰ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar - Beyond the Basics*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996, 645.

making disciples. The church is holding the paid pastor responsible for the discipleship making process when, in all actuality, it is his job to train the saints for the work of the ministry.⁹¹ The true calling of every Christian is to reach their neighbors, their city, their state, and never stop until everyone has heard the good news of Jesus Christ.

Paul's letter to the church in Colosse further supports a leadership development model that intentionally grows the church. Paul writes, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ."⁹² The act of proclaiming Christ is saving the lost, and warning everyone and teaching people, are the pastoring and equipping elements to the leadership development process. Lastly, presenting everyone mature in Christ is the mobilizing element to the process and the restart of the process of saving the lost, shepherding, equipping, and mobilizing. When Christ made the Great Commission cyclical, it simultaneously created a cyclical process for leadership development within the church.

God teaches and demonstrates the process of how a healthy church should grow. First, the process takes a lost person and gets them saved. Second, the newly saved person gets shepherded or pastored into their new life with Christ. Third, the freshly pastored person gets equipped to carry out the ministry God has called them. Lastly, the equipped person gets mobilized to reach his neighbors to the end of the earth. The entire leadership process is contingent upon the obedience of the person whom God calls to reach the people, and that person is the church, the called-out ones, anyone who claims Jesus Christ as their savior.

⁹¹ Francis Chan, and Mark Beuving, *Multiply: Disciples Making Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2012), 34.

⁹² Col. 1:28.

Getting Saved

As Christians move through the leadership development process, they will get to the point where they are mobilized to reach the lost. In church today, this process is called evangelism. For a personal evangelism journey to be effective, Christians, need to have a motive for reaching the lost. The motivation for reaching the lost can range from a joy that God has given to a strict conviction to the obedience for the Great Commandment.⁹³ After establishing a motive, a Christian must add meaning to their motivation for evangelism. A motive for evangelism comes from the passion and calling God puts within a Christian to help people become better or to enjoy leading people to a true conversion.⁹⁴ Lastly, a Christian must have a method of leading a person to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and accomplishing this can be done in many ways. Some of the techniques that are useful start as acts of kindness or the sharing of a personal story. Other methods can be more direct such as asking for a response or creating an environment that leads to opportunities to present the Gospel.⁹⁵

The most excellent example of a life of evangelism and reaching the lost is the Apostle Paul. The three elements of his success as an evangelist were his life, his experience with God, and his prayers. The story of Paul's life before becoming a great evangelist is riveting and will be discussed in the next point. The life of Paul after he becomes a Christian is an experience that Christians should be looking to mimic. Paul was willing to do whatever it took to spread the Gospel, even if it meant death. Paul was in jail, and his life was so significant that he claimed the attention of the highest authorities. Acts 25:23 "So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came

⁹³ Dave Earley, and David A. Wheeler, *Evangelism Is--: How to Share Jesus with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2010), 3-52.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 53-120.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 245-330.

with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in." Paul lived a life that caused himself to be arrested, beaten, and even shipped wrecked, but never did he forsake the Gospel or his mission to reach the people.

The second element of Paul that made him a successful evangelist was his experience with God. In Acts 16:12-21, Paul shares his extraordinary story of how he came to meet Jesus. The encounter was so real and impactful that Paul shares the same story multiple times to different people. Paul is a great evangelist because his experience with God was genuine, and he wishes for others to experience the same genuine conversion.

The last element that made Paul an extraordinary evangelist was his prayer life. The aspects of Paul's prayers are humbling as he gives credit to God for his life and convicting as he prays for the people even as he is in chains.⁹⁶ Paul's life example gives support to the fact that leadership development in other people needs to start in the leader's life. Once a leader learns to live out a godly Christian life, then they are fully equipped to speak into other people's lives.

An effective leadership development process must start with an invitational funnel that attracts new people into the process. Because of this, an evangelistic approach to ministry is necessary. The approach needs to be presented as a responsibility to every Christian and not pushed to the pastor. The pastor needs to turn his focus to pastoring the people who are being saved.

Pastoring the Saved

When people become Christians, they need to be pastored into the relationship because they are still carrying all of their "yesterdays," meaning they need healing from their sin and

⁹⁶ Acts 26:22, 29.

transgressions. All the person knows is that they said a prayer, and now their life is supposed to be different. When they go home, they are faced with the same temptations, issues, and demons as before they gave their lives to Christ. The question that remains with them is, “How?” How are they to live their lives and move forward with Christ? It is at this point where a pastor can do the most significant kingdom work as they work with a new Christian to provide counsel and prayer support that will usher the Christian into a healing process. Not only is a pastor able to do the most significant work during the healing process, but he is also responsible for pastoring the newly saved Christian.⁹⁷

In chapter seven of Romans, Paul teaches about transformation, being freed from the law, and being bound to Christ.⁹⁸ There is nothing wrong with pointing a new Christian to these theological points. However, since a new Christian is like a baby, they will need milk to get started and the best place for them in the Gospel of John.⁹⁹ Assisting a new Christian into their new walk must start with bringing healing to the person through forgiveness. Tozer writes that humans are in contention between two worlds, the physical and spiritual world. Humans have within them the ability and the desire to do good because God has created them and deemed them good. The issue with humans is their sinful nature, and this sinful nature wishes to remain dominant as it feeds the selfish desires of the flesh, of the eye, and life of pride.¹⁰⁰ The starting point of a Christian’s life is to admit they are sinners and fall short of the glory of God.¹⁰¹ The next step, according to Paul, is, “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in

⁹⁷ Eph. 4:11-12.

⁹⁸ Rom. 7.

⁹⁹ Elmer L. Towns, *The Gospel of John: Believe and Live* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), xi.

¹⁰⁰ A. W. Tozer, and James L. Snyder, *And He Dwelt among Us: Teachings from the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2014), 189.

¹⁰¹ Rom. 6:23.

your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." The act of speaking is essential in this process as it brings confirmation to the heart that what is said is believed. Once a Christian makes this confession, it is equally important to get them to confess their sin so that they can start healing just as James wrote, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." The confessing of sin and asking for forgiveness is how Christians start their new life in Christ. The act of asking for forgiveness for all the sins a person commits is the first piece of the healing process. Some people would argue that it should be the second piece next to extending forgiveness to others first — either way, the Bible instructs us to ask for forgiveness and also to forgive others. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Forgive us of our debts as we have forgiven our debtors," and pure or total forgiveness is when a person petitions God to let people who have caused hurt to us, off the hook.¹⁰² Total forgiveness needs to come from the heart and be directed not only toward the actions of other people, but they also need to direct it to the sinner's heart. The hardest people to forgive are usually themselves, but Jesus said, "for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."¹⁰³ Furthermore, in Acts 2:38, "Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Looking back at the Great Commission Jesus left for the disciples, he states explicitly, "...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."¹⁰⁴ The task here is to seek the lost and to teach the new Christians the commandments of Jesus. The commandments of Jesus are

¹⁰² R. T. Kendall, *Total Forgiveness* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2007), 16.

¹⁰³ Matt. 26:28.

¹⁰⁴ Matt. 28:20.

plenty throughout the scriptures, and it takes a daily walk with Jesus to fully grasp the significance of how people are to live in Christ truly. Once a new Christian starts the process of healing and has made significant changes such as changing their lifestyle and starting better godly habits, further investment is needed, even simultaneously, equipping them for the calling God has in their life.

Equipping the Pastored

The third phase of the leadership development process is to equip the new Christian, who is going or has gone through the healing process. In his letter to Ephesus, Paul points out that a pastor's job is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately people, more specifically, new Christians, often feel as though they are not qualified to talk about what God has done for them. Perhaps, they are embarrassed about what they have done and feel as though they do not measure up to helping someone else because of their past. The feelings of inadequacy are normal and bring to light the reason why the healing process is critical.

Looking back at the Great Commandment, Jesus instructs his disciples, who were and continue to be sinful, to make disciples, baptize them, and teach them. If the cycle is continuous, then when Peter made a disciple, he would instruct his new disciples on how to make more disciples, how to baptize them, and how to teach them. Moreover, if this is the means of how the church grows today, then it can be conceivable that a new Christian upon receiving Christ as their savior should be taught to make disciples, to baptize them, and teach them. The Bible does not support a view of being saved for any length of time before being sent, except for Paul's letter to Timothy, where he instructs him not to put a recent convert into a position of a pastor.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Eph. 4:12.

¹⁰⁶ 1Tim. 3:6.

The equipping process requires encouraging the new Christian to talk to others about what God has done in their lives. Paul continues in his letter to the church in Ephesus, “Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”¹⁰⁷ As Christians talk more about what God has done and is doing in their equipping process, they will be more at ease in engaging others with the message of Christ.

Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry is a two-fold task. The first task is to prep the heart and mind of the Christian. Pastors need to ensure that Christians know how to pray, how to read their Bible, and, most importantly, how to hear from God. The equipping of the saints is more than getting them ready to serve at the church; it is the process that will impact their life on an eternal level as they are advancing the kingdom, in their communities, and around the world. Paul instructs the church to be careful where one walks, to walk with the wise and not the unwise, and that people should make the best of their time because the days are evil.¹⁰⁸ It is a pastor's job and responsibility to ensure that the flock knows and understands that they are called to advance the kingdom, and they are to be ready for the ministry God has put upon them.

The second fold of equipping the saints is the practical aspects of ministry, which include solid leadership training, training in their called ministry area, the training in leading people to Christ, and teaching others as the Great Commission commands. All of this training can and should happen simultaneously with the healing process. Once a Christian has undergone significant healing and training, they then become part of the cycle of the Great Commission, which will mobilize them to reach the lost. Equipping the saints is not a new idea; Augustine is

¹⁰⁷ Eph. 4:25.

¹⁰⁸ Eph. 5:15.

an exemplary model for pastors to follow when it comes to equipping or mentoring people in ministry. Augustine is best known for his letters and sermons, but what is less known is that Augustine's favorite method for teaching and equipping people was initiating and facilitating group dialog.¹⁰⁹ The leadership style Augustine demonstrates for pastors today is what leadership experts refer to as servant leadership, which is expressed from the inner motivation of a leader.¹¹⁰ Augustine demonstrates servant leadership by pouring into others through teaching and facilitating the learning process.

Mobilizing the Equipped

The mobilization of the equipped Christian is not a cut and dry line. The entire leadership development process is a matter of maturity, but a Christian should never think that it is too early to step out in faith and walk in the calling God has put upon them. The mobilization of a Christian is another two-fold endeavor, the first of which is the personal walk of the Christian. A Christian's action will speak louder than any sermon they preach, so a Christian's outward actions must portray Christ living inwardly. Paul addressed this issue with the church in Ephesus, "I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."¹¹¹ If a Christian believes in their heart the calling God has put on them; then they will minister out of the overflow of that belief. Jesus instructed the people he was with, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this, all people

¹⁰⁹ Edward L. Smither, *Augustine as Mentor: A Model for Preparing Spiritual Leaders* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2008), 138.

¹¹⁰ Paul Pettit, ed. *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming like Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 179.

¹¹¹ Eph. 4:1-3.

will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another."¹¹² The Christian's actions and reactions are the primary testimony of who God is and how much he means to that person.

The second fold of the mobilization process is to preach the Gospel. Concerning the Great Commission, Christians are instructed to go and preach the Gospel. The word "go" means "as you are going along in life." In essence, Christians are to go about their lives living as Jesus has instructed and preaching the Gospel. Jesus commissions the disciples in Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."¹¹³ The word "witness" written here means a legal or judicial affinity or natural likeness. Christians are called to be and act in a natural likeness to Jesus in Jerusalem, which represents the city in which the Christian lives, Judea, which represents the state in which the Christian lives, and Samaria, which represents the country where a Christian resides. Jesus also mentions that Christians should not just stop there but go to the ends of the earth.

Leadership development within the church was never meant to be hard as it has a defined process established throughout scripture. Church of the Highlands' Pastor Chris Hodges teaches that it is the church's responsibility to make God known, help people find freedom, aide them in discovering their purpose, and mobilize them to make a difference.¹¹⁴ A pastor's job is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, and the ministry is to develop leaders who will come to know Christ, get healed from their past, get equipped for their ministry, and then go out and recreate the process in someone else's life.

¹¹² John 13:34-35.

¹¹³ Acts 1:8.

¹¹⁴ Chris Hodges, *A Vision to Grow* (Grow Leaders Conference, Birmingham, AL, July 30 – August 1, 2019).

Theoretical Foundations

A leadership development process or method within the confines of the church varies in name and length. Nevertheless, getting people to serve in the local church is the desired outcome for each of the methods. The phrase churches use to disguise their main objective cleverly is, "Getting people to use their giftings to advance the kingdom." Unfortunately, two significant components are missing from this leadership development process ideology. First, the development of the person as they enter into the so-called leadership process, and second, the lack of continuous care invested into the person once they are "using their giftings." Frequently, churches manipulate the idea of a leadership pipeline to guilt a person into serving whether they want to do the job or not. In his book *Empowering Leadership*, Michael Fletcher informs his readers that if they are looking for warm bodies to fill positions in the church, appeal to the masses, but there will never be a leadership culture. On the other hand, the promotion of leaders will grow people, and the culture will be one of leadership development.¹¹⁵

Leadership development processes need to be intentional and develop the person as a whole, not just in the position in which they serve. For this reason, the term *leadership pipeline* needs to become a phrase of the past, and churches need to turn their attention to an intentional leadership development process. The process needs to be adaptable to everyone from a first-time guest, to a seasoned Christian looking to serve in a ministry or the individual who feels called to full-time ministry. An actual leadership development process should not be used solely to engage people to serve in the church. The process needs to be transferrable to the individual's home life, workplace, and personal life. Repeating an earlier phrase: Leadership development processes need to be intentional in developing an individual as a whole not just in the position in which

¹¹⁵ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, 111.

they serve, Fletcher teaches that doers respond to a need where leaders respond to a vision.¹¹⁶

Having people to fill in the children's ministry is excellent, but developing leaders who make the children's ministry happen and understand the vision behind it and the effects on the church as a whole is most desirable. Unfortunately, more organizations are equipping doers than leaders, and this includes the church.

The church associated with this research is deficient in properly developing leaders due to the process they are using. Once a person has been attending the church for a while, they are encouraged to attend step classes. The classes are designed to inform the participant of the vision of the church and how the church functions. The classes conclude with step four, which matches the participant up with a ministry leader to get them plugged in. Even though there is nothing inherently wrong or unbiblical with the process, it does not address any of the hurts or sufferings of a new leader that would hinder their effectiveness in ministry.

