

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

Expository Teaching for the Stonepath Church's Understanding of Worship

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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Expository teaching is a method of explanation that can raise the biblical understanding in the minds of those receiving the teaching. This paper studies a group of participants from Stonepath Church who receive three expository teaching lessons on three biblical passages on worship. The initial understanding of biblical worship is gauged by the scores of the participants on a worship survey taken before the first lesson, and the increase in biblical knowledge is gauged by the scores of the participants on the same worship survey taken after the third lesson. A statistical analysis is run to determine whether or not the increase in test scores is significant. This paper assumes if the congregants at Stonepath Church receive a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, then the congregants who participate in this study will gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship.

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Abbreviations

DMIN *Doctor of Ministry*

Chapter 1

Introduction

Expository teaching is a method of teaching that is accurate in its interpretation of the Bible and an excellent way to teach the biblical pericopes.¹ Expository teaching uses details from the Bible to explain the meaning of any passage of Scripture.² This Doctor of Ministry (DMIN) thesis uses expository teaching to raise understanding of biblical worship among the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in the study reported in this thesis. This study attempted to quantify the level of understanding of biblical worship among the congregants of Stonepath Church and to raise this level of understanding through the expository teaching of key passages of worship in biblical Scripture.

This chapter covers the ministry context, the problem presented, the statement of purpose, the basic assumptions, the definitions, the limitations, the delimitations, and the thesis statement. The ministry context provides the setting within which this project was conducted as well as necessary background information related to the study participants. The problem presented is the problem found within the ministry context. The statement of purpose describes the intended direction that this DMIN thesis project was intended to take. The basic assumptions provide the reader with an understanding of the truth assumed by the investigator and the study participants. The definitions provide a deep look into specific words and phrases that must be understood within the framework of this project. The limitations and delimitations state the parameters within which this thesis project was conducted by explaining the parameters set by

1. Michael A. Farley, "What is "Biblical" Worship? Biblical Hermeneutics and Evangelical Theologies of Worship" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 3 (2008): 591.

2. Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. 3rd ed. (Ada: Baker Academic, 2018), 8.

the ministry context and the thesis project. Finally, the thesis statement states the goal of this DMIN thesis project.

Ministry Context

The rituals that are most predictable and central to the Stonepath Church congregation's culture are multiple. Worship starts at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday and involves everybody (children and adults) in the sanctuary. The service opens with some announcements. Next, the music starts with some songs from a hymnal and some modern songs. The same musicians and singers perform every Sunday morning.

After the singing ends, the pastor takes to the stage and preaches for approximately 30 minutes. Stonepath Church currently has no children's ministry. The pastor closes the sermon by extending an invitation to anyone who wishes to respond to the sermon's message. During the altar service, people come to the front of the church for prayer. Usually, others will accompany those who engage in prayer. After the altar service, the pastor closes the service with a word of prayer. The service is usually finished by noon.

Another activity that is instrumental in shaping the views of the congregation is the denominational association of Stonepath. Stonepath was formerly a United Methodist Church, but it separated from the United Methodist Church to form its own independent church. Stonepath has some roots in the Pentecostal church movement and promotes open praise and worship, meaning musical sections can be lively and can even last the entire duration of a Sunday morning service, resulting in no preaching at all. The Pentecostal roots of Stonepath are evident in the shouts of praise and the manner in which most members of the congregation engage in prayer throughout a service. These prayers are always led by an individual, but more

than half of the congregants tend to pray out loud alongside the one who leads the prayer for the group.

Pews, old hymns, modern music, shouting, crying, and an old-time traditional church service are the symbols that best describe Stonepath Church. The congregants of Stonepath are few in number; therefore, they are all familiar with one another. The congregants thus form a tightknit community of believers, all of whom value traditional Pentecostal services.

Furthermore, the congregants are supportive of one another, as a close family is. Among the congregants, no foul relationships that could cause disruption to this sense of community exist. In sort, everyone is supportive of one another.

Stonepath Church is a small church with approximately 70 congregants who attend worship services; most of the congregants are Caucasian. The church is located in a rural area surrounded by farmland, and the congregants are classified as lower-middle class; they are not wealthy in appearance. For example, many drive functional secondhand cars. The attendees aged 50 and older tend to wear a mixture of dress pants, dress shirts, and dresses, while those younger than 50 tend to wear jeans and smart shirts. Approximately 90% of the attendees are aged 50 and older.

Little evidence of biblical education can be observed among the congregants and staff. Stonepath vets its pastors by requiring a certain level of biblical understanding; however, the congregants do not need to have received any formal biblical teaching. This is not to say that the congregants have not received a formal education, only that little to no formal biblical education is evident.

As a result of this lack of a formal biblical education, the congregants of Stonepath Church may not have a firm understanding of the Bible and its doctrines, including the concept

of worship. The congregants gather at Stonepath every Sunday to engage in a worship service, and they follow the model of worship described earlier in this section. However, the congregants are likely unable to answer questions regarding why such practices (e.g., singing hymns, preaching from biblical passages) exist. The congregants of Stonepath Church are well acquainted with the activities of any given worship service; however, they are likely unacquainted with why their worship services contain such elements.

This project deals with biblical worship; the case study subsequently described influences each worship service at Stonepath. This study sought to determine the effectiveness of raising the level of understanding of biblical worship among the congregants at Stonepath Church by using the expository teaching method of interacting with a number of congregants of Stonepath Church who choose to participate in this study. These participants were interested in the study of biblical worship and thus were willing to engage in a series of expository teachings related to passages from the Bible on biblical worship.

Problem Presented

The problem this project addresses is that the congregants of Stonepath Church may not have a clear understanding of biblical worship. As mentioned, the congregants of Stonepath Church are well acquainted with the activities of any given worship service but are likely unacquainted with why their worship services contain such elements. Therefore, the congregants of Stonepath Church could benefit from greater understanding of *why* they are worshipping God in the manner they are as opposed to merely *that* they are worshipping Him.³

3. James William Tonkovich and Theological Research Exchange Network, "Worship: A Study Guide for Small Groups" (DMIN diss., Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1995), 70, Theological Research Exchange Network.

Stonepath Church is not a part of any denomination. The church is an independent church, and no formal biblical education is evident among its leadership. The pastor has received some biblical training from the United Methodist Church, but the local church leadership is self-taught with respect to the principles of the Bible and therefore lacks the supervision of an academic frame of reference. This reality means that the congregants of Stonepath Church are likely not educated in theology because a lack of a theological understanding tends to pass from the leadership to the congregation.⁴ As mentioned, this does not mean that the congregants of Stonepath Church are ignorant of theology or unbiblical in their practices; however, it likely means that they lack a formal academic standard by which their theological knowledge and practices can be measured.

Consequently, it is likely that no program akin to expository teaching is known to the congregants of Stonepath Church. The preaching at Stonepath tends to be textual and topical; that is, a theme is discussed and supported by corresponding references from biblical passages⁵; this is done in the absence of expository preaching, where a biblical pericope is chosen and the details of the passage constitute the fuel that feeds the preacher his information to proclaim. Topical sermons tend to start with the description of a real-life situation alongside a scriptural reference rather than with a scriptural reference being first introduced and then applied to real life.⁶ Textual sermons start with a scriptural reference followed by a discussion of a real-life situation. Thus, because expository preaching is likely unknown to the congregants of Stonepath

4. R. Albert Mohler, Jr. "The Primacy of Preaching," in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*, ed. Don Kistler (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 2002), 23.

5. James W. Cox, "Topical Preaching," in *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*, ed. William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 492.

6. Ronald E. Sleeth, "'What Is the Matter with Preaching?': A Fosdick Retrospective," *Pulpit Digest* 63 (September-October 1983): 17.