A few key components need adding to make the mentioned process more effective. The first component is the engagement of the people. From the moment a person walks through the door of any organization, namely the church for this research, they must be engaged but not to the point of annoyance or where they feel as though they are intrusive to the church. In other words, approaching each person needs to be intentional and respectful. Whoever engages the visitors needs to treat them as though they are the only people there. The visitors need to be hand walked everywhere and shown where everything is, including the children's area, if applicable, the restrooms, and the worship center. The engagement does not stop here as they should be contacted initially either by email or a text with a warm welcome. Later in the week, a second

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 106.

connection either by email or phone should be made, inviting them back and with an expression of anticipation to see them.

Once the visitors become comfortable with the church, they should be engaged to either give their life to Christ or work toward becoming a member of the church. The engagement at this level needs to be a dedicated team that will track the guest and approaches them weekly to make them feel welcomed and at home within the church. The team then engages the newcomers to guide them to the next step, building a deep relationship between the newcomer and the church. Leadership expert Robert Lord teaches leadership resides in the minds of the followers, and because of this, it is critical to discover what those followers are thinking.¹¹⁷ Since the church is in the business of making leaders, the Lord's statement is well worth remembering as it will move members to engage newcomers and motivate them to build solid relationships. Moving forward, if the visitors are not believers and are not ready to make that commitment, they should be invited to join a connection group that will help them better understand what it means to be a Christian. If, when approached, the team member can lead them to Christ, the newcomer should be coached into attending a new believer's class before attending the member classes.

Another critical component to a successful leadership development process is how a person can achieve healing and restoration from past hurts, wrongdoings, and in some cases, poor decision making. Whether the visitor is a new Christian or a seasoned Christian, the church needs to have a system that enables a person to get healing from their yesterdays. A team member needs to care for the hurts and wounds that people carry because not addressing the

¹¹⁷ Robert G Lord and Cynthia G Emrich, "Thinking Outside the Box by Looking inside the Box," *The Leadership Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (2000): pp. 551, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843\(00\)00060-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843(00)00060-6).

pains of the participants will cause them to take those wounds into ministry with them. The Bible teaches that a person will speak from the overflow of the heart.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, “Hurt people, hurt people,” and this is the last thing that needs to happen within the confines of ministry. Within the church world, there are a plethora of resources to use to assist people in getting healing and restoration back into their lives. Having a process where people can get healed is a significant component of building lasting leaders because the process communicates, “Nobody is perfect, and everyone is welcome.” It also displays God’s grace, tangibly. The team member must remain in constant contact with the participant and should not hesitate to pray with the people and invest their time in the success of the participant. The church frequently fails to offer a healing process due to the need for people to serve in certain areas. The downfall of skipping this step is the implementation of hurt doers instead of healthy leaders.

The third component of a successful leadership development process is equipping the member for the work of the ministry.¹¹⁹ Unfortunately, people often feel as though they are not qualified to talk about what God has done for them or perhaps, they are embarrassed about what they have done and feel as though they do not measure up to helping someone else because of their past. Whatever the reason before equipping can happen, Christians must understand that they are fallen people living in a fallen world, and there is a need to keep working on their relationship with God.

Churches believe they have the equipping part down, but this author believes otherwise. Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry is more than having them attend membership classes, take a DISC and personality test along with completing a spiritual gifts test. Equipping

¹¹⁸ Luke 6:45.

¹¹⁹ Eph. 4:12.

for ministry contains significant elements such as prayer, tithing, and reading the Bible, along with other internal learning aspects and practices. Dr. Riggio writes concerning the one mistake organizations make in the leadership development process is they forget about the follower.¹²⁰ Riggio goes on to write in another article giving ten steps to developing leaders from a follower mindset. Within those ten steps, he highlights pieces that the church misses, such as developing core competencies, developing cognitive, social, and emotional skills, setting development goals, and getting feedback.¹²¹ Leadership experts agree that learning occurs through studying, doing, and participation resulting in a change in the participant's know-why, know-how, and know-what, respectively.¹²² When a church embraces leadership development as a process and not as a step, the leaders they produce will not only be healthier, but they will create the leadership funnel churches are seeking. Another benefit of healthy leaders is the retention of those leaders, which will allow for more focus on the growth of the church instead of the constant asking for volunteers and leaders to fill positions.

The team member that has been engaging the participant from the beginning needs to continue building a relationship with them to ensure that spiritual disciplines are being developed. Team members need to keep encouraging the individuals to attend some basic membership classes that include the vision of the church, the spiritual gifts test, and personality profiles. The participants need a basic understanding of the Bible, a teaching on how to pray, and

¹²⁰ Ronald E. Riggio, Ph.D. "The Number One Mistake of Leadership Development Programs." *Psychology Today*. Sussex Publishers, accessed November 18, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/cutting-edge-leadership/201809/the-number-one-mistake-leadership-development-programs>.

¹²¹ Ronald E. Riggio, Ph.D. "10 Steps to Developing Your Leadership." *Psychology Today*. Sussex Publishers, accessed November 18, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/cutting-edge-leadership/201502/10-steps-developing-your-leadership>.

¹²² Kimberly B Boal and Robert Hooijberg, "Strategic Leadership Research," *The Leadership Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (2000): pp. 517, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843\(00\)00057-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843(00)00057-6).

coaching on many other spiritual disciplines that will enhance their relationship with Christ. Within these classes, the participants will build relationships; they will engage in discipleship and will understand the need to participate in outreach events. The courses should be designed to engage, encourage, and develop a person in their walk with Christ. Upon completing the classes, the participants enter into the last component of the leadership development process, which mobilizes them into the ministry area of their choice. At this stage of the leadership development process, the individual should have a better grasp on what they want to do or where they are called to serve. Furthermore, they, in turn, become the new team members who meet and minister to the next visitor.

For the church to be truly successful, it must first define their leadership model. Once the model is identified, then the church can start unraveling the types of leaders and leadership styles it has or needs to accomplish its mission and vision. The critical component of a successful leadership development process is to remain constant in the process and allow for minor changes to happen that will increase the effectiveness of the process.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Intervention Design

The purpose of the research is to implement an effective leadership development process by identifying areas in the church where leaders are needed, then equipping people to be leaders and mobilize them according to their abilities and gifts. The main objective of this research is to implement a process that will result in a natural, cyclical leadership development process, thereby creating a healthy church in the years to come.

An effective leadership development process can be broken down into four steps. The first step includes an evangelistic element that reaches the city and brings people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Once a person has made Christ their savior, the second step addresses the need to shepherd them through a healing process because everyone has patterns in their life that need fixing and a past that they need healing from. The third step is equipping the people for ministry consists of teaching them how to share their faith, read their Bibles, and engage in different ministry activities. The last step is to mobilize people into a ministry, preferably one they feel called to that will aide in evangelizing the lost. The four steps that make up the leadership development process, although they may look different, are easy enough to implement in every church.

For this research, steps three and four will be the main focus. Primarily the research will focus on getting people who are already Christians and are on board with the vision and mission of the church to assume a leadership role and responsibility.

The intended intervention plan is to implement a leadership development process that will consist of assessing the current leadership involvement, identify potential leaders, train

the leaders, and then mobilize them. The process will be reproducible and cyclical to promote further leadership development. The intended project is based solely on people volunteering to be leaders within the church. Every person who volunteers will be part of the project. In the participant's eyes, they will only be taking part in an integration process the church has designed. Should a person decide not to lead or serve in any capacity after they have completed the training, a connection will be made to them to find out what has transpired since the training. If an individual has a long lapse of time without leading, then wishes to lead again, they will be required to sit with a pastor or trusted leader. The pastor or trusted leader will ensure the leader is ready to assume a leadership role.

Before any participants for the project was approached, an IRB approval letter was obtained (See Appendix D), and consent forms (See Appendix C) generated. At the onset of the training, the leadership development process will be explained to all participants. The method of building relationships, engaging in discipleship, and reaching out to others will be the pillars for the training. Explaining that leadership training is necessary to multiply leaders who are conducting ministry is necessary for healthy church growth. With the multiplication of leaders, the possibility of reaching the city and surrounding areas is enlarged. As the church's influence expands within the city, the opportunity to reach more people for Christ expands, thereby increasing the church's attendance. With the increase of the church, comes the chance to develop even more leaders who will conduct more ministry, which will reach more of the city. Every participant will be taught how the leadership development process works and what is expected of them. Furthermore, they will learn what they can expect from the church leadership in support of their ministry.

The implementation of the intervention plan will be executed in a four-step cyclical process that will be reevaluated each month to assess progress. Before the process is implemented, this researcher will sit with the lead pastor, and together define what leadership is within the church. The definition will reflect the vision and mission of the church, and since the church is moving toward becoming a small group church, it will also consider the leaders who lead the groups. Once a definition has been rendered, the first step in the leadership development process will be to assess the current leadership situation. The assessment needs to be accomplished before the actual implementation of the intended intervention. This researcher will achieve this by obtaining the number of current leaders and the positions they fill from the church database. This researcher will verify the names with the lead pastor and add other people he may have that have yet to be identified by current leaders. The names collected will not be used for anything other than to obtain an accurate count of leaders and to ensure that people who are leading in multiple positions are not being counted multiple times.

Next, this researcher will personally contact the leaders on the list to ensure they are staying in their current position. This researcher will also ascertain if the current leaders have other key leaders that should be considered, which may not be listed. Leaders will be contacted primarily by meeting them face to face while they are serving on Sunday mornings. If the leaders cannot be contacted on any given Sunday, they will be reached by phone, text, or email.

Once this researcher has obtained a list of all the leaders, he will sit with the lead pastor to go through the list to ensure that there are no anomalies nor people are serving

where they should not be for whatever reason. With a complete list, this researcher will contact the leaders and request that they participate in a church survey. The survey will help determine what the church is doing well and what are areas the church needs improvement. Setting an established time and place at the church for the leaders to meet each week before the start of the intended leadership development training will ensure all leaders are able to complete the survey. For the people who may not be able to make the established time and place, this researcher will ensure to set an appointment up with them at their convenience to accomplish the survey.

The survey designed by this researcher covers eight areas in the church. The leaders will rate each area using a scale of one to ten. The areas of the survey will include rating the pastor's accessibility, spiritual climate, preaching/teaching, worship, discipleship, outreach, facilities, and ease of getting connected. The survey will be in print form and is located in the connection group box in the office of the pastor of spiritual development.

The reason for the broad span of areas in the leadership survey is that the church is trying to move towards a small group church model. The survey will provide feedback on which areas are doing well in the church and where the need lies in the development of better leaders. The areas that are doing well in the church, in theory, are the areas in which contain mature, reliable, Christian leaders. Knowing this will help the lead pastor identify the leaders who carry more influence. The pastor then can leverage the influence of those leaders to assist in identifying and developing other leaders.

When all leaders on the list complete the survey, all of the numbers will be entered into a spreadsheet. The end product will be a vertical bar graph depicting the scores the leaders

assigned to each area. The report will be given to the lead pastor so he can decide what area needs more focus to represent the church's vision and mission more accurately. The researcher intends to have the leadership definition, the leaders list, and the survey completed with the results presented to the lead pastor before the training begins, along with weekly updates as the training continues. Once the actual leadership training starts, it will run for seven classes over two weeks.

The second step in the leadership development process is training the leaders. The leadership development intervention addresses the foundational elements of leadership development, which include the building of relationships, and the equipping and mobilizing of leaders. To get people to buy into a vision, they have to buy into the people first. Successfully building relationships with people will lower the odds of them leaving and will aid in their ability to be pastored effectively. Once people establish a connection and they are cared for, their ability to do ministry will be more impactful. A by-product of intentional leadership development will be their willingness to develop others.

Leaders who are already serving will be approached and instructed to be first to attend the training. Subsequently, the leadership training will be announced during the Sunday morning announcements inviting new leaders to attend. For the individuals who are attending the step classes, the instructor of the step classes will keep encouraging them to attend the leader's training. Names of the people who are currently in the step classes will be obtained by this researcher, who will reach out to them repeatedly to get them into the leaders' training. A participant's commitment is assumed when they volunteer to show up for the training; this is solidified with the signing of a leader's agreement, required for every

leader at the end of the training. A consent form that informs each participant of the research currently being conducted will be issued to them to read and sign. (See Appendix C)

At the start of the training, people who are currently serving in leadership positions will be among the first to be trained, making the opening number who are getting trained high. As the current leaders move through the training, the numbers will decrease. The primary tool for gathering data that will track the training progress will be the church's database system and an Excel spreadsheet. Since the leadership development intervention requires people to take action, the data collected will only reflect the leaders who participated and took action after completion of the training. The data will not reflect the people who did not complete the training or fulfill all the requirements needed for this research project. Specific reports concerning the weekly Sunday morning attendance, the number of active groups, and the number of trained leaders will be tracked in the church database system. The data will be transcribed to an Excel spreadsheet that will track the current percentages and deficits of all monitored areas of the research.

The preparation for the leadership training entails printing the workbooks, leader's agreement, and consent forms along with securing stationery and snacks for the participants. The training will take no more than a two-hour block of instruction and discussion. The teaching and discussion will center around the leader's training guide. Every leader in training will be issued a printed copy of the workbook by the classroom instructor, who obtained the workbooks from a box on the connections group bookshelf in the office of the pastor of spiritual development. The leader of the training will utilize the instructor's guide, which contains all the answers to the workbook version of the training. For this research, the

training will be conducted on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 6:00 pm in the building labeled “Modular Two” for two weeks. Additionally, the training can be facilitated in homes and within a small group setting outside of designated evenings as long as there are prior notice and ample time.

The training will cover topics such as leaders within the church, the expectations of leaders in the church, biblical models and standards for leadership, and the administrative tasks and details of being a leader at the church. Before the trained leaders are released as new leaders, they must read and sign the church's leader's agreement. The agreement is a detailed list depicting the expectations placed upon being a leader at the church. The agreement is attached to the back of the workbook. The instructor will immediately or as soon as possible, make copies of the signed agreements in the workbooks and then return them to the new leaders. Every meeting will end in prayer over the new leaders and the church as a whole. The third step in the leadership development process entails mobilizing the new leaders to take action. Upon completion of the training, the instructor will set a meeting time and place with each of the leaders if they are not currently serving in an area. For leaders currently serving in the church, this instructor will meet them on the evening of the training to ensure they are where they wish to be and serving in accordance with their gifts and passions. All other meetings can take place at any mutually agreed upon location but should happen within a week of completion of the training. The meetings will be designed like an interview process to find out how the new leader is going to get involved. Questions of the sort below will be used to determine the best place the leader should serve:

- Considering your spiritual and natural gifts, where do you see yourself serving?
- If you could serve anywhere in the church doing anything, what would it be?
- Are there any leaders whom you already have a relationship with that you would like to serve?