Church, expository teaching is likely also unknown to them. As a result, the method of expository teaching needed to be explained to the congregants of the Stonepath Church who choose to participate in this study.

Expository teaching is an excellent vehicle for teaching the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study because this type of teaching remains true to the intended meaning of the Bible.⁷ This characteristic solved the problem of which method of learning to introduce to the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study and left only the biblical topic to be decided; biblical worship was subsequently chosen as the topic of this study.

The topic of biblical worship is relevant in this situation because of the broad definition of worship and the direct application of this topic at Stonepath Church. Because the congregants of Stonepath Church are likely unfamiliar with expository preaching and teaching, it seemed appropriate to evaluate and then attempt to raise the level of understanding of biblical worship among the congregants who chose to participate in this study through expository teaching.

Several prevalent themes can be found throughout the literature on biblical worship, and these themes can help identify the portions of the Bible that are best suited to employment for expository teaching. One of the prevalent themes found in the literature on the biblical exposition of worship is the concept of reading and explaining the Bible as an act of worship.⁸ Therefore, an act of worship was used to treat the problem of a potential lack of understanding of biblical worship in the minds of the congregants at Stonepath Church because the potential for a lack of

7. Mark E. Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2000), 45-46.

8. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 116.

understanding of biblical stories and acts of worship is high among these congregants owing to their way of life.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this DMIN action research project was to provide a clear understanding of biblical worship to the congregants of Stonepath Church who participate through expository teaching. Learning through biblical exposition is an excellent method of learning the teachings of the Bible by enabling individuals to dive deep into biblical texts in order to uncover the truths that lie therein.⁹ This exchange of ideas and information is a vital aspect of the transfer of information and is widely employed today in schools and colleges. The global society seems to thrive on teacher–student learning as opposed to the self-taught method of discovery. Therefore, employing teacher–student learning through biblical exposition could greatly benefit the congregants of Stonepath Church who participated in this study.

Every Christian requires a solid understanding of the intended message of the Bible in its original context with respect to its intended audience and from the perspective of its author, and expository teaching can provide such an understanding.¹⁰ Such a solid understanding helps to guide Christians toward the truth of the Bible and leads them away from errant misinterpretations of the Bible. Furthermore, expository teaching enables teachers of the Bible to create sermons based on the structure and content of the Scriptures.¹¹ A firm grasp of the truth of the Bible can

9. Joel Breidenbaugh, *Preaching for Bodybuilding: Integrating Doctrine and Expository Preaching for the 21st Century*. Rev. ed. (Orlando: Renovate Publishing Group, 2016), 46.

10. Sutton, Jerry. *A Primer on Biblical Preaching*. Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2011), ch. 8, a clear biblical message, paragraph 3.

11. Daniel L. Akin, “The Ministry of Proclamation: Book 1,” Section 4, “What is Christian Preaching?” (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 13.

help Christians to grow up believing in God without adhering to ideologies that are not in keeping with God's principles.

The world contains many religions and many religious subsets. Similarly, Christianity has its own set of problems related to interpretative and practical application. Even in Jesus's day, many different sects of Judaism existed, as seen in the prevalence of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Even Christianity itself was originally a somewhat new sect of Judaism because the early Christians attended synagogues and gathered for worship alongside Jews. Jesus ushered the Jews into a new era of worship,¹² and thus his followers continued to regularly attend their Jewish gatherings.¹³ Christianity today is divided into many denominations with multiple methods of interpretation and practical application of God's teachings.

The purpose of this DMIN action research project was to provide a clear and accurate interpretation of the Bible to the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate by explaining biblical passages in detail. The goal was to accurately relay information from the Bible related to worship to these participants.¹⁴ With the help of collected quantitative data, as explained in Chapter 3, the participants could therefore learn how to quantitatively measure details of biblical texts related to the understanding of biblical worship. This DMIN action research project provided details of biblical passages to the participants through expository teaching with a view to considerably raising the level of understanding of biblical worship among the study participants.

12. Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2006), 101.

13. *Ibid.*, 357.

14. Ian Paul and David Wenham, eds., *We Proclaim the Word of Life: Preaching the New Testament today* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013), 15.

Basic Assumptions

Each participant in this study was assumed to have no formal biblical education. This means that each congregant was assumed to know little of the history or context behind any given passage of Scripture outside of the information that the Scripture provides to the reader. Therefore, the assumption was that the congregants of Stonepath Church would possess little background knowledge regarding the contemporary significance of contextual details in the Scripture.

As a result, each congregant was assumed not to possess a comprehensive understanding of biblical worship prior to the first survey that was administered, which assessed the congregants' initial understanding of biblical worship. Because the congregants had received no formal academic biblical training, no foundation for a formal doctrine had been set for them.

Each congregant was assumed to be honest in their responses to the first survey. Two surveys were conducted during this thesis project. As mentioned, the first assessed the participants' initial understanding of biblical worship, and the second assesses their post-teaching understanding of biblical worship to determine the effectiveness of expository teaching in relation to key passages regarding biblical worship. The instructions of both the first and second surveys required the congregants to select the answers that they were certain were correct. This thesis project assumed that each congregant would be honest in their selection of each answer and that each selected answer would be provided based on certainty and not as a result of guesswork.

Next, this thesis project assumed that each congregant was a born-again Christian with a basic knowledge of Christianity. Here, "basic knowledge" referred to the knowledge of Jesus being the congregants' Lord and savior and the understanding that worship is practiced in honor

of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Each congregant of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study was required to affirm that they were a regular attendee of Stonepath Church; this study inferred from this required that all the participants considered themselves born-again Christians.

This thesis assumes that the Bible is inerrant. This research was based on the premise that the Bible should be comprehensively explored and analyzed in order to find the most accurate information therein to deliver to the congregants of any given Christian church. Biblical exposition is valuable because it remains true to biblical record without deviating from it and therefore is valued by those who believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.¹⁵

Definitions

Throughout the remainder of this paper, “congregant” is defined as an attendee of Stonepath Church. The purpose of this thesis project was to raise understanding of biblical worship among the people who attend Stonepath Church. Therefore, no formal recognition of membership at Stonepath Church was required by the study participants to prove regular attendance.

“Expository teaching” is defined as a method of teaching that uses details from biblical texts to explain their meaning and application. This method of teaching can be employed to create a structural diagram of a biblical passage and to trace the grammatical functions of a pericope.

Expository preaching is text driven preaching that honors the truth of Scripture as it was given by the Holy Spirit. Its goal is to discover the God-inspired meaning through historical-grammatical-theological investigation and interpretation. By means of engaging and compelling proclamation, the preacher explains, illustrates

15. R. Kent Hughes, “*The Anatomy of Exposition: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos*,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 3, no. 2 (1999): 46.

and applies the meaning of the biblical text in submission to and in the power of the Holy Spirit, preaching Christ for a verdict of changed lives.¹⁶

“Formal biblical education” is defined as any classroom setting where a congregant gains understanding of biblical knowledge through graded assignments rewarded with earned credits. These credits are not restricted to a certain school or organization but may be gained through any structured means of receiving an education from an organization. Such an education may take the form of a local ministry school that sets graded assignments and provides earned acknowledgement for good work, such as a diploma. Alternatively, such an education may be received from an accredited post-secondary education school.

“Pericope” is defined as a complete unit of scriptural thought from beginning to end. This means that the entire scope of each passage of Scripture is contained within the biblical reference of the passage. No biblical passage was considered only partially in this thesis project. All passages of Scripture began with the beginning of the author’s thought and continued until the end of the author’s thought while leaving the initial thought unbroken in its treatment of the passage. A pericope is not defined by chapter or verse but by the logical flow of thought that corresponds to it.

“Worship” is defined as the gathering of congregants alongside every act of worship that is performed by them. Worship is not limited to the widespread connotation that worship is solely a musical experience. By contrast, worship covers many activities, including Scripture reading, preaching, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, as well as the act of singing and performing songs for the Lord.

16. Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), Introduction, accessed January 26, 2020, <https://app.wordsearchbible.com>.

Limitations

One limitation of this thesis project was that only congregants of Stonepath Church were studied. The action research for this thesis project was conducted based on three lessons. Therefore, the project analyzed only the congregants who willingly attended these lessons.

Another limitation imposed on this thesis project was that the only times available for the teaching of these three lessons were Wednesday evenings. The start time for each lesson was set as 6:30 p.m. for the convenience of the congregants who were to participate. Scheduling the lessons in the morning or afternoon would have created problems because of the work schedules of all involved. Therefore, lessons starting at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings were deemed most suitable, especially considering that the participants were all regular attendees of Wednesday evening services.

As mentioned, the low attendance of Wednesday evening congregants was another limitation of this study. Approximately half of all the congregants attended the Wednesday evening service at Stonepath Church. Therefore, attempting to persuade them to participate in a Wednesday evening class was disadvantageous, regardless of the type of compensation offered to them. Therefore, as mentioned, this study limited its lessons to Wednesday evening classes starting at 6:30 for the convenience all involved. The congregants of Stonepath Church were used to attending Wednesday evening services, so this time slot was convenient for those who attended Wednesday evening services.

Another limitation was the location. The lessons needed to be held at Stonepath Church for the convenience of the participants. Because the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study would already be at the church at the time of each lesson, the most sensible course of action was to remain on location and use the fellowship hall of the church as

the location for the lessons. Additionally, doing so would provide a suitable area for the serving of food and a location on site to perform the study while not disturbing the setup of the sanctuary. All surveys and interviews were administered at Stonepath Church.

The penultimate limitation imposed on this DMIN thesis project was hunger. As mentioned, the most suitable time for the lessons to be conducted in this DMIN thesis project was during the Wednesday evening service at Stonepath Church because the participants would already be at the church attending the service. However, this timeslot was in direct conflict with the participants' Wednesday evening dinnertime. Therefore, a solution was required to solve this problem, namely the provision of food for the study participants.

The preceding limitation created its own unique problem in that the food provided for the study participants needed to be food that they would all find sufficiently appetizing. This meant that a considerable amount of money needed to be spent to provide a high-quality, appetizing meal to the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study. For example, no cheap meals could be served, and funds would need to be generated to provide the study participants with a high-quality meal that would encourage them to want to participate in a study being conducted during dinnertime.

Delimitations

The two major delimitations of this DMIN thesis project were (1) that the project would focus on the impact of expositional teaching in raising a congregant's understanding of a biblical topic, and (2) that the project would focus on the biblical topic of worship. Although worship was not the focus of this thesis project, it was the topic employed to assess the impact of expositional teaching on a congregant's understanding of a biblical topic. Other minor delimitations are detailed as follows.

Given the vast scope of the theme of worship and the many passages of Scripture that could be used to discuss this topic and because of the limited amount of time available to this project to devote to such an undertaking, this thesis project focused on passages of Scripture specifically related to worship. Three such passages were taught, with one passage being discussed each week.

As mentioned, this thesis project focused on the impact of expositional teaching on the congregants of Stonepath Church. No other church was assessed during the action research part of this project. Therefore, the results of this thesis project relate to only the assessment of the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study.

One lesson was taught per week for a total of 3 weeks. Each lesson was 30 minutes long. Although 30 minutes is a short period, this amount of time was set because of concerns that a lesson longer than 30 minutes could lead to decreased participation. To help promote participant engagement, a free dinner was provided to the participants; this aspect was key to ensure the highest level of comfort possible among the participants and thus help maximize their level of involvement.

Thesis Statement

The idea behind this project was that by attending a series of lessons on biblical worship, congregants of Stonepath Church could gain an understanding of biblical exposition and principles of biblical worship through a course delivered over a comfortable number of weeks to maximize retention. The course was designed to minimize the possibility that the participants would be overwhelmed by excessive details. A 3-week course consisting of one lesson per week served as the basis of teaching interaction, and the participants were provided with a free dinner

immediately before each lesson to help them remain as comfortable as possible during the lesson and therefore maximize their involvement.

Expository teaching was the chosen teaching method in this thesis project, and increased knowledge of biblical worship among the participants was the goal of this study. Therefore, the thesis statement of this DMIN thesis project is as follows: Congregants of Stonepath Church who receive a series of expository-teaching-based lessons on biblical worship focusing on pericopes from biblical passages will gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

This chapter is divided into three sections: a review of the literature related to expository teaching and biblical worship, the theological foundations upon which this study is validated, and the theoretical foundations common to expository teaching. These three sections convey the conceptual framework of expository teaching and discuss the subject of worship, thereby creating a clear path toward the design of an intervention for the congregants of Stonepath Church. This chapter describes the implementation of the intervention for the study participants. The first section of this chapter, the literature review, covers the topics of expository preaching, expository teaching, and biblical worship. The second section, namely that regarding theological foundations, covers biblical preaching and participation in worship. The final section covers the theoretical foundations of how expository teaching is implemented, how teaching within the church in general is implemented, and how worship is commonly conducted in the church in modern times.

Literature Review

The fundamental problem of focus in this project was that the congregants of Stonepath Church may not have a clear understanding of biblical worship. Therefore, the literature on expository teaching and biblical worship was the focus of this literature review. During the literature research process, several predominant themes related to expository teaching and worship emerged. These themes provide a structural diagram of the grammar of a biblical passage and the context of a passage of Scripture and thus enable the text of a biblical passage to speak for itself regarding its doctrine and theology, acts of worship found throughout it, and the

concept of relationship. Each theme is discussed in this section with a view to showing how the themes of expository teaching and biblical worship are related and provide an academic basis for research regarding a possible solution to the problem presented in Chapter 1, namely the congregants of Stonepath Church lacking a clear understanding of biblical worship.

Structural Diagram

The use of a structural diagram is a major theme found throughout the literature on expository preaching and expository teaching. A structural diagram is a grammatical mapping of a pericope of Scripture and, as explained by Kaiser, an essential aspect of biblical exegesis.¹⁷ A structural diagram exhibits the importance of each phrase of text relative to each of the other phrases and shows the relationship of each word with the phrase within which it resides. Additionally, a structural diagram visually represents a passage of Scripture in such a manner that the expositor can then decide which phrases are the leading phrases of a pericope and which are the peripheral phrases.¹⁸ In this way, the expositor can then determine the meaning of a passage of Scripture by considering the interrelationships among all the words, phrases, and sentences therein.¹⁹ Gibson asserted that the structure of a biblical passage determines the meaning of the passage itself.²⁰ This means that a structural diagram is essential for understanding what the author of a passage originally intended to communicate at the time of writing.

17. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1981), 131-140.

18. Schreiner, Thomas R. *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), ch. 5, paragraph 2.

19. Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 94.

20. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 101.

Wayne McDill advocated a method of biblical exegesis that depends primarily on the structural diagram of a pericope. For McDill, the entire exegesis process starts with a structural diagram that is then used throughout the entire process.²¹ Therefore, the structural diagram is the most crucial tool used in the McDill method of biblical exposition.