If the new leader is considering leading a small group outside of the core groups at the church, they will be asked:

- Where will the group meet?
- Whom are you asking to be in the group?
- How often are you meeting?
- What is the main point of the group?

These questions assist the leader in identifying and designing a mission and vision for their group. Before the meeting concludes, the researcher and leader will ascertain the next steps and set "no later than" dates for their completion. These dates will be noted, and the leader will agree upon when and where to meet for the follow-up appointment, usually two weeks from the current meeting date. The meeting will then end in prayer.

When the date draws closer, this researcher will send out a reminder and confirm the meeting. At the actual meeting, an inquiry concerning the status of the leader's involvement will be conducted. Whether the leader is involved in a church ministry or leading a small group, this researcher will diligently ask about the welfare of the leader, their time with God, and if there is any way to serve them. The meeting will end in prayer, and this researcher will make a note to follow up on the leader in the coming weeks. Any concerns the leader had, if necessary, will be reported to the lead pastor for consideration.

The last step in the leadership development process will be a reassessment of the current leadership status. This researcher will update the number of leaders and groups the church currently has along with the number of people in attendance within the groups and how many trained leaders are presently leading. The lead pastor will get a full report each month concerning

the progress of trained leaders and the positions within the church that are filled or at a deficit. A recommendation for another survey to every leader to see the areas the church has made a significant impact will be made to the lead pastor. It will be conducted according to his directive.

Evaluation Approach and Goals

The evaluation of the intervention involves tracking different aspects of the intervention, the first of which is the number of participants who complete the leader's training. The number of people who complete the leader's training needs to be a priority since the rest of the data will only entail people who have completed the training. Another aspect that will be evaluated is the number of groups that either start or stop within the given period. Also, the ratio of people in small groups to the average Sunday morning service attendance will be evaluated along with the number of leaders who are currently leading either in a small group or a church ministry.

A successful outcome will be any growth in the number of leaders and an increase in the number of small groups the church has to offer. More specifically, the goal is to train a minimum of 20 percent of the average weekly attendance to be leaders, which at the current attendance should produce ninety leaders. An additional goal is to have one group for every ten people in the average weekly attendance. Currently, Spout Springs Church is tracking four hundred and fifty adults in the Sunday morning services, which would set the connection group goal at forty-five groups. Lastly, the percentage of the Sunday morning weekly attendance who attend small groups and the number of leaders leading will also be taken into consideration. Ultimately, the goals for those numbers are 10 percent and 70 percent, respectively. Should the Sunday morning attendance remain steady at four hundred and fifty adults, the attendance goal for small groups will be one hundred and eight.

A journal will be used to keep track of any issues that may arise for the duration of

the training. The information obtained in the journal will be used to make the leader's training run smoother, along with making the training more efficient in the future. Journaling throughout the project will also provide valuable feedback as to any changes in the church climate. Scripting the thoughts and ideas people express throughout the training and within the groups will prove to be useful information in future planning and training. Furthermore, keeping a record of testimonies and observations of how people have grown as leaders benefit the lead pastor as he pursues the vision and mission of the church, not to mention, provide a means of attracting more leaders.

The old approach to leadership development limits the number of people who are involved in ministry. Currently, only a few areas in which a person can serve exist, and the ministry areas carry the tone of being a clique rather than a ministry. Everyone who desires to serve has to join a pre-existing ministry, no matter if they are introverts or extroverts, with no regard for their spiritual or natural gifts. The method currently in place seeks to fill positions with people, and the building of relationships is a by-product that happens only a fraction of the time, if at all.

The new approach teaches leaders that God has put into them everything they need to do ministry; all they need to do is be obedient. The new strategy emphasizes the need to build relationships, engage in discipleship, and reach out to others. Filling a position with a warm body will not be necessary because people will be free to serve where they wish, resulting in leaders being more than happy to fill in where needed. The most significant difference between the old and the new system is the freedom to serve. The new system allows for just about anyone to lead a small group or serve in the church. The small groups will function as a "Free Market" society, which means people can lead a group that is of

interest to them. Whether the group is a Bible study, a running group, or a group that focuses on missions and outreach, the leaders will be trained and equipped to lead within their area of interest. Waiting for a position to open or for the church leadership to recognize a person's ability to run an active ministry will no longer plague the church. When real ministry is established within the church, people will want to soar, and there will never be a lack of leaders to accomplish the vision and mission. If a process is not put into motion soon, Spout Springs Church will decline and be forced to close its doors or survive on a plateau at best.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

An anonymous survey, a classroom portion, and an interview with the prospective leader represent the data collection methods for this research. The survey collected data on how the leader viewed the current status of the church. Each leader was asked to fill out a paper survey where they were to rate areas such as pastoral care/accessibility, spiritual climate, preaching/teaching, worship, discipleship, evangelism and outreach, welcoming/facilities, and the ease of getting plugged into the church (See Appendix A). Each anonymous survey rated each area on a scale from one to ten, where one represents the area they are not satisfied, and ten is the area they are most satisfied with. This researcher had his assistant read the consent form to each class and address any questions. Upon completion of the consent form (See Appendix C), the assistant issued the survey ensuring everyone used the same color pen and ensured no other identifying marks were on the page. The assistant then collected the papers and secured them until after the research project had concluded. This researcher was not present while the assistant issued, collected, and secured the survey. Once the surveys were secured, this researcher was notified and began the classroom portion of the leadership development process.

The leader's anonymous surveys were noted on a spreadsheet and analyzed to determine which area they felt the church needs to work on and in which area the church needs to maintain what they are doing because it is producing excellent results. The applied research survey is a tool that will assist the lead pastor. The results of the survey will provide a snapshot of not only what type of leaders the lead pastor needs to invest in to cover any deficiencies, but it also informs him of which areas in the church are seemingly successful. From here, he can see what the leaders are doing in those areas and possibly shift them around or provide more training for the areas that are in need. The survey also serves as a baseline for the church. After a determined amount of time, the lead pastor should gather his leaders and conduct the survey again and compare it to the previous survey, thus allowing him to see if any and where changes were made or still need addressing.

The classroom portion of the research averaged out to be approximately one and a half hours of teaching and a time of questions and answers. The research data collection was three-fold during this portion of the project. The first fold was teaching leadership development for the new small groups' structure. The critical elements of the teaching consisted of building relationships, engaging in discipleship, and participating in outreach. The second portion makes a note of the types of questions coming from the leaders. The analysis of the questions would inevitably reveal a point of contention within the church. The questions were recorded and analyzed for patterns that show differences between them and the results of the survey. Lastly, this researcher observed the people who attended the class to see who were seemingly on-board with the changes and who potentially were not interested in making the change from ministries to small groups. An analysis of the class, to include open objections, body language, and

participation compared to the results of the survey, should bring to light any issues within the church.

The final data collection point of the research was an informal interview with each of the leaders. The interview allowed the leader to ask more specific questions concerning what was expected of them as well as allowing this researcher to identify how that leader was planning on getting involved and when they were planning on acting on their intentions. The design of the interview process was informal to get the leader to open up about concerns and be encouraged to step out and do the ministry they felt God was calling them to start and to keep the leader accountable to their ministry. Before the leader parted ways for the evening, there was a follow-up meeting set no less than one month out where the leader and this researcher would meet to see how the ministry is going and if there need to be any changes.

Upon completion of each training, this researcher compiled notes to include questions asked in the class and the interviews and compared thoughts with the assistant. The combined time of sharing brought clarity to some areas of the training, along with challenges to make the training better. When a difference of opinion was made known, it was set aside for further investigation at a later date.

This researcher and the assistant made general observations during the class portion and the interview. The observations included both positive and negative deductions. On the positive side, some of the newly trained leaders who have not held a position in the church prior were genuinely excited to start or join a connection group. The leaders who wished to start a new connection group expressed creativity and a sense of ownership as they explained their idea. Even during the interview process, some new leaders communicated they had an idea but did not

know if it would work or how they would get started. The leaders were encouraged and given guidance to take small steps to reach their goals.

The observations made during the classroom and interview also carried with it a negative side to the change in ministry. The most frequently asked questions and statements made that came from the training include:

- Why are the ministries breaking up?
- Why are we going to small groups?
- We are not comfortable having people in our homes.
- You want our small groups to meet in public places?
- We do not see why we need to do outreach as part of our small group.

Overall, the feedback presented favored the change in the leadership development process, a good choice for the church. The new leadership development process will accentuate the vision and mission of the church and will keep the leaders accountable for developing future leaders. Requiring the leaders to participate in outreach and evangelism activities was a hard sell to some, but overall, it is counted as a needed effort in the church.

Chapter 4: Results

Addressing the problem of Spout Springs Church of Cameron, NC, needing an effective leadership development process that encompasses everyone from the new convert to the church leadership team had its challenges, but overall it was successful. The rise in the overall number of people leading within the church was an expected and achieved outcome, which was a direct result of the leadership training and interview process. However, the notable segment of the research project is in the surveys of the leaders since it provided insight into possible areas within the church that could use some improvement along with highlighting areas where the church functions with excellence.

Observations stemming from a joint effort between this researcher and the assistant concerning the overall research project revealed interesting points. This researcher and the assistant observed that approximately 25 percent of the total number of people trained either viewed the new training and leadership development process as an inconvenience and either made a negative remark or expressed concern and dislike in the process. The observation is significant in that 25 percent of the people trained are currently leading in some capacity at the church. The questions were annotated and needed to be answered if the church is going to walk into what God has for it. The noted questions include:

- Has the church created an environment of complacency?
- Is the church walking in Ephesians 4:11-14?
- Is the church being the church, or is it having church?
- Is the church a consumer, or is it a community?
- What is the one thing that needs to change to change the mindset of the church?

Another observation made concerning the classroom and interview portion of the research was the diminishing in attendees. As expected, the number of leaders who attended the first class was the largest of the seven classes conducted. The number of attendees dropped in

small increments, with the largest class being fourteen leaders and the lowest class being four leaders. The numbers do represent a keen interest in the leadership development process. Still, due to the classes being close together for the research, they may be misrepresenting future attrition rates.

All leaders who attend the training will be counted and represented by a total number on an Excel spreadsheet. (See Appendix B) The spreadsheet will also contain the current count of small groups and the number of leaders that are leading. The spreadsheet will also reflect the present average adults in attendance on a Sunday morning along with the projected goals for the number of leaders, the number of current small groups, and the number of people in attendance within the small groups. The goals for each of the areas were set by this researcher following the “Pastor Mentor” website, who feels they best reflect a healthy growing church.¹²³

At the beginning of the research project, Spout Springs Church had approximately six hundred people in weekly attendance between two Sunday morning services. Out of the six hundred in attendance, four hundred fifty were adults ages eighteen and older who attended the regular morning services. The four hundred fifty adults are the baseline for measuring the set goals and research project outcomes. The set goal for the church to reach is 20 percent of the adult attendance as leaders. The leaders will start or maintain a connection group, either of their choosing or one of the core connections groups. The goal set for connection groups is 10 percent of the adult attendance, whereby accumulative participation within the connection groups should reach 30 percent of the Sunday morning adult attendance. To measure the growth and effectiveness of the research project, a baseline of leaders, connection groups which are

¹²³ Hal Seed. “Pastor Mentor.” *How Healthy Is Your Church? These 18 Numbers Will Tell You*. (blog), 2016. <https://www.pastormentor.com/healthy-church-18-numbers-will-tell/>.

identified as ministries at the beginning, people currently in attendance within the ministries, and the number of leaders who are currently leading was established. The baseline reflects the individuals identified as a leader due to their current or past involvement within the church. The connection groups or ministries have been identified by their influence within the church, such as the children's ministry, men's ministry, and the worship ministry. The leaders provided the current attendance of people who were actively involved in their ministries. The number of leaders leading included those in the leadership or co-leadership position on the current leaders list.. The number on the chart reflects the number of leaders actually leading at the time of the questioning. The numbers below each column reflect either a deficit or an increase in each area. (See Table 1)

Table 1. Beginning Baseline of Leaders.

DATE 2/09/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Current			
Current Attendance	Current Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Current Leaders	Ministry***	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108**	15	5	30	5
		20%	10%	30%	17%	1%	7%	33%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(75)	(40)	(78)	
** Represents 30% of the baseline adults minus the goal for leaders.								
*** Original name used in the church. The name changed to Connection Groups upon the start of the new training.								

Since the church is moving away from the ministries model as indicated in Table 1 above, to a small group or connection group model, as shown in Table 2 below, every ministry within the church will become a connection group. Existing teams that make Sunday mornings happen, such as the worship team, children's ministry, and the greeters, along with the first impressions team, will take on the look of a connection group. Each of these areas transforms into a connection group that will be responsible for building and fostering relationships, engaging in discipleship, and participating in an outreach project.

The connection group model consists of two major sections, the core groups, which enable the church to function, worship, and children's ministry, for example, and community groups, which range from Bible studies to hobbies. The idea behind the connection group model is that a person does not have to feel committed forever, especially in one of the core connections groups, as there are a beginning and an end to each group. The connection group cycles will run three times throughout the year, including a Fall thirteen-week cycle, a Spring thirteen-week cycle, and a Summer nine-week cycle. Individuals can efficiently serve in a core connection group for one cycle and not feel guilty about taking the following cycle to either enjoy a different group or begin a new community group.

The first group that attended the training and completed the survey were current leaders within the church. The group included fourteen people who lead in different areas of the church, such as the worship ministry, women's and men's ministry, and the children's ministry. The addition of the fourteen leaders reduced the deficit to seventy-six that still need the training to reach the church's overall goal (see Table 2). Upon completion of the first night of training, there were seven connection groups identified, and nine of the fourteen leaders committed to active leading, which is a modest growth of 40 percent in ministry/connection groups and 80 percent in leaders actively leading from the baseline. The leaders are counted as active leaders if they choose to head up a connection group or co-lead with another leader. The attendance was figured by how many people will remain involved in a current ministry as it restructures to a connection group. Also, compared to the baseline of the research, there is one less identified leader, and the attendance had a 17 percent growth. (See Table 2)

Table 2. First Leadership Session, Training of Fourteen Leaders.