Wright explained that the structural diagram of a pericope can help an expositor see the overall layout of the message of the author. This bird's eye view helps the expositor remain aware of the overall message of the author while surrounded by minute details so that they do not go off on a tangent that may be supported only by minor details. Therefore, the expositor can come to understand the true meaning of the passage and then teach said passage to others, safe in the knowledge that he or she understands the author's original intention behind the passage.²²

Gibson asserted that the structure of a pericope should determine the structure of a sermon related to that pericope.²³ In other words, a sermon should be developed as the expositor comes to understand the passage of Scripture upon which it is based; the sermon can therefore remain true to the text without deviating from the author's intended meaning. McDill agreed and noted that the overall structure of a structural diagram should mirror the overall structure of the passage of Scripture upon which it is based. In this way, the meaning of the passage is transferred to the sermon, and thus the sermon remains true to the author's original meaning.²⁴

21. Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006), 39 & 54.

22. Christopher J. H. Wright, *How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2016), 106.

23. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 101.

24. Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 24.

Context

The context of a passage of Scripture is vital to that passage's effective exegesis and subsequent exposition.²⁵ This exegesis and exposition can be a difficult task for a teacher²⁶ but is no less necessary owing to its difficulty. The context of a passage can be as simple as constituting the details of the pericope or its surrounding passages; it can also be as complex as covering the entire book within which the pericope resides or the context of the story of redemption and how the pericope fits into the wider message of the Bible and the history of mankind.

Generally speaking, the context of worship must consider the surrounding socioreligious context within which a given pericope resides. Both Whaley and Hill explained that the false worship found in the Old Testament is often associated with foreign gods and idols belonging to other religious systems in the surrounding cultures of Israel.²⁷ Richard Niebuhr discussed multiple historical contexts and how Christ interacted with them in different ways. Niebuhr also discussed the scientific context within which Christianity finds itself today, along with the intersection of politics and religion.²⁸ Christ does not deal with Christians without regard for their context, whatever that context may be. In other words, Christ always deals with Christians in the context within which they reside.

25. Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 9.

26. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 62.

27. Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2009), 59-66; Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts with Praise!: Old Testament Worship for the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 23.

28. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 1-2.

Peterson discussed the context of the history of worship and how Christians must strive to understand how God revealed Himself and the way He intervened in history on behalf of His people. A teacher of theology should understand this context in order to understand the specifics of what a passage of Scripture says about worship. The context of the history of worship has a major impact on the specific information found within any given pericope.²⁹

Kimball made an observation regarding context by explaining that the norms of one culture do not automatically transfer to another culture and, therefore, must be carefully analyzed by missionaries who seek to communicate with the people of a culture different from their own.³⁰ Wright argued something similar but positioned the idea in a biblical context. He asserted that a believer must first try to understand the context within which a pericope was written before attempting to decipher the author's original meaning with respect to his target audience.³¹ Timothy George likewise explained that every sermon must be "contextually rooted in sound exegesis" and should consider the overarching theological context of the Bible.³²

Allow the Text to Speak for Itself

John MacArthur stated that the meaning of the Bible is found in its details.³³ Gibson suggested that allowing biblical texts to speak for themselves is the only method of extracting the

29. David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 48.

30. Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship*, 69.

31. Christopher J. H. Wright, *How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth*, 63.

32. Timothy George, "Doctrinal Preaching," in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 96.

33. John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 166.

true meaning of the Bible itself.³⁴ The most effective method of understanding biblical worship is to use the Bible to explain such worship because. The focus of this thesis is the use of biblical exposition to solve a problem in a church. Enabling a biblical text to speak for itself is useful because the Bible is the cornerstone for all things related to the church and how it operates.³⁵

For Gibson, one aspect of allowing a text to speak for itself is to allow the text to determine the structure and content of its message, just as his position on structural diagrams suggests.³⁶ McDill backed up this claim but extended this concept by suggesting that a structural diagram of a textual pericope is key to allowing the text in question to speak for itself.³⁷ Undoubtedly, the key idea for both of these authors is to allow a text to give meaning to its reader and not allow the reader to extract new meaning from the text. Exegesis is the goal for both authors because eisegesis, which refers to allowing a reader to impose their own meaning on a text, can warp the author's intended meaning. The author's original message should be the only message that a person interprets in any biblical passage. More importantly, the original message should be the only message a preacher or a teacher imparts to their listeners, and the only way to preach or teach an original message should be for a preacher or teacher to bind himself or herself to the text in question.³⁸ In other words, expository teaching adheres to a text and allows it to express whatever it wishes to express.³⁹

34. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 30.

35. John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry*, 166.

36. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 101.

37. Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 24.

38. Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 59.

39. Stephen F. Olford and David L. Olford, *Anointed Expository Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 69.

McDill connected the structural diagram idea to the concept of allowing a text to speak for itself by asserting that a structural diagram enables a preacher to dive deep into the structure of a pericope and view its overall construction. Doing so enables the preacher to follow the flow of the structure of the pericope so that they can allow the pericope to express what it wishes to express.⁴⁰

Webber spoke about allowing a text to speak for itself in light of the concept of biblical worship by noting that such worship is found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, both of which provide Christians with truths that can be applied to the practice of worship.⁴¹ This means that each passage must be read individually and allowed to speak for itself. In this way, the collective context of the Scriptures can come together to form a grand mosaic picture of worship. Similarly, Farley explained that practices of worship are seen throughout the Scriptures and must be pieced together in order to understand the overall picture presented throughout the Bible. This piecing together requires careful analysis of each individual Scripture by a preacher. That is, each passage of the Bible must be read and scrutinized to recognize every detail that the author intended his audience to notice. By doing this, the preacher can piece together a beautiful mosaic picture of exactly what the Bible teaches about the concept of worship.⁴²

Dan Kimball offered a unique perspective on allowing a text to speak for itself by discussing how worship norms affect the outward workings of a theoretical model of worship. Kimball explained that the Bible has been consulted from many angles regarding how worship should be conducted inside the church; however, a related problem is that many people do not

40. Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 41.

41. Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 13.

42. Michael A. Farley, "What is "Biblical" Worship? Biblical Hermeneutics and Evangelical Theologies of Worship," 596.

approach the Scriptures without allowing worship commonalities to be prevalent in their own presuppositions; Tonkowich agreed that this is indeed a problem.⁴³ Therefore, many readers overlook what the Scriptures say about many church activities actually occurring outside the four walls of a church. This reality, according to Kimball, is a direct result of not allowing the Bible to speak for itself and instead allowing one's own presuppositions to determine how the New Testament Scriptures should be interpreted and understood.⁴⁴

Noel Due echoed the idea of allowing a text to speak for itself when he wrote about the influence the Bible should have on modern day worship. In his book *Created for Worship: From Genesis to Revelation to You*, Due explains that the modern worshipper requires an understanding of the biblical narratives concerning worship so that an accurate interpretation of worship can be concluded by the modern worshipper.⁴⁵

Doctrine and Theology

According to Joel Breidenbaugh and William J. Carl III, doctrine is prevalent in the proclamation of the Bible,⁴⁶ as well as in other forms of worship. Ligon Duncan spoke about the importance of being able to answer the fundamental questions of doctrine by using liturgical items. These questions cover an understanding of, among other things, the theology of the Godhead, God the Father, the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of salvation, and the

43. James William Tonkowich and Theological Research Exchange Network, "Worship: A Study Guide for Small Groups", 70.

44. Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 27.

45. Noel Due, *Created for Worship: From Genesis to Revelation to You* (Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 236.

46. Joel Breidenbaugh, *Preaching for Bodybuilding*, 14; William J. Carl, III, *Preaching Christian Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 8-9.

Gospel and the Gentiles.⁴⁷ For Breidenbaugh and Duncan, the theology behind worship is vital and must not be overlooked. In the mid-1900s, E. C. Rust indicated that the common practice of preaching often overlooked doctrine and theology, implying a deep need for preachers to preach the doctrine and theology of the Bible.⁴⁸ According to R. Alan Day,⁴⁹ good theology should be easy to preach, and David Buttrick supported this assertion when he argued that preaching needs to take “a turn to theology.”⁵⁰ Broadus also agreed that congregations require doctrinal preaching.⁵¹ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones bridged the concepts of the structural diagram and doctrine and theology by explaining that these concepts go hand in hand. He believed a preacher could not preach the grammar of a passage without automatically being forced by the passage to include doctrine and theology,⁵² an idea with which John MacArthur agreed.⁵³ Furthermore, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones went so far as to say preaching is “theology on fire.”⁵⁴

Towns and Whaley indicated that worship comes to believers through the salvation of Jesus Christ,⁵⁵ and this idea is in keeping with Goldsworthy’s affirmation that all biblical

47. Ligon Duncan, *Perspectives on Worship*, 21.

48. E. C. Rust, “Theology and Preaching,” *Review & Expositor* 52, no. 2 (1955): 145.

49. R. Alan Day, “Theology and Preaching,” *The Theological Educator*, no. 57 (Spring 1998): 104.

50. David Buttrick, *A Captive Voice: The Liberation of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 110-112.

51. John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Philadelphia: Smith, English, 1870; reprint, New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1891), 77.

52. Iain H. Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1961* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990), 261.

53. John MacArthur, Jr., “Moving from Exegesis to Exposition,” in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching: Balancing the Science and Art of Biblical Exposition*, ed. Richard L. Mayhue (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992), 288.

54. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching & Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 97.

55. Elmer L. Towns and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship through the Ages*, 48.

understanding is grounded in the gospel.⁵⁶ For F. B. Meyer, an exposition of biblical worship includes the doctrines of Scripture, given that Jesus was heavily dictated by those doctrines.⁵⁷ Many authors emphasize the saving act of Jesus on the cross as the primary reason for worship,⁵⁸ thereby indicating the significance of doctrine and theology within the concept of worship. Tonkowich even pointed out that a worship gathering should be not a meeting for people to get together with a program or schedule in place but rather a celebration of what Jesus did for mankind, with a focus on his actions while on the cross.⁵⁹

Chapell did an excellent job of combining the concepts of expository teaching and biblical worship by explaining that every passage of Scripture is designed to bring glory to God. This means that every biblical passage, when expounded properly, contains a message that guides readers toward Jesus, and every facet of worship should glorify God.⁶⁰ These ideas perfectly summarize the concepts of expository teaching and biblical worship and marry them together in the glorification of the Lord. Paul and Wenham put forward a similar argument by showing that biblical theology maintains a consistent theme by showing how God acts toward man and how man should respond. Therefore, each passage of Scripture carries the doctrine and theology of the message of the Lord's goodness and thus should lead all men and women to worship God.⁶¹

56. Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), 95.

57. F. B. Meyer, *Expository Preaching Plans and Methods* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, George H. Doran Co, 1912), 36 & 71.

58. David Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 254; John Jefferson Davis, *Worship and the Reality of God*, 12; Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 259; Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 31.

59. James William Tonkowich and Theological Research Exchange Network, "Worship: A Study Guide for Small Groups", 36.

60. Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 251.

61. Ian Paul and David Wenham, eds., *We Proclaim the Word of Life*, 220.

Acts of Worship

Whaley provided many acts of worship by using biblical examples, including the worship of Abraham through obedience, tithe, sacrifice, and complete surrender.⁶² Hill divided acts of worship into three categories, namely sacrificial liturgy, covenant-renewal liturgy, and temple liturgy.⁶³ For Hill, spiritual inquiry, obedience, submission, ministry, the acknowledgment of God's superiority, prayer, and drawing oneself near to the Lord through one's relationship with Him are all acts of worship.⁶⁴ Ross described Old Testament acts of worship more specifically by stating that people "made sacrifices, set up pillars, commemorated holy places, swore sacred oaths, paid tithes, carried out ritual burials, and sang and danced in praise to their God."⁶⁵ Similarly, Tonkowich spoke of the importance of physically bowing down as both a sign of respect and an inner act of worship prompted by the gratitude of one's heart.⁶⁶ Towns and Whaley summarized the historical acts of worship from the Great Awakenings by stating that these acts were characterized by sacrifice, obedience, and commitment to the Lord.⁶⁷

Perhaps one of the most significant acts of worship is the reading of stories of God's redemption throughout history. This was a common act of worship that emerged from multiple authors. Webber asserted that the initial orientation into worship occurred after God delivered Israel out of Egypt. The supper attended by God and the leaders of Israel indicated the gravity of

62. Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 54.

63. Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts with Praise!*, 50.

64. *Ibid.*, 2-9.

65. Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory*, 164.

66. James William Tonkowich and Theological Research Exchange Network, "Worship: A Study Guide for Small Groups", 23.

67. Elmer L. Towns and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship through the Ages*, 371.

this deliverance and how it should be told throughout the remainder of history.⁶⁸ Because the Book of the Covenant was given to the children of Israel after the Exodus, the reading of the book became an act of worship as well,⁶⁹ likely because of the story of redemption found therein. Later, Nehemiah has Ezra read the Law as an act of worship based on this model.⁷⁰ Keeping in line with the idea that reading these stories is an act of worship, Peterson highlighted the presence of the Lord's Supper in New Testament worship.⁷¹ Davis agreed with Peterson in this regard and acknowledged that the New Testament church experienced the real presence of the risen savior in their midst during communion.⁷²

Regarding which biblical passages can be used to demonstrate biblical worship, many passages of Scripture can be used for this purpose. For Davis, Exodus 19-24⁷³ is a principal collection of passages; for Webber, Exodus 31:16-17⁷⁴ carries a tremendous amount of weight; for Hill, the Psalms are key⁷⁵; Nehemiah 8 is significant for Gibson⁷⁶; and Towns and Whaley use Mark 12:30⁷⁷ as their principal Scripture for worship. Exodus 24 and Nehemiah 8 seem to be the most prevalent passages cited by these authors.

68. Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 20.

69. *Ibid.*, 24.

70. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 116.

71. David Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 130.

72. John Jefferson Davis, *Worship and the Reality of God: An Evangelical Theology of Real Presence* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 116.

73. *Ibid.*, 174.

74. Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 26.

75. Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts with Praise!*, 202.

76. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 116.

77. Elmer L. Towns and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship through the Ages* (Nashville, TN: Broadman-Holman Books, 2012), 4.

A. W. Tozer provided a caveat related to the modern worship movement in reference to musical acts of worship. He cautioned that Christians should not allow themselves to be swept away by the emotions of music to the point that they forget about the intellectual interaction with God that must occur in their mind.⁷⁸ Dallas Willard made a similar statement in his book *Renovation of the Heart* by noting that the emotions of an individual are excellent at serving said individual in the manner they were made to serve but that emotions should never be in charge of how an individual acts or responds. In other words, emotions serve well but should never control a person.⁷⁹

Regarding striking a balance between the constructs of a worship service in the church and the lifestyle of a Christian outside the church, Ligon Duncan provided a useful perspective. He asserted that acts of worship during a church service can sometimes be performed out of habit without the heart engaging in true worship toward God. However, he also stated that acts of worship performed in such social settings can have a greater impact than people may realize. Effectively, such acts of worship have a positive impact that even the most disinterested worshipper finds beneficial.⁸⁰ In other words, by engaging in such acts, even the most disinterested Christian is influenced with respect to their relationship with Jesus.

Relationship

The idea of relationship is discussed by several authors. This idea suggests that worship is not only a singular act but also one that denotes the relationship between a worshipper and

78. A. W. Tozer, *The Root of the Righteous* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1997), 84-85.

79. Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 117-139.

80. Ligon Duncan, et al., *Perspectives on Worship: Five Views*, ed. by Matthew J. Pinson, (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2009), 34.