DATE 02/10/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	14	7	35	9
		20%	10%	30%	16%	2%	8%	64%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(76)	(38)	(73)	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

According to survey results (see Fig. 1), the current leaders view the preaching and teaching as the highest quality of the church, followed by pastoral care and the availability of the pastors. Welcoming and facilities rank third, and interestingly, the worship experience is fourth but ahead of the overall spiritual climate of the church. The ease of getting connected, evangelism, and discipleship round out the bottom three. One noteworthy observation from the interviews after the training is that this initial group was the only one that voiced a lack of interest in the outreach requirement in the new connection group model, even though they had rated evangelism second last, the worst being discipleship. Teaching and pastoral care are paramount in the eyes of the leaders, along with welcoming and facilities and worship. However, when it comes to getting the leaders out of their comfort zone, there seems to be some resistance as portrayed in them ranking evangelism and discipleship last.

During the classroom portion of the leadership training, the leaders in the first group also voiced the most discontent when introduced to the change of moving from ministries to connection groups to focus on discipleship. The significance of the discontent is that it contradicts how they viewed the church in the earlier survey. The results of the survey indicated that they were least satisfied with the areas of discipleship and evangelism within the church. The discontent of the current leaders to change is inconsistent as the results of their survey disprove it. Moreover, the identified lack of discipleship and evangelism is one of the main

reasons for the move away from large group ministries to smaller connection groups, thereby addressing the dissatisfaction of the leaders.

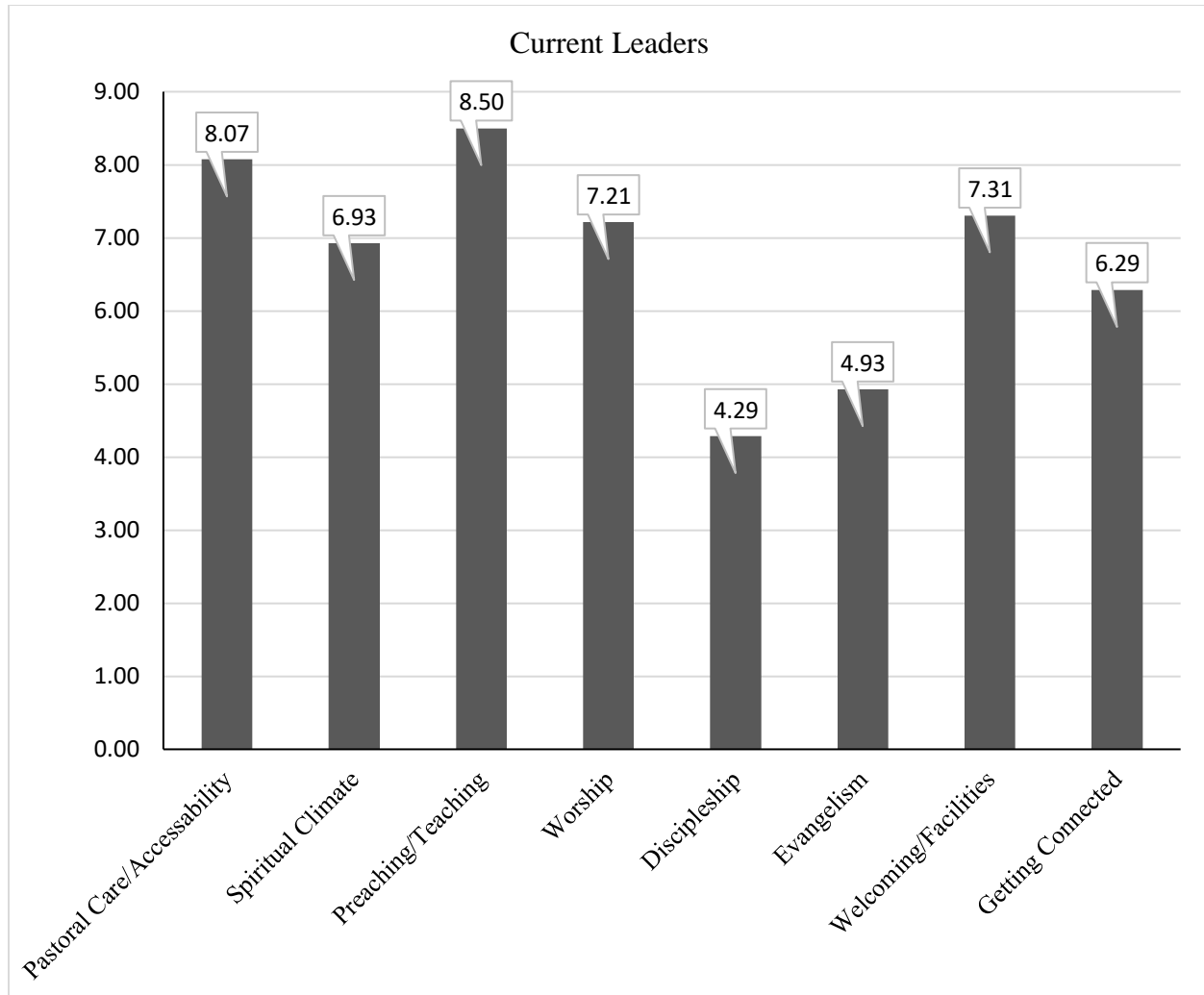


Figure 1. Church Survey of Current Leaders.

Since the leaders trained were current core group leaders in the church, the interviews conducted mainly focused on clarifying the connection group process and easing their apprehensions. One of the significant concerns expressed during the interviews was the sense of losing control of the ministry. This researcher addressed each of the leaders' concerns with the reassurance that the goal of connection groups was not to restrict the growth of the group but to encourage more people to step up and join the group. Another concern that arose was, “What if

the group gets too large?" to which the answer was to multiply leaders and start a second group. The leaders' understanding of the need for a change from ministries to connection groups helped to address their apprehensions and concerns.

The next survey portion and training session of the research project took place with nine new leaders, bringing the total to twenty-three leaders trained. The increase of leaders is a growth of 64 percent from the previous training session (see Table 3). The number of connection groups grew by three, a 43 percent growth, and they all committed to being a community connection group that will meet outside the church. The newly added community connection groups center around prayer, Bible study, and flag football.

The number of people attending connection groups grew even though it was only slight growth; it was a 34 percent increase from the last class. Due to the short period of conducting the research project, there was minimal growth in attendance. Time did not allow for an extended period to canvas for a significant increase. At the end of the training night, there were thirteen leaders actively leading within the church, bringing the growth percentage of leaders leading up 44 percent from the last training session. (See Table 3)

Table 3. Second Leadership Session, Trained Nine Leaders.

DATE 02/11/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	23	10	47	13
		20%	10%	30%	26%	2%	10%	57%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(67)	(35)	(61)	
**Connection Groups replaces the name ministry								

A similar impression emerges when comparing the survey results between the current leaders and the newly trained leaders. (Fig. 1 & Fig. 2) A notable difference between the current leaders and the nine newly trained leaders is the shift from the preaching being first to the

pastoral care area taking the lead. The preaching and teaching ranked second by quite a different margin. Both the current and the new leaders viewed discipleship as lacking. (Fig. 2)

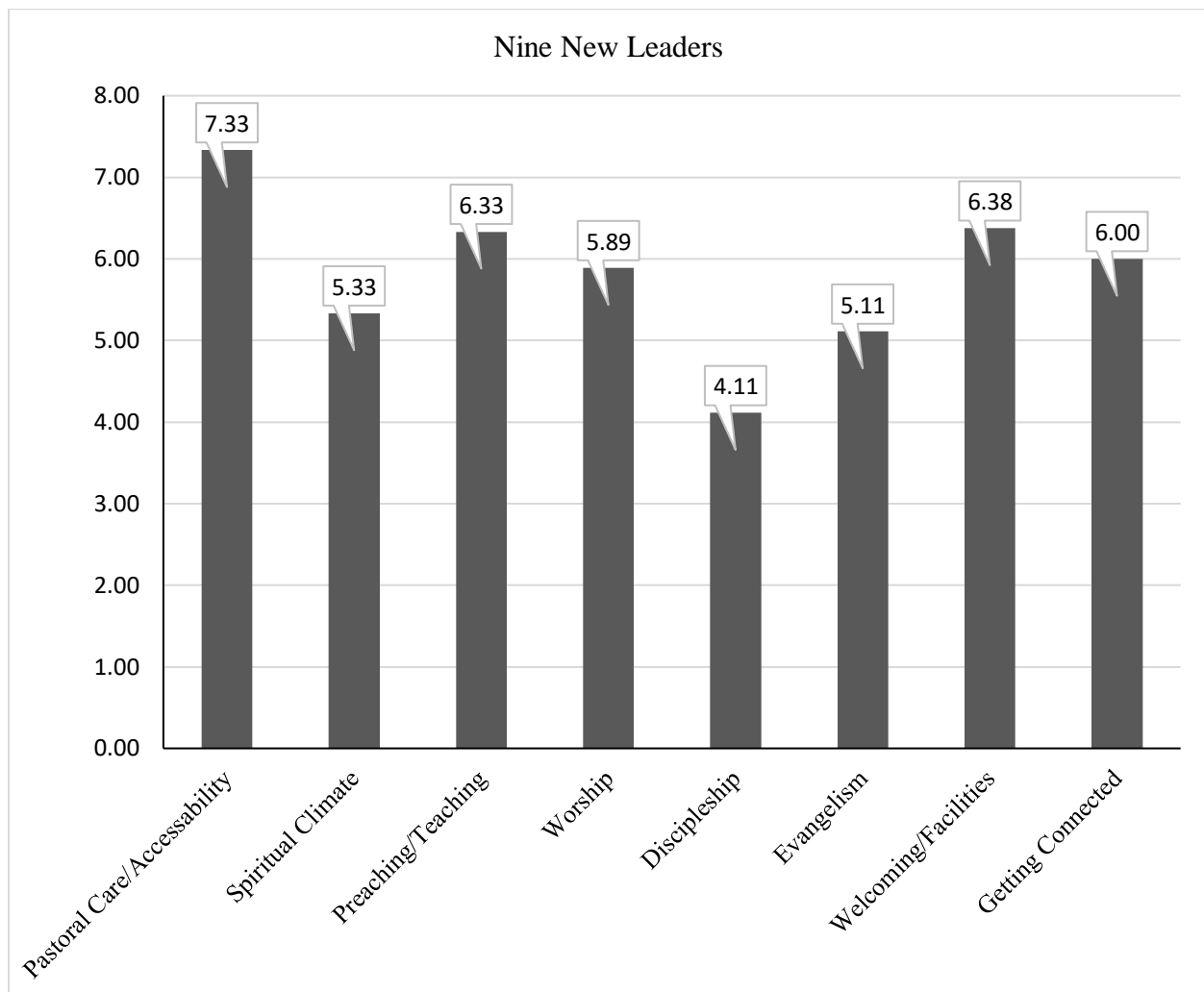


Figure 2. Church Survey of Nine New Leaders.

One of the notable differences between the current leaders and the new leaders is the increased optimism and excitement displayed by the new leaders during the training. The contrast in views only brings to mind questions concerning what the church must do to take better care of its leaders. As will be the trend with the future training sessions, the leaders expressed mixed emotions in the outreach requirement. Some of the leaders displayed

apprehensions, while others were verbal in their details concerning the ideas they had for taking on the challenge.

The interviews consisted of encouragement for the leaders who felt as though they could not lead a group, let alone conduct an outreach event and guidance for the leaders who already had a plan for their group and their outreach event. Interviews conducted in future training sessions, including this one, had follow-up dates set to keep the leaders accountable and to keep their momentum going. The overall training session and interview process was a positive experience.

The third night of leadership training produced ten new leaders, bringing the total up to thirty-three, a 43 percent growth from session two, six new connection groups, a 60 percent growth, and attendance grew 19 percent due to the time required to build a group (see Table 4). At the end of the night, twenty leaders were committed to leading or co-leading a ministry within the church, which reflects a growth of 54 percent from the last training session. In just three days, the number of leaders has grown 120 percent, and the amount of ministry inside and outside the church has increased due to connection groups growing 220 percent. The total number of leaders who are actively leading or co-leading within those connection groups has risen 300 percent, and they are conducting ministry to no less than fifty-six people in attendance, which is an 87 percent increase. (Table 4)

Table 4. Third Leadership Session, Training of Ten Leaders.

DATE 02/12/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	33	16	56	20
		20%	10%	30%	37%	4%	12%	61%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(57)	(29)	(52)	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

For the church to meet or exceed the goals set forth, there is still a need to train fifty-seven more leaders, start twenty-nine more connection groups, and get another fifty-two people in attendance. The percentage of leaders actively leading will fluctuate but should hold anywhere between 65-75 percent. Keeping a watchful eye on this percentage will help in the prevention of burnout in some leaders but will also give the church leadership team refreshed leaders to use elsewhere when needed.

The addition of six more connection groups brought ministry opportunities in prayer and sermon visits, where the group will take the latest sermon and pick it apart as a group. Also starting is another Bible group focusing on Old Testament usage in the New Testament. Since the church has a gymnasium, one leader is hosting an open hoops night where the community can come in and play basketball.

The survey results from the ten new leaders (see Fig. 3) bring about a few changes, such as the area of getting connected, taking the top, preaching taking second, and pastoral care at third. The similarity between this survey and the others is that discipleship and evangelism still ranked at the bottom. However, looking at the numbers, it is observed that the ranking was in a higher number rating. Conversely, the ten new leaders are the only group to rank the spiritual climate higher than the worship category.