God. Gibson explained that the Bible provides intricate details regarding the covenantal relationship between God and man,⁸¹ and Webber indicated that worship is designed to create a relationship between God and man.⁸² Ross also discussed the concept of covenant between God and man and stated that man cannot worship God without fully comprehending the fact that he is in covenant with God.⁸³ Peterson extended this concept by explaining that early churchgoers gathered in corporate worship to proclaim their relationships both with God and with one another.⁸⁴

The concept of relationship within the confines of worship also extends into a negative territory. In *Called to Worship*, Whaley talked about the relationship the Israelites had with other gods through the medium of worship.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Ross discussed the negative impact of an impure relationship with God by explaining that even if a person wants to honor the Lord, they cannot do so without first establishing a strong relationship with the Lord. This means that even if no false idols are involved, a person still cannot worship the Lord unless they do the will of God.⁸⁶

The idea of relationship extends even further than that of a relationship between two people. Paul Lang put forward an interesting idea about the relationship between the body and the soul. He stated that the body and the soul belong together and cannot be separated from each

81. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 59.

82. Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 149.

83. Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory*, 340.

84. David Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 159.

85. Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 72.

86. Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory*, 340.

other.⁸⁷ This concept is notable considering that the plan for this action research study was to educate congregants of Stonepath Church. Lang asserted that because the body cannot be separated from the soul, the body must also be considered whenever one considers altering the soul, or mind, of another person, as this study intended to do.

Donald Hustad provided another reference to the body and the soul, namely the relationship that music has with each. Hustad explained that the sound of the music affects the soul of the one who hears it and that this effect can be seen both in Scripture and throughout history.⁸⁸ Norman Nagel also discussed the relationship between sound and the soul by explaining that what a person hears affects their faith. By uttering the words of the Bible and words of faith in prayer, a believer can instill faith in himself or herself, even when he or she does not experience that faith.⁸⁹

Conclusion of the Literature Review

In summary, much is covered in the literature concerning the topics of expository teaching and biblical worship. The literature suggests the existence of a gap in the application of expository teaching related to worship in specific churches. A tailor-made expository teaching study of Stonepath Church is an excellent method of exploring this territory. Therefore, lessons based on expository teaching regarding worship in passages from the Bible needed to be created in order to expositively educate the congregants of Stonepath Church and thus raise their level of understanding of biblical worship, which was the purpose of this doctoral thesis project.

87. Paul H.D. Lang, *Ceremony and Celebration* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1965), 9.

88. Donald P. Hustad, *Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 1993), 131.

89. Norman Nagel, "Luther's Liturgical Reform," *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* 7 (1998), 26.

Theological Foundations

The premise on which this DMIN thesis project rests is the presupposition that the exposition of Scripture will influence the participants from Stonepath Church because this paper suggests the exposition of Scripture is the most effective method of scriptural teaching because of its strict adherence to biblical records.⁹⁰ Therefore, this section describes how the exposition of Scripture can be used to teach people of God about the word of God. Additionally, this section specifically discusses the exposition of Scripture for the sole purpose of teaching people of God about worship.

The exposition of Scripture is found multiple times within the Scriptures, and the exposition of worship is also found in many biblical passages. Therefore, this DMIN thesis project rests upon a strong theological foundation. Although dozens of pages could be written about the exposition of Scripture and the exposition of worship within the Scriptures, this section zeroes in on a small number of passages to provide a necessary theological foundation that shows the importance of expository teaching to biblical worship. This section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection deals with biblical exposition in general and follows the examples set by Moses, Jesus, and the New Testament authors, each of whom expounded the Scriptures. The second subsection deals with the exposition of worship found in three biblical verses: Exodus 24, Nehemiah 8, and 1 Corinthians 14.

Biblical Exposition

The Bible is expounded at several points in the Scriptures. Although Jesus is the most famous example of a biblical expositor, both the Old Testament and New Testament contain

90. John S. McClure, "Expository Preaching," in *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*, ed. William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 132.

multiple instances where exposition is conducted by other figures. In the Old Testament, Moses reads and explains the Law to the people at Mount Sinai and then again explains it to the Israelites on the last day of his life; his sermon is recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. In the New Testament, the authors of the epistles explain the Old Testament to the readers of their letters. Moses, Jesus, and the New Testament authors seemingly found it expedient to exposit the Bible so that readers could understand its meaning; their exposition provides an excellent theological foundation for the concept of expository teaching to clarify a believer's understanding of the Bible.

Moses

The book of Deuteronomy is Moses' exposition of the Law and what the Lord has done for the children of Israel.⁹¹ In addition, the book of Deuteronomy likely mirrors much of what is said in Exodus 24. Deuteronomy derives its name from the Latin Vulgate *Deuteronomium*, which suggests the idea of a "second law"; however, this is a misnomer because Deuteronomy's account of the Law is a retelling of much of the Law instead of being a second part of the Law. Deuteronomy is a "homiletical" retelling of the meaning of the Law that serves to solidify the Law among the Israelites before they cross the Jordan River to begin their conquest of the Promised Land. This retelling was intended to instill in the minds of the Israelites who God was and what He had done for them from the time of creation to the time of the conquest of Canaan.⁹²

Moses is believed to have written the entire Pentateuch at approximately the same time, namely near the end of his life. This would mean that Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,

91. Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1994), 21.

92. Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 16-17.

and Numbers close to the time that he wrote Deuteronomy.⁹³ This belief further emphasizes the importance of Deuteronomy's influence in the grand scheme of history. The fact that Deuteronomy was written at the end of Moses' life alongside the rest of the Pentateuch shows the deep importance of teaching God's people about the Lord. Deuteronomy stands out as a key text of the Bible and is used to convey the redemptive story of creation by guiding the way toward God through His intervention and eternal rescue and through the medium of the covenant and treaty with Israel.⁹⁴

Ezra

Ezra is another example of an individual expositing Scripture. In Nehemiah 8, Ezra reads the Law of Moses to the people of God after they have returned from exile in Babylon. Ezra and the Levites explain the Law of Moses to the people of Israel for 6 hours, and everyone understands what the Law says after he is done explaining it. This is an excellent example of how the word of God was read and explained to the people of God.

Jesus

Jesus is an excellent biblical example of an individual expositing the Scriptures. Jesus is known for his exposition of the Old Testament, and he expounds the Bible in several places. In Luke 4:14-30, Jesus visits a synagogue and teaches the people there about the book of Isaiah and how Isaiah speaks about the Messiah, which he indicates is himself.⁹⁵

93. Ibid., 20.

94. Kenneth L. Barker, et al., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Abridged Edition: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 236.

95. Craig A. Evans, *New International Biblical Commentary: Luke* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 70-71.

In Mark 12:28-34, Jesus explains to a legal expert the greatest two commandments. The first is that God is the only god and that one must love God with all one's heart, being, mind, and strength. The second is to love others like one loves oneself. Jesus distills the entire Law of Moses down to its essence and explains it to the legal expert, namely that these two commandments encompass the spirit of the Law as well as the actions required by it.⁹⁶ In summary, Jesus explains in extremely little detail what both Moses and Ezra explained about the Law of Moses.

After Jesus's crucifixion comes the Emmaus road experience in Luke 24:13-35, which is one of the most famous passages of Scripture. In this passage, Jesus unpacks the truths of the Bible to the two disciples with whom he is walking. He explains how the Scriptures talk about the suffering of the Messiah and how the Messiah will enter His glory after this suffering. The disciples with whom Jesus is walking did not believe a report told to them by women⁹⁷ because of their lack of understanding regarding what Jesus told his followers before his death on the cross.⁹⁸ Therefore, Jesus takes advantage of their emotional pain to explain to them again what the Scriptures say.

New Testament Authors

In addition to Jesus, several New Testament authors expounded the Old Testament Scriptures to explain them to the people to whom they were writing. There is much debate as to how some New Testament writers interpreted the Scriptures because of some of the meanings

96. Larry W. Hurtado, *New International Biblical Commentary: Mark* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989), 202.

97. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee: Matthew—Romans*, Vol. IV (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 358.

98. Craig A. Evans, *New International Biblical Commentary*, 350.

assigned to certain passages; however, that discussion is outside the scope of this section, which focuses only on the fact that the exposition of Scripture is seen within Scripture and not on how the Scriptures were interpreted.

Paul exposit 1 Kings 19 in Romans 11:1-6 by explaining how God's grace has kept His people in existence. Paul takes a particularly gloomy scenario in Scripture and shows how the grace of God was abundant even in the worst of times in the Old Testament. Furthermore, Paul defines the concept of 7,000, which refers to completion and totality; God used this number in his answer to Elijah to mean that God was in perfect control of His people and that His people were not in danger of extinction but would continue to exist because of His choice to supply His abundant grace.⁹⁹

The author of Hebrews exposit several verses from Deuteronomy, 2 Samuel, and Psalms in the first chapter of the letter. This chapter is an apology for the Scriptures pointing to the Messiah being the Son of God rather than just an angel. As Guthrie stated, "The Son sits at a preeminent position in the universe, with the angels in an inferior position as the servants who worship him."¹⁰⁰

Peter exposit Isaiah 40:6-8, as referenced in 1 Peter 1:24-25. Peter is writing about Jesus, and he uses a reference to "the word of the Lord" to refer to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In an effort to underline the main point of his exposition, Peter changes

99. James R. Edwards, *New International Biblical Commentary: Romans* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 261-262.

100. George H. Guthrie, *The NIV Application Commentary: Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1998), 71.

the wording of the phrase “word of our God” in Isaiah to “word of the Lord.”¹⁰¹ In this manner, he is explaining the Scripture so that readers can clarify their understanding of Jesus.

Worship

The theological foundations concerning worship for this thesis project are principally based on the biblical passages of the covenant detailing Mount Sinai in Exodus 24, Ezra and the Temple in Nehemiah 8, and Paul’s church service instructions in 1 Corinthians 14. These passages show how worship was conducted in both the Old Testament and the New Testament and provide examples of how worship was performed by the Israelites and members of the early Christian church.

Exodus 24

Exodus 19-24 is a large scriptural expanse that depicts the meeting between God and Moses atop Mount Sinai. The culmination of these six chapters is the final one, chapter 24, where Moses and the people of Israel respond to the Lord’s instruction from Mount Sinai. “Exodus 19-24 illustrates some of the key elements of worship: the call to assemble; God’s coming to be present with his people; God speaking his words; the people responding with promises of obedience; the covenant formed with sacrifice; the covenant celebrated with a fellowship meal in God’s presence.”¹⁰² This is an important theological foundation because God Himself gave Moses several instructions regarding how to interact with Him and how the people of Israel should interact with one another. Namely, they were to conduct themselves in certain

101. Norman Hillyer, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 and 2 Peter, Jude* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 54.

102. John Jefferson Davis, *Worship and the Reality of God*, 174.

ways and refrain from certain practices. Their interactions with God, their fellow Israelites, and foreigners were important to God. Once these instructions have been given to Moses, the first thing Moses does is speak to the children of Israel the words of the Lord and His case laws. In addition, he writes down the instructions given to him so that future generations of both Israelites and foreigners can learn the Law of God.¹⁰³ This passage demonstrates the importance of the intellectual understanding of the worship of God and suggests the necessity for all people to clearly understand worship from a biblical perspective.

Moses sets the stage for future biblical expositors by reading the Law of God to the Israelites and explaining what it means. The Israelites' agreement with what the Lord has commanded suggests that they fully understand what they are committing to, which implies that Moses has thoroughly explained the Law of God to them. In keeping with this model, it is not only theologically sound to exposit the word of God to the people of God but also theologically imperative for biblical expositors to open the minds of the people of God to the truths contained within His word.

Nehemiah 8

Similar to the covenant at Mount Sinai in Exodus 24, Ezra conducts a worship seminar with the children of Israel in Nehemiah 8 after the Israelites return from their captivity in Babylon. During this encounter, Ezra and the Levites read the Law of Moses to the people of Israel and explain its meaning so that the people can understand what the Law of Moses is saying. Ezra and the Levites instruct the children of Israel regarding the meaning of the Word of God so that the children of Israel can understand what the Lord said and what He expects them to

103. Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2007), 472.

do in their lives. The backstory to the Babylonian captivity is that the people of Israel did not obey the commands of the Lord in the Law of Moses and therefore were punished for their disobedience with exile. Therefore, upon reconciliation with their homeland, Ezra and the Levites eliminate the possibility of further disobedience by reading the Word of God to the people of Israel and then explaining it to them so that the people of Israel can understand it. “Reading the Bible had itself become an act of worship (Nehemiah 8).”¹⁰⁴

Nehemiah 8 echoes Exodus 24 to a great extent because Ezra does what Moses did by reading the Word of God to the people and then explaining it to them. For Moses, the purpose of reading and explaining the Word of God was to instill in the hearts and minds of the Israelites exactly what God had done for them so that they would not forget the Lord but rather would worship Him the way He wanted to be worshipped. Ezra is on the other side of the exile, just as Moses was on the other side of the exodus. The start of the new life after exile is exactly like the start of the new life after the exodus because it begins with the reading and exposition of the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 14

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul gives the Corinthian church a set of instructions regarding the flow of a worship service. In this chapter, Paul addresses the fact that worship services for the Corinthian church have gotten a little out of hand, and his purpose in this chapter of the letter is to explain how church services should have an order to them.¹⁰⁵ As Dr. J. Vernon McGee stated, “We do not want a stranger to step into the church and think he has entered into a group of

104. Scott M. Gibson, *Preaching the Old Testament*, 116.

105. Marion L. Soards, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 Corinthians* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 311.

people who have gone mad. If there is one thing we need today, it is the logical, meaningful presentation of the Word of God.”¹⁰⁶ McGee went on to explain what these services could look like and attempted to provide parameters for a church service through examples.

The text of 1 Corinthians 14 is somewhat different from Exodus 24 and Nehemiah 8 in that it is less dependent on specific scriptural references and more dependent on the instructions given by Paul to the Corinthian church outside of a specific Scripture. The main difference, however, is that Paul’s writing takes place right after the Christ event. This situation is similar that of Moses in that Paul is writing the “law” of Christianity in much the same way that Moses wrote the Law of God. In this manner, Paul lacked written material from which to quote, and thus his letter contains few references to the Old Testament and mainly consists of him explaining the Gospel and expositing the Old Testament in light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Several times, Paul mentions how the Corinthian church can clearly see in the Scriptures that Paul is correct in what he is saying, suggesting familiarity with the Old Testament; however, few Scriptures are used by Paul in this passage compared with the numbers used in Exodus 24 and Nehemiah 8.

Exodus 24 uses the entire Law that was given to Moses by God Himself, and Moses explains these laws and cases to the people of Israel. Although a tremendous amount of time must have been spent on this explanation, no timeframe is given in the text. The Bible records only that Moses read the laws and cases to the people of Israel and that these people agreed abide by everything they had heard. In Nehemiah 8, Ezra reads the scroll to the people of Israel and, along with a few others, explains the word of the Lord to the Israelites, who had divided themselves into several groups that then gathered together to have the Law of God explained to

106. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee: 1 Corinthians—Revelation*, Vol. V (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 69.

them. This reading took many hours for Ezra and his companions; however, the timeframe seems to be irrelevant in this passage as well, even though many other details related to time are provided. The focal point of this passage is the reading of the Word of God alongside its explanation; therefore, what is emphasized is what happened and not for how long it happened. Furthermore, the Word of God appears frequently in both Exodus and Nehemiah; this is in stark contrast to Paul's use of the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 14.