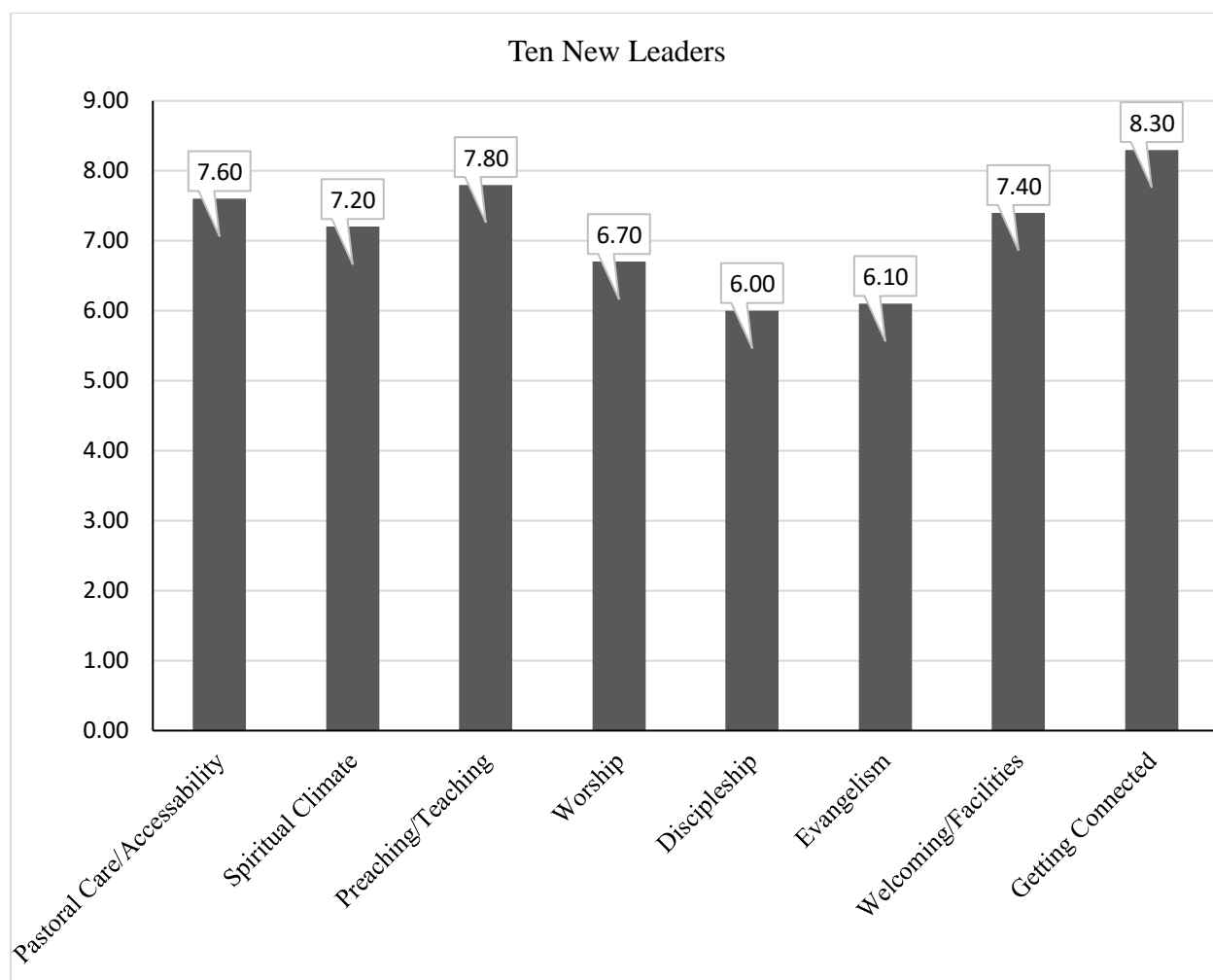


Figure 3. Church Survey of Ten New Leaders.

The leaders in the leadership training session did not express any new level of either excitement or apprehensions concerning any of the requirements of being a connection group leader. Possible "What if" scenario questions filled the questions and answers time. Future training will include all the concerns that the leaders have expressed.

The only significant element that emerged from the interviews was a concern about hosting a closed group. A closed group is exclusive to who can participate and usually revolves around a healing or support process, such as Alcoholics Anonymous. The leader who raised the concern during the interview made the point that conducting an outreach event draws unwanted attention to a private matter. A compromise emerged where the closed groups should either team

up with another group's efforts or take an active role in any church-sponsored outreach or evangelism endeavor.

The fourth leadership training produced eight more leaders, which is a 24 percent growth in new leaders from session three. (See Table 5) The total number of leaders is at forty-one, of which, twenty-six, an increase of 30 percent, are committed to leading right away, bringing the overall goal to just under the half-way mark. The number of connection groups increased 56 percent from the last class. With the nine new groups, the total number of groups rose to twenty-five, bypassing the half-way mark to the church's current goal of forty-five groups. The new groups starting up include a fitness group, a military deployment group, and specific focused men's and women's groups. With more leaders getting on board, there is a sense of excitement inside the church. People are genuinely becoming intrigued with the idea of leading a group. Cumulative attendance within the connection groups only rose 9 percent, but the rise to meet the church goal is still optimistically within reach.

Table 5. Fourth Leadership Session, Training of Eight Leaders.

DATE 02/16/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	41	25	61	26
		20%	10%	30%	46%	6%	14%	63%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(49)	(20)	(47)	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

The survey results of the eight new leaders continued the pattern of viewing discipleship and evangelism within the church least satisfactory. Preaching was put back on top by this group, along with pastoral care and getting connected. Spiritual climate, worship, and welcoming streamlined the middle of the survey staying mostly in line with the other surveys. (Fig. 4)

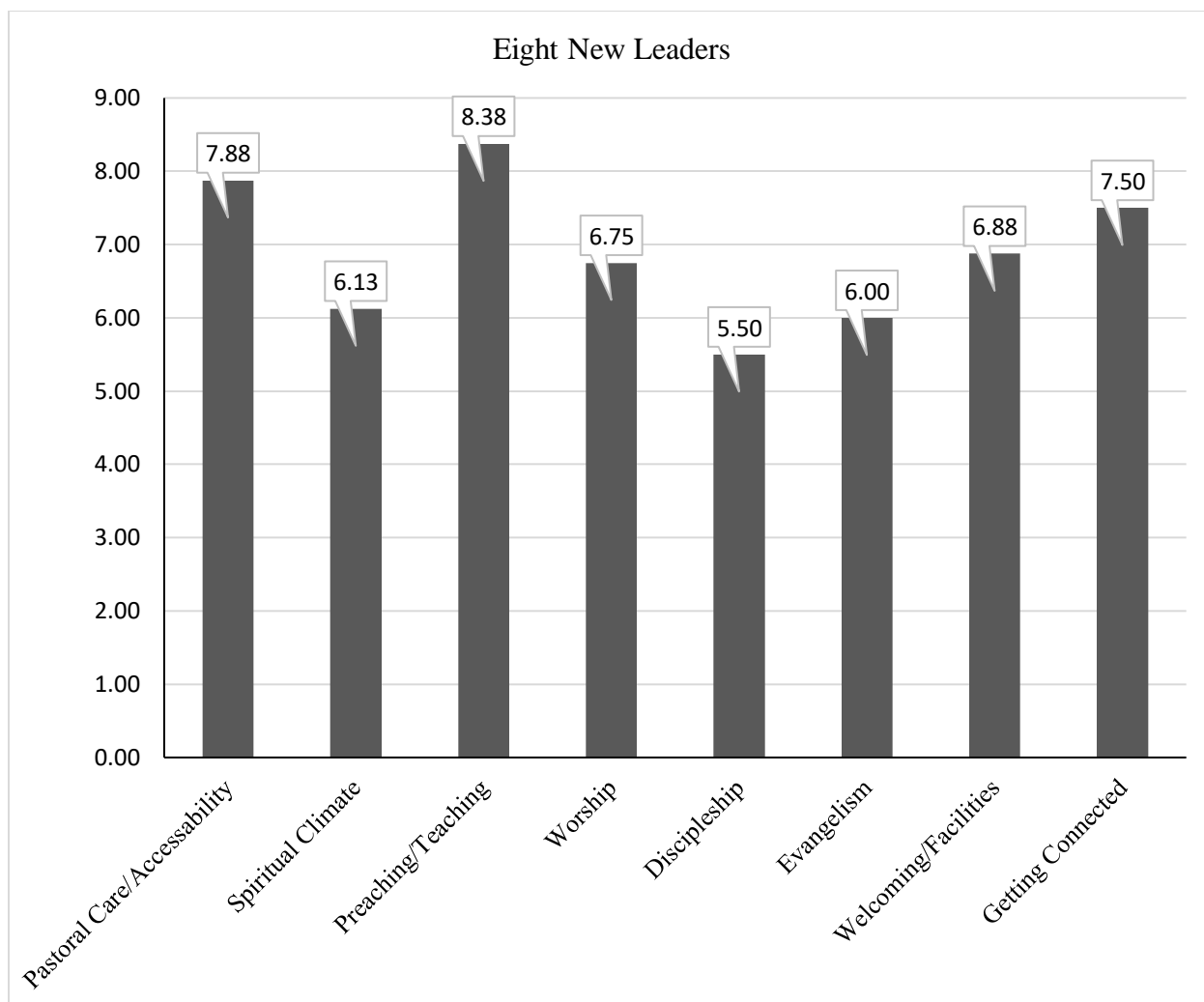


Figure 4. Church Survey of Eight New Leaders.

The fourth leadership training session was much like the third as there was much excitement, a little apprehension, and even a request for more training. The request came when the leadership training covered inviting neighbors and the people that they regularly come in contact with into their groups. The request for training centered on how to lead people to Christ and learning how to address difficult questions such as death, divorce, and other hard topics that plague society from day-to-day.

The leaders expressed much of the same apprehensions and excitement during the interview process. One significant concern was where to meet in the community since there was

an uneasy feeling of hosting people with small children in their home. After a moment of brainstorming local coffee shops, the library, and even the local park became viable options.

After a few days off and another push on Sunday morning for people to attend the new leaders training, the attendance number began to decrease, as expected. Upon completion of this research project, the goal will be to conduct the training at a minimum one time a month, which may result in slightly larger classes.

The fifth class hosted six new leaders, and even though they were the only ones trained during this class, the number of leaders climbed 15 percent bring the church that closer to its goal. (See Table 6) With the new leader's overall number settling in at forty-seven, the new number of leaders who are stepping out and committing to lead or co-lead has risen to thirty-one, a 19 percent increase in active leaders from the last class. Notable is the increase in attendance, which went up by twenty-six people, a 41 percent jump that surpasses the half-way mark to the goal.

Table 6. Fifth Leadership Session, Training of Six Leaders.

DATE 02/17/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	47	30	86	31
		20%	10%	30%	52%	7%	19%	66%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(43)	(15)	(22)	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

The survey completed by the six new leaders (See Fig. 5) continues to follow one common outcome: the categories of discipleship and evangelism were both viewed as an area of dissatisfaction. The group's results rated discipleship and evangelism at a tie just above the half-way rating mark and rated getting connected extremely high, bringing welcoming and preaching

tied for second. Other than preaching and teaching, getting connected is the only other category to obtain a ranking of nine, and this was the only time it happened.

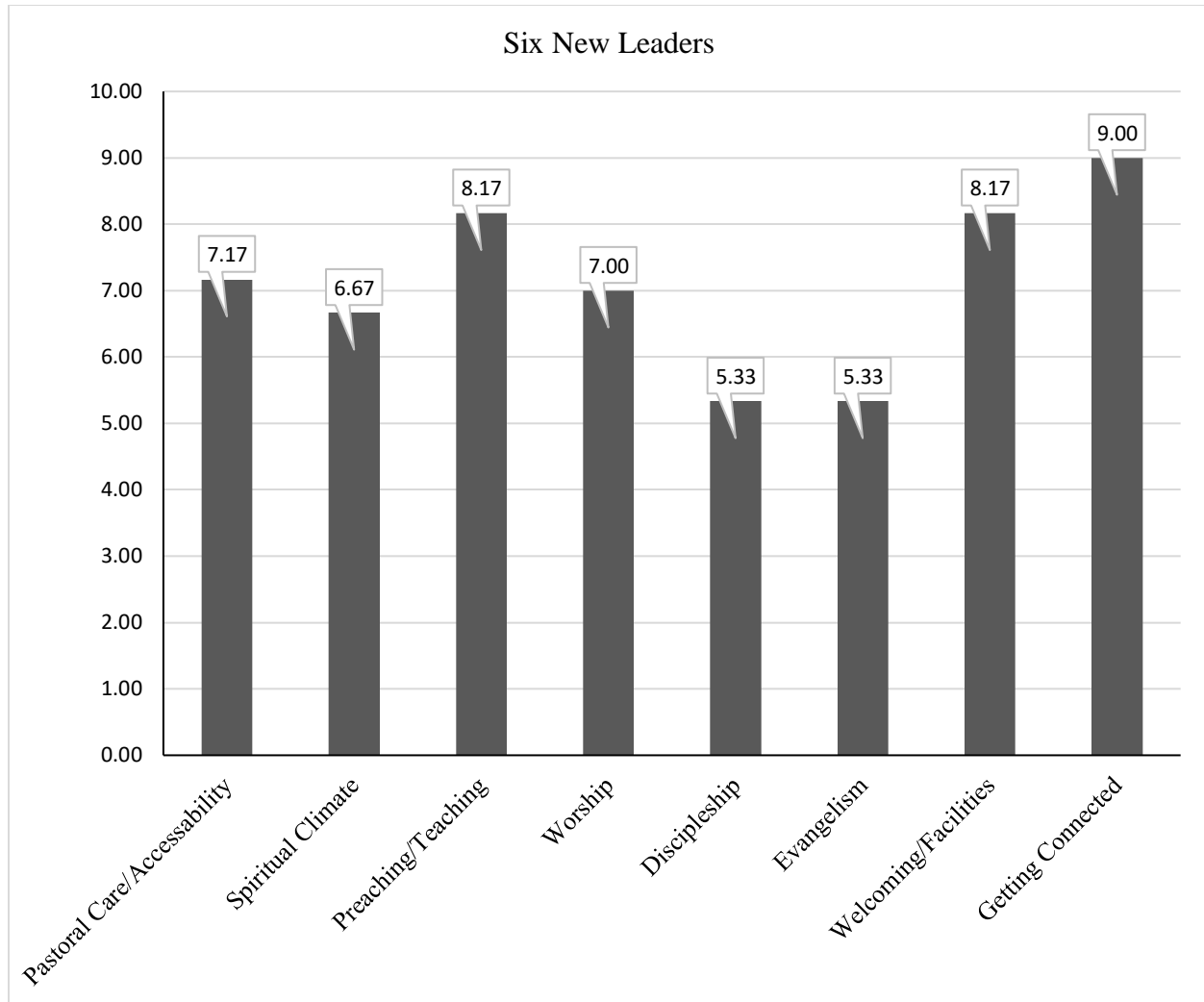


Figure 5. Church Survey of Six New Leaders.

The significance of the growth in attendance stems from leadership development training. The training teaches the new leaders to disciple other leaders, which will include getting those leaders through leaders training. The increase in the number of people involved in connection groups will significantly increase the chances the connection group leaders will have to disciple attendees into leading new groups.

Nothing significant or noteworthy came out of the leader's interviews outside of addressing the same apprehensions, concerns, and excitements. After leadership training session five, the goals set for the church are all more than half-way, and the percentage of active leaders remains at a healthy level.

The sixth leadership training acquired another six leaders making the total fifty-three leaders (see Table 7), a 13 percent increase over the last session, of which thirty-eight have committed to leading or co-leading a connection group, an increase of 23 percent. The overall attendance increased by eighteen, a 17 percent increase, which is still a good number of people getting involved. The hope is that the more active connection groups become, the more people will continue to join. The connection group count, despite training six more leaders, only grew by 3 percent with the addition of one group. The group is no less significant in its ministry as it aims to minister to parents with special needs children.

Table 7. Sixth Leadership Session, Training of Six Leaders.

DATE 02/18/2020								
Baseline		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	53	31	101	38
		20%	10%	30%	59%	7%	22%	72%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(37)	(14)	(7)	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

The survey results for the six newly trained leaders (See Fig. 6) allowed for preaching and teaching to hit an all-time high making this the first of two times it gets a rating at nine or above. Staying true to form, the newly trained leaders kept discipleship at the bottom with scores in the upper fours. In this survey, the welcome and facilities were favorable more than the pastoral care, and accessibility and worship still dominate the spiritual climate.

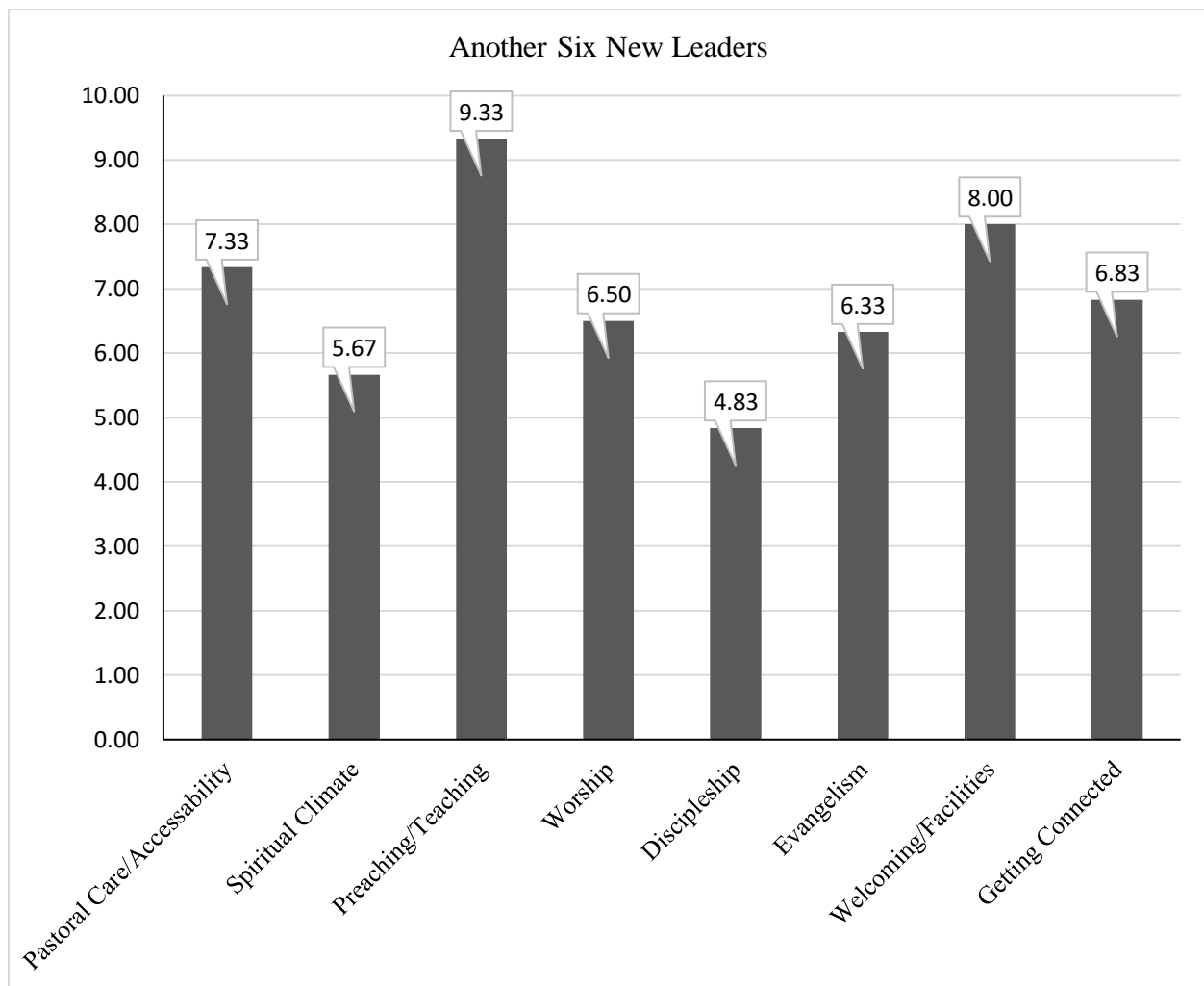


Figure 6. Church Survey of Six New Leaders.

The leadership training for the current leaders opened up good dialog concerning the different aspects and characteristics of hosting connection groups. The time spent together was valuable as it provided an opportunity to instruct the leaders on the cycle of connection groups. The leaders left the presentation well informed of what to look for during their hosting of a connection group.

During one of the interviews, a leader who had attended the church many years ago and had returned requested to lead a group that he had led then. Initially, there was some friction between what the leader wanted and what the new method of leading expected. Fully

understanding that when he left, the system and method for becoming a leader and leading a ministry were different, the goal was to show the individual the value in the new system. Presenting the value of the new leadership development process was reinforced through biblical context and examples. After further conversation and encouragement, the leader gained a better understanding of the process and reasoning for the changes and he agreed to at least give the new system a try.

The expectation of class sizes decreasing became a reality when the last class convened with only four new leaders, which is a 7 percent growth over the previous training (see Table 8). However, there was an increase of leaders leading by nine to include the four newly trained leaders, which is a 23 percent increase over the last class. Attendance in the groups increased by seventeen people, a 16 percent increase, and connection groups increased by 6 percent with the addition of two new groups.

At the beginning of the research project, the church had fifteen leaders, five ministries hosting thirty people in attendance, and out of the fifteen leaders, only five were actively leading. Two weeks later, the church can boast of having fifty-seven trained leaders, which is a 280 percent increase in leaders, of which forty-seven are currently, actively leading in a leader or co-leader position increasing the active leader percentage by 840 percent. The church can confidently say that it hosts thirty-three connection groups, which is an increase of 560 percent from when it began. Lastly, the church can say it grew its attendance in connection groups by 293 percent, which will increase significantly in the coming months as the new connection group system continues to be a priority in the church.

Table 8. Seventh Leadership Session, Training of Four Leaders.

DATE 02/19/2020								
Current		Goals*			Newly Trained			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Connection Groups	Connection Group Attendance	Newly Trained Leaders	Connection Groups**	Connection Group Attendance	Leaders Actively Leading
600	450	90	45	108	57	33	118	47
		20%	10%	30%	63%	7%	26%	82%
* Goal Average was obtained by www.pastormentor.com					(33)	(12)	10	
**Connection Goups replaces the name ministry								

As with the prior surveys, the four new leaders did not make much of a deviation from the current view of the church concerning its strengths and weaknesses (see Fig. 7). Discipleship remains at the bottom of the survey results, and interestingly the four new leaders rating of discipleship is well below the half-way mark.

One major difference with the current survey compared to others is the ranking of spiritual climate, evangelism, welcoming, and getting connected, which are rated about the same and at a decent score. Worship and pastoral care tied in the eights and the preaching and teaching ranked its second highest with a nine. It is interesting to note the difference between worship and spiritual climate as it portrays the largest gap among all the surveys.

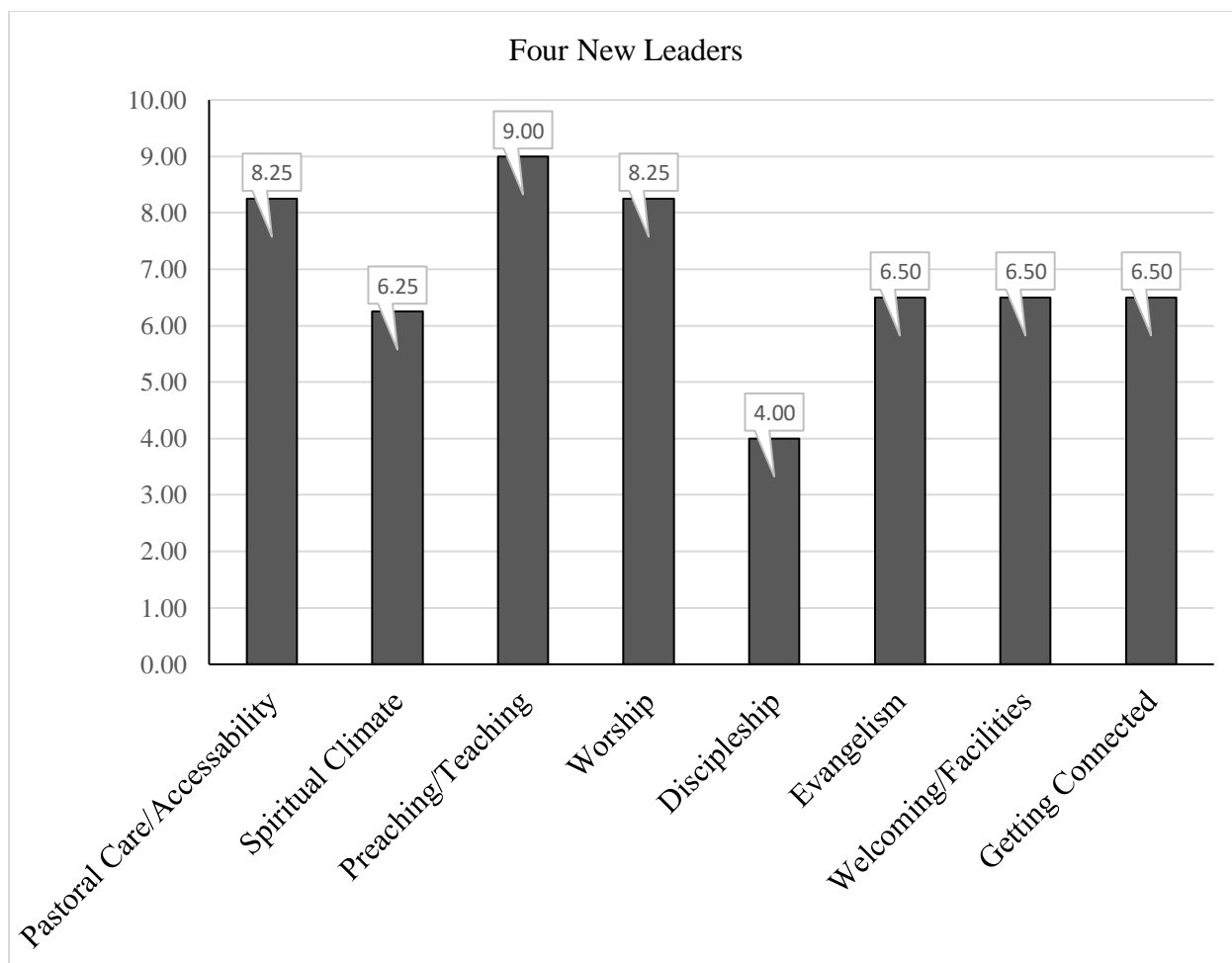


Figure 7. Church Survey of Four New Leaders.

The last leadership training session was a bit more intimate, as there were only four leaders to train. However, the leaders did not deviate from the other classes when it came to express their apprehensions and excitement. Nothing noteworthy emerged from the leader interviews.

The survey conducted with all leaders gave insightful advice to the church leadership team on where the focus should be in the coming months. The survey that was taken by the current leaders depicted in Figure 1, and the new leaders are depicted separately by their classes in Figures 2 through 7. The differences between the surveys were slight in some areas and overt

in others. Taking the survey another step further and looking at how the new leaders view the church cumulatively is depicted in Figure 8.

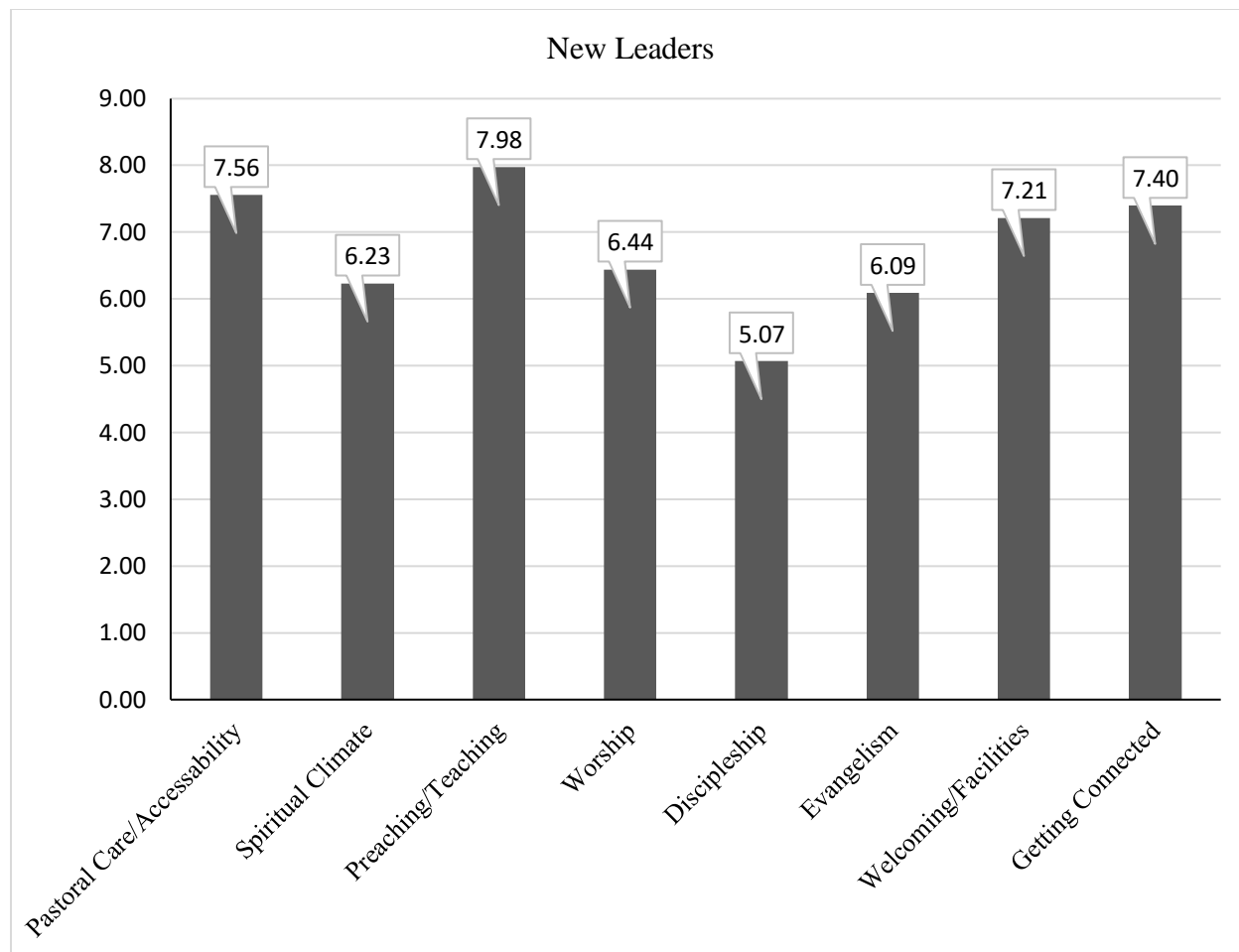


Figure 8. Church Survey New Leaders Combined.

The total of all new leaders still has Preaching/Teaching on the top by a significant margin. Preaching and teaching top pastoral care, welcoming and facilities, and getting connected ending up in a close fourth place. The last four categories fall significantly from the first four leading with worship and spiritual climate, evangelism dropping down from the previous results, and discipleship, not even making the half-way mark of the survey.

When the new leader's cumulative survey results are compared to the current leader's survey in Figure 1, a common observation in the surveys is the rating discipleship as the least

satisfactory element within the church, while preaching and teaching remain at the top of the list for both groups of leaders. An interesting observation is that out of all eight categories, the new leaders rated three of the areas higher than the current leaders. Although it is not a dramatic difference, the new leaders ranked the areas of discipleship, evangelism, and getting connected higher than the current leaders. Another significant difference between the new leaders and current leaders is that the new leaders did not rank the preaching and teaching as high as the current leaders. The preaching remained at the top but not to the degree of importance as the current leaders. (See Fig. 9)

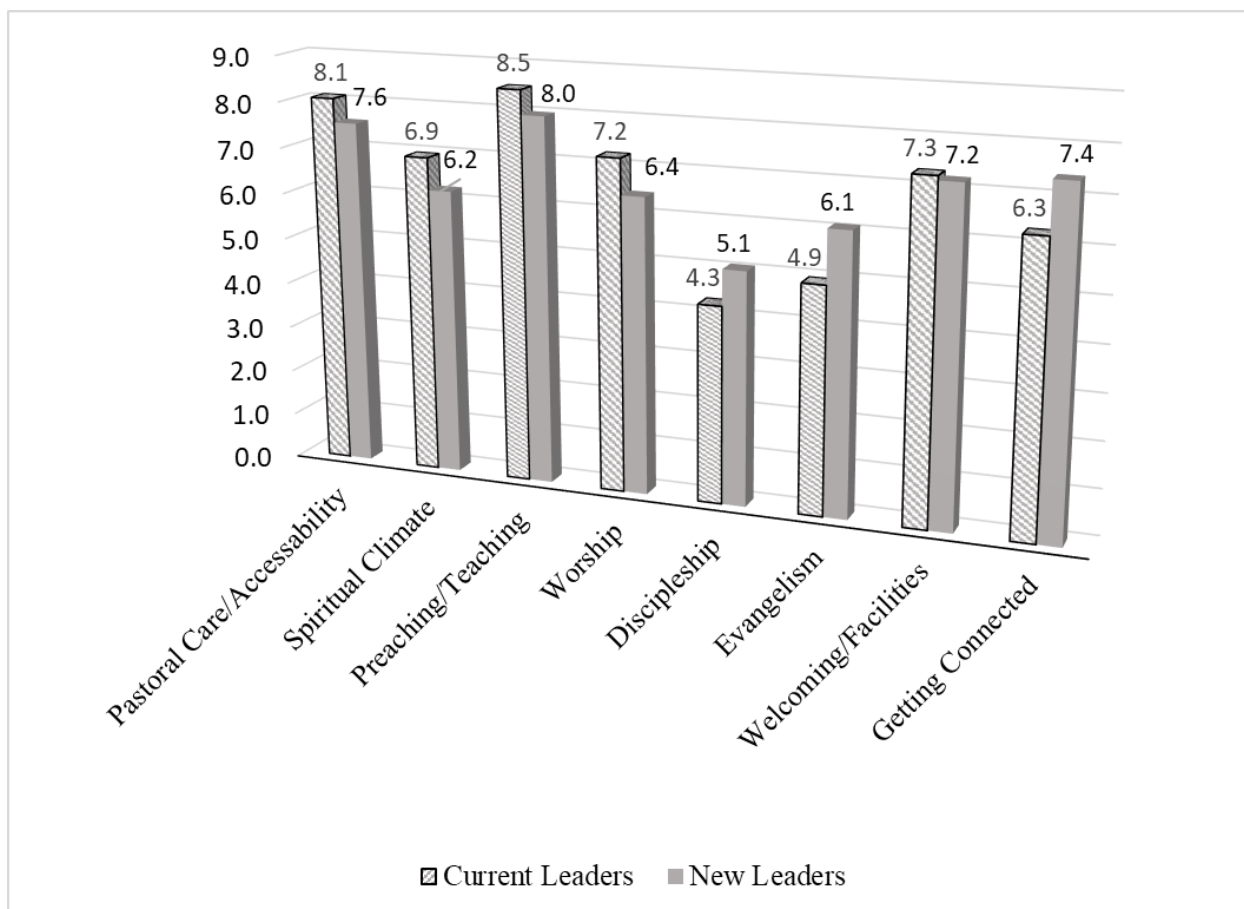


Figure 9. Church Survey Comparing Current Leaders and New Leaders.

Combining both the current and the new leader's survey results into one bar graph, changed the results very little. The design of the survey was to measure what the leaders in the

church viewed as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Furthermore, it identifies the strong areas of the church. Assigning a scale to the survey labeling anything below 5.0 as in desperate need of work, anything between 5.1 and 7.0 needs some attention, and anything above 7.1 is sustainable; the church needing to work on discipleship desperately is a fair deduction. Evangelism, worship, and spiritual climate need some attention, and the sustainable areas would include welcoming and facilities, getting connected, pastoral care and accessibility, and preaching and teaching. Even though the last four areas of the church fell into a sustainable rating, note that they fall into the lower section of sustaining. Just for comparison and argument, if there were another rating that was placed at the 8.5 and above labeled exceeds standards, the leaders who filled out the survey would hold the church severely lacking. (Fig. 10)

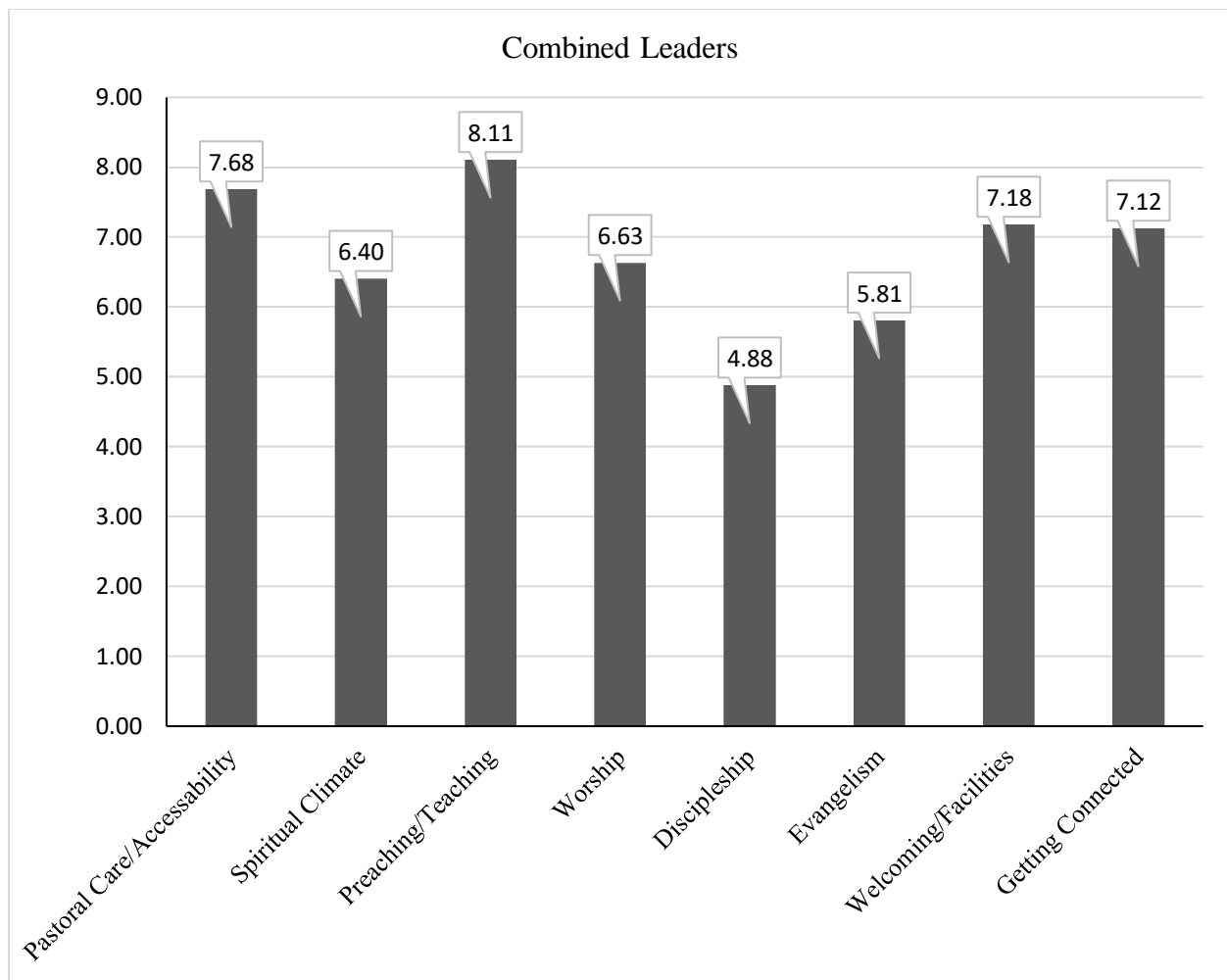


Figure 10. Church Survey of All Leaders Combined.

The success and accomplishment of training leaders, developing a connection group system, and getting people involved in a connection group that they will enjoy doing was a desired outcome of the research project. The research project obtained positive and constructive results overall but not entirely in the goals set for the training. For the church to meet its goals, only thirty-three more leaders need to be trained, and the formation of twelve new groups need to happen. The attendance has already exceeded its goal by almost 10 percent, and the percentage of active leaders is sitting at a comfortable 82 percent rate. As long as the excitement and the importance of connection groups are maintained, it would be hard to fathom a reason for the church not to exceed its current goals.

According to the current numbers, there are thirty-three connection groups, and should every connection group meet the expectation of participating in an outreach event at least once a year, that would mean that there would be thirty-three outreach projects within the city. Currently, with no less than 118 people reaching the city for Christ, the next survey conducted should reflect discipleship and evangelism much higher.

Although the survey is subjective, it does provide an excellent overview of where the church needs to direct its attention to maintain a healthy atmosphere and to grow. The church leadership team needs to use the data collected and make improvements where needed. After some changes have time to gain traction, the survey should be reissued to its current leaders to get a feel of how the church is managing all the changes.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The purpose of this DMIN thesis is to address the problem of the leadership development deficit by implementing a process that will engage more than 30 percent of the average attendance. The research project comprises three main elements, the first of which is a survey of the church through the eyes of the leaders. The design of the survey is to obtain a snapshot of how the church is doing. The snapshot will come from the eyes of the people who want to lead.

The second element of the research project is leadership training. The training serves a two-fold purpose, the first of which is to introduce a change in the way the church approaches ministry. The change is implementing a connection group model of ministry that replaces the traditional ministries such as men's and women's ministries because traditional ministries fail to foster the proper building of relationships for every person in every walk of life. The traditional ministries have a leadership model that appoints a leader based on no specific leadership merit, thereby excluding other people who desire to lead. The switch to connection groups emphasizes the people being the church and allows for people to walk out their calling or be part of a ministry instead of a select few. The connection group model is designed for every person from every walk of life to be trained as a leader and to participate and use their time, treasures, and talents to advance the kingdom.

The second purpose of the training is the actual leadership development teaching that indoctrinates the new leaders into the new connection group model for ministry. The elements of the learning that are key to a fruitful connection group ministry include building relationships, engaging in discipleship, and participating in outreach, all of which is an expectation of the leaders. Also contained within the learning objectives is understanding how developing leaders

within connection groups grows the church, a further understanding of the life cycle of a connection group, and what resources are available to the leaders.

The third and final element of the research project is the one-on-one interview with the new leader. Interviewing each leader will ensure they understand the process, the expectation of being a leader, and also to answer any questions they may have concerning the new leadership model. The interview process will also allow for a further assessment of the people entrusted with certain aspects of ministry. The church has a responsibility to due diligence when getting people involved in ministry, and the interview acts as a layer of that process. The interview also allows the church leadership team to understand better the leaders they are putting in position. Should a new leader demonstrate unresolved sin or hurts in their life, the church leadership team will address it before the new leader starts a ministry or leads in any capacity. The new leader will enter into a connection group led by a staff member who is trained in helping people deal with life issues. The staff member will take the leader through a process of healing and forgiveness to ensure that any areas of hurt are dealt with appropriately. The healing process is a necessity for all leaders because hurt people will hurt people. Should a hurt leader be allowed to lead, the potential damage the leader could do justifies the need for a connection group that provides healing. Once the leader has completed the connection group designed to bring healing and forgiveness, they will start back with another interview before heading into a ministry. A pastor is not only responsible for the health of the church leaders but also for the people entrusted to that leader.

The results from the research project parallel the ideas and teachings of many leadership teachers and pastors. Robert Clinton makes the case that leadership is not something that a person does, it is who they are, and the leaders in the church should be actively seeking people

whom they can invest into to raise their level of influence.¹²⁴ Since a leader is who a person is and the church is in need of leaders, it is logical that the church should provide leadership training to make more effective leaders, not only for ministry but for their homes, jobs, and community as well. Michael Fletcher expounds upon the idea of the people being the church when he teaches that the primary job for leaders is to develop people into leaders then build the church-people are the point of ministry and the vehicle that advances the kingdom of God.¹²⁵

The idea of training people to be leaders in connection groups allows people to meet in smaller, less intimidating environments where they can be free to ask questions and obtain knowledge and healing as needed. Chris Hodges teaches that even people who have been Christians for a time will need some cleaning up from time to time and what a better place to do it than in a small group of trusted Christian friends.¹²⁶ The growth of a church starts with a single relationship built at the individual level. The relationship grows into a small group of people who speak truth and encouragement to each other, who reach out to others and eventually become a more extensive gathering where more individuals are building relationships and are speaking life into each other and then reaching out to others.

If a church is serious about the biblical mandate to grow and to reach the world, then it needs to provide a process where a person, no matter what their current status is with God, can jump in and get the healing, training, and mobilizing that they need. ¹²⁷ Aubrey Malphurs teaches that if people within the church are declining or plateaued in their spiritual development and

¹²⁴ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 15.

¹²⁵ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, 111.

¹²⁶ Chris A. Hodges, *Vision to Grow*. Grow Leaders Conference, Birmingham, AL, July 30 – August 1, 2019.

¹²⁷ Robert J. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 25.

growth, they are, in essence, responsible for the decline and struggles of the church as a whole.¹²⁸

It has to be recognized that the church needs to provide a place where people can get the leadership training they need, and that is why connection groups are critical to the growth and overall health of the church, as this would bring the discipleship element to full circle. A Christian's leadership development needs to take place in all areas of their life to include their character, their spiritual walk, and the confines of the culture in which they live.

The results of the research project reinforce Michael Fletcher's teaching that everything a church needs to reach its city is already in the house.¹²⁹ Why have a handful of ministries with the same goal when God provides well-equipped ministers to reach the world? Promoting leaders will grow people, and the culture will be one of leadership development.¹³⁰ God designed the church to grow, and it is the pastor's responsibility and duty to train, equip and mobilize the people God has entrusted to him to reach their community, their state, and to the ends of the earth.¹³¹

Lessons Learned

Upon completion of the research project, this researcher gleaned four essential truths, the first of which is the importance of implementing a leadership development process that intentionally focuses on discipleship. No matter how insightful, humorous, or heartfelt a sermon is, it will not grow the church, there must be a process that builds relationships, engages in discipleship and participates in outreach. People remember relationships and personal touches, whereas sermons instruct and advise people in their relationship with Christ. Sermons need to be

¹²⁸ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 9.

¹²⁹ Michael Fletcher, *Empowering Leadership*, xvii.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 111.

¹³¹ Acts 1:8

relevant, and humor is essential, but it should reinforce relationships and not be the sole method of attracting people to Christianity. Jesus set an example of giving a hand before asking them to lend an ear. Truthfully, once Jesus served people, they wanted to listen to what he had to say he never had to ask them.

The second essential truth gleaned from the research is that people genuinely want to be an active part of the church, as seen by the growth of leaders recorded in this research. More people stepped into the role of a leader when the participating church moved away from ministries and began encouraging people to lead a connection group that was of interest to them, thereby multiplying the avenues of ministry. No matter the status of the church as far as its health in going and reaching, there will always be people who are willing to step up and make stuff happen, and it is the pastor's job to ensure that there is a place for people to serve.

Pastors are not to just provide a place for people to serve, but they are to invest in those people, which brings up the third essential truth learned from this research project; invest in people, and they will rise to the occasion. When the leadership training opened, the number of people who stepped up to get trained far surpassed the number of people who were currently leading. The church provided a means to invest in people in their ministry, and the people rose to the occasion. An excellent example of investing in people and have them rise to the occasion is Jesus and his disciples. The significance of Jesus saying, "Follow me," is rooted in the Jewish culture, and every disciple knew what it meant when a Rabbi said, "Follow me." The disciples were not the godliest people, and they had many flaws, but looking at the recounted events in scripture, Jesus invested in the men, and they rose to the occasion. The church should look at the

people that walk through their doors and strengthen them as a Christian so they can reach the world.¹³²

The fourth truth this researcher learned from conducting this research was that implementing an intentional discipleship process is paramount in fostering the growth of leaders. As in the case with the participating church, the number of leaders grew from fifteen to fifty-seven, increasing by 56 percent. As stated before, it is not the preaching, the building, the programs, nor how much money the church has to spend; for leadership growth to take place, discipleship needs to be the core of the church, next to outreach, which should be the heartbeat. Jesus made discipleship his primary focus once he started his ministry, and that needs to be the example followed by all churches. Jesus not only disciplined people, but he also taught discipleship. Jesus would do things in front of the disciples so they would learn and ask questions, and other times they would be sent away to do the things he had trained them to do.¹³³ Throughout the New Testament, Jesus demonstrates discipleship by touching the heart of people and serving them before he spoke to them about truth and who he was. Jesus created an environment where hearing a truth, no matter how hard it was going to be to listen to it, was easy to listen to and understand. Looking at the story of the Samaritan women at the well, not only were Samaritans detestable to Jews, but she also lived a life that brought her shame, hence why she was at the well by herself, she was an outcast. Jesus built a relationship with her and then spoke the truth to her, thereby creating a model for personal discipleship.¹³⁴

¹³² Acts 16:5

¹³³ Matt. 17:19, Matt. 10:5-15.

¹³⁴ John 4:7-26.

Recommendations for Church Leaders

A recommendation to all pastors, lay leaders, and elders would emphasize four main points. First, the church is not yours, so stop calling it yours. Jesus went to the cross and took a curse for our sins so we could be the church. A pastor is to disciple, teach, coach, and mentor people into ministry.¹³⁵ If a pastor feels that he is the center of the church, he has placed himself in a dangerous position. The church is the people, so in essence, when a pastor lays claim to a church, he is claiming ownership of people, which is not a biblical concept. A pastor's calling to lead a church is a response to the mandate God has given him and to the people God allows him to lead.

The second recommendation to pastors, lay leaders, and elders would be to stop making excuses for why the church will not or cannot grow. Learning to intentionally invest in people through biblical discipleship and ushering them into the calling God has for them needs to be a pastor's priority. Pastor's need to come to grips with the biblical truth that not only does God desire for the church to grow, but the pastor has the responsibility and duty to make sure that it does. Jesus told Peter, "On this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹³⁶ The vision that Jesus is casting is a church, a force that will be unified and will be so strong that hell itself will be powerless against it. Jesus also stated, "Since the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force."¹³⁷ The idea that the church is a force is prevalent throughout the New Testament. The church is a hospital, but it is also a training camp for a mighty army. Pastors have to stop using excuses such as, "We are a rural church" or "Our church is mostly made of retirees, and we do

¹³⁵ Eph. 4:11-13

¹³⁶ Matt. 16:18

¹³⁷ Matt. 11:12

not like the new music or changing what we have" or the sickening excuse for not growing, "This is the way we have always done it." Pastors should be introducing change to the church consistently to thwart the comfort of the church, which after prolonged exposure, will cause confusion. The concept of introducing change to rival the confusion of comfort supports the adage, "A confused buyer never buys" written in Christian terms, "A confused Christian, or church, never produces."

A third recommendation would detail out the importance of knowing the status of the church. Use a survey, or hire a consultant, use whatever means necessary to find the information, and see how the people view the effectiveness of the church. The church needs to be led like a long-term force that has a mission that will never end, and because of this mission, it is of utmost importance that discipleship is the core of the church and outreach be the heartbeat. Churches need to be an organization that develops leaders who develop leaders to reach the world. Every single person in the church has a calling, and a pastor's job is to get that person to walk in that calling to advance the kingdom. Pastors should be teaching biblical truths from the pulpits, coaching the people in their relationships with God, and mentoring a select few for the future of the church.

The last recommendation to all pastors would be to get out of the church—the church building should not harbor Christians, not even the pastor. Outside of being a place of worship, the church should hold a two-fold function within the discipleship process. The first function is that the church should be a hospital where people can get healing, and second, the church should be a training center that equips and mobilizes leaders. God has called the church to reach the people for him, and those people are out in the community. Not only should a pastor demonstrate a lifestyle of outreach and evangelism, but he should also ensure every member of his

congregation is fully engaged in the outreach efforts. Many Christians only think of church on Sunday morning when they go to a building and worship for an hour then go about living their lives as before forgetting that the church, which is the people, have a responsibility to reach the community. Pastors need to take the church, the people, to the community and serve the people they are trying to reach. Evangelism and outreach need to be the heartbeat of the church. Once the people are reached the pastor needs to have a leadership tract that will take the new member and help them deal with their sinful past, then train the person for a ministry that they feel God is calling them to and then equip and mobilize them to go back out and reach the lost.

Concluding Remarks

The focus of this research project casts a light on the topic of leadership development within the church. The beginning of the research uncovered what experts had to say about leadership development—it is a biblical mandate that a church must follow. Subsequently, the research sought out expert insight into how to implement leadership development into the church. From there, the research project looked at the theological implications of leadership development, using Jesus' ministry as the primary example. Then an examination of theoretical leadership development within the church was explored for practical application. Lastly, the project incorporates action based qualitative research into the plan developing a leadership process that would increase the number of leaders within the church, which in turn would increase the effectiveness of the church and result in healthy numeric growth and healthy growth in ministry.

The project was designed to implement a change in the church that would increase the number of leaders, thereby strengthening the church with reliable leaders who would change the world. The change came by a leadership development process that successfully acquired new

leaders and current trained leaders to host connection groups that will enable the church to grow organically. Additionally, the church was able to identify areas needing development along with identifying the areas in which it excelled from a conducted survey of the current and new leaders who have a vested interest in leading in the church. The survey indicated a need for more leadership development and discipleship emphasis within the church. The research project and the newly implemented leadership development training are currently addressing the expressed need for change.

Next Steps and Summary

One of the requirements placed upon the connection group leaders is to develop new leaders within their group intentionally. Conducting further research could uncover how effective the current leaders are in accomplishing the task. The research may identify some of the obstacles that challenge current leaders developing new leaders. Another possible research opportunity that would take the current research further would be to design a system that identifies not only how many leaders each group is producing but how many groups and what kind of groups are spawning from the current groups. Conducting further research with community connection groups that seem less effective should prove to be beneficial not only for the group but also for future leadership training. Being able to understand the leader's apprehensions and inabilities to grow a group could present a theme for many groups who may not be able to increase the attendance of their group. Identifying and addressing the complexities, barriers, insecurities, and shortcomings of the leader will benefit future training. Lastly, since there is a requirement for the connection groups to participate in an outreach or evangelism project, further research into the effectiveness of their chosen project and the impacts they had on

people and the community would render valuable information for future groups and their projects.

If the church is recognized as a force that hell cannot prevail against, the people that make up the church need to understand their own need for leadership and discipleship training. Because no matter the location of the church, whether it is a rural, urban, in the United States, or an underground church, two facts will always remain true, the church is the people, and God desires for the church to grow. Those reasons alone are enough to point out the importance of discipleship and leadership development in every church, for every Christian.

Appendix A: Church Assessment

Directions: Rank your level of satisfaction by writing your rating number in the section where 0 represents not satisfied, and 10 represents extremely satisfied. Then total your numbers at the bottom.

1. Pastoral Care/Accessibility	<input type="text"/>
• 2. Spiritual Climate	<input type="text"/>
• 3. Preaching/Teaching	<input type="text"/>
• 4. Worship	<input type="text"/>
• 5. Discipleship	<input type="text"/>
• 6. Evangelism/Outreach	<input type="text"/>
• 7. Welcoming/Facilities	<input type="text"/>
• 8. Ease of Getting Connected	<input type="text"/>
•	

TOTAL _____

Appendix B: Tracking Spreadsheet

DATE								
Current		Goals (National Average)			Current			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Con. Groups	Attendance	Leaders	Ministry	Attendance	Leaders Leading
300	225	45	22.5	54				
		20%	10%	30%	0%	0%	0%	
					(45)	(23)	(54)	0

DATE								
Current		Goals (National Average)			Current			
Attendance	Adults	Leaders	Con. Groups	Attendance	Leaders	Connection Groups	Attendance	Leaders Leading
300	225	45	22.5	54				
		20%	10%	30%	0%	0%	0%	
					(45.00)	(22.50)	(54.00)	0.00

Appendix C: Consent Form

The Liberty University Institutional
Review Board has approved
this document for use from
2/10/2020 to --
Protocol # 4122.021020

CONSENT FORM

**Leadership Development:
Creating a Culture of Developing Leaders in the Church**

Vincent J. Charron

Liberty University School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study on leadership development in the church. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older and a current leader in Spout Springs Church. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before completing the survey.

Vincent J. Charron, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to address the problem of the leadership development deficit by implementing a process that will engage more than 30 percent of the average attendance.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to complete an anonymous survey, which should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

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

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

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

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. The survey will be issued and collected by a designated representative other than myself. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this survey is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Spout Springs Church. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time before submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please do not complete or submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Appendix D: IRB Approval/Waiver

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 10, 2020

Vincent J. Charron

IRB Exemption 4122.021020: Leadership Development: Creating a Culture of Developing Leaders in the Church

Dear Vincent J. Charron,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,



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

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