Although Paul spends little time quoting the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 14, the Word of God still appears in this passage. Paul references Isaiah 28:11-12 in verse 21 of 1 Corinthians 14 when he explains that the Lord said that He would speak to people of foreign language but that they would not listen. This reference is useful for Paul because it enables him to explain that the passage in question talks about how unbelievers will undoubtedly identify themselves in a setting where others are speaking in tongues by stating that the people speaking in tongues are out of their mind. Therefore, speaking in tongues identifies an unbeliever and acts as a sign that indicates unbelievers in a group. This assertion is meant to suggest the fulfillment of what the Lord said in Isaiah, namely that if God speaks in an unknown tongue and people reject His message, these people are acting just like the unbelievers whom God spoke about in Isaiah.¹⁰⁷ Paul segues beautifully into his point by showing that prophecy reveals the believer in the same way that speaking in tongues reveals the unbeliever and that unbelievers will be brought close to God by revealing believers and the truths they speak.¹⁰⁸ In this part of 1 Corinthians 14, Paul shows the immense power of a pair of verses when they are properly explicated for the people of

107. Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, ed. Vol. 7 (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2018), 291-292.

108. Kenneth L. Barker and John R. Kohlenberger, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Abridged Edition: New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 646.

God. This simple exposition on Paul's part is an effective display of the general power of exposition.

This short exposition is not the only instance of exposition in 1 Corinthians 14. The final few verses suggest that Paul has been expounding the Scriptures throughout the entirety of 1 Corinthians 14. If so, it seems evident that what Paul has given to the Corinthian church is an explanation of the Scriptures without quoting many of them directly. In this manner, Paul provides an excellent example of how the exposition of the Bible lies at the heart of his ministry, and, therefore, suggests that expository teaching (particularly that regarding the biblical concept of worship) has a strong theological foundation through the example in his writing.

Conclusion of the Theological Foundations

Biblical exposition can be seen clearly throughout the Bible and provides the church with a model by which to expound the Scriptures to believers in Jesus Christ. The major leaders of the two testaments (Moses in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament) make it evident that biblical exposition, in general, is a method of explanation and preaching that is vital to providing a clear understanding of the Word of God for all believers. The other Old Testament preachers and New Testament authors use the expository method of explanation to open the minds of the people of God so that they can come to know and clearly understand His word.

Regarding the topic of biblical worship specifically, all three of the aforementioned Scriptures (Exodus 24, Nehemiah 8, and 1 Corinthians 14) contain the elements of reading the Word of God and explaining the worship of God. This theological foundation provides this thesis project with a theological framework on which to base the necessity of explaining the worship of God to the people of God. Moses, Ezra, and Paul all explain the Word of God and the worship of

God to the people of God to clarify these people's understanding of the worship of God; this is the exact purpose of this thesis project.

Theoretical Foundations

Many theoretical foundations on which to build this DMIN study were available. Between the Bible and the modern-day United States of America, multiple methods could be drawn on to develop an effective intervention for the implementation of a series of expository-teaching-based lessons for the congregants of the Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study. Within the Bible and the modern-day United States of America, several examples of methods for teaching people about the Bible can be found. Diving into each of these methods provided a backdrop from which to springboard and carefully craft a series of expository-teaching-based lessons for the participants of this study.

Bible

Several methods found in the Scriptures have been employed to explain the Word of God to His people. Some of these methods are designed to be delivered to people in groups. Teaching methods designed for large group settings tend to have extremely long running times; therefore, lessons based on these methods can take several hours to complete. Other methods are designed to provide people with a reference guide of instructions that they can refer to later. The final method in this section is the communal meal aspect, where a group of people can bond in a common setting to deepen the impact of instruction on their minds.

Groups

In the Old Testament, in Exodus 24, Moses gathers the people of Israel together to hear the Law of God and to be taught these laws and cases. In this model, Moses addresses a massive

group of people to read the Word of the Lord and explain His word. In turn, the people corporately respond to Moses's message about the Word of the Lord. Likewise, in Nehemiah 8, Ezra and the Levites read the Word of God and explain its meaning to the people of Israel. Like Moses, Ezra and the Levites follow the corporate assembly method of interaction with their listeners. First, Ezra spends half a day reading the Law of Moses to the people of Israel. Then, the Levites read and explain the Word of the Lord to these people, who remain in their groups. In both instances, a long period of time is used to teach the people of God.

In the New Testament, Jesus also addresses large crowds of people and spends a long time explaining the Word of the Lord. In Mark 6, Jesus teaches a group of 5,000 men accompanied by women and children. He spends so long teaching them that the next mealtime arrives during his exposition, and his listeners have nothing to eat. Jesus then performs a miracle in feeding the 5,000 after teaching them. Jesus performs a similar miracle in Mark 8, when he feeds 4,000 people; however, in this passage, Jesus seems to spend most of his time healing the sick and touching the lives of those that approach him. Although Mark 8 provides few details to suggest long periods of time spent engaged in rigorous teaching, it does state that Jesus feeds the people after ministering to them. This description supports the idea of combining a communal meal with the performance of ministry or a service. In this manner, the aspect of communal dining is closely connected with teaching and ministry in the Bible.

Based on a story from Acts, Paul was apparently known for being longwinded. In Acts 20, Paul talks until so late in the evening that a boy falls asleep and falls out of a window. The boy is fine after Paul attends to him while harnessing the power of the Holy Spirit; however, the focal point of this passage is that Paul spends a considerable amount of time talking to and teaching his listeners. After reviving the boy through the power of the Holy Spirit, Paul goes

back upstairs and eats some food, thereby participating in the common practice of eating after a service.

Instructions

Paul is also known for his instructions to the church. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul instructs the Corinthian church in several aspects of worship services and how they should be conducted. In that chapter, the Bible does not give Christians an example of how to teach people about the Scriptures; however, Paul lays out a blueprint for how a church service should be treated and provides multiple parameters to which a church service should adhere. The passage in question provides clear instructions for how a service should be performed; for example, a church service should be orderly, only one person should speak at a time, no more than three people should prophesy or speak in tongues, and all things in the service should benefit the people who attend it.

Communal Meals

The stories of Jesus feeding the 5,000 and then the 4,000 alongside the story of Paul eating after reviving a fallen boy fall within the context of community and communal meals. The idea of having communal meals is prevalent in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In Moses's and Ezra's narratives, after the Word of the Lord is read and explained to the people, a meal is served. In Moses's narrative, a select group of elders is invited to eat a meal with God Himself. In Ezra's, an entire host of people eat a meal and celebrate the Word of the Lord. Similarly, at the Last Supper in Matthew 26:28, Jesus serves his disciples a meal that is representative of his body and the blood of the covenant; this passage links directly back to Exodus 24:8.

Modern-Day United States of America

Seminary, church services, Sunday schools, and small groups are all used in the modern-day United States of America to teach people about the Bible. Each of these methods is used to clarify understanding of the Bible among those who choose to participate. Seminary provides large numbers of attendees with a formal education that requires the completion of assignments to be graded. Sunday schools and small groups service smaller numbers of attendees in less formal settings; usually, a teacher or group leader discusses a chosen biblical topic. Church services provide people with opportunities to engage in praise, sometimes through music, and to listen to the preaching of the Word of God by a preacher. Each of these methods serves the purpose of conveying the Word of God and enlightening those who attend the gathering in question.

Seminary

Seminary is an obvious choice for biblical education because a seminary is a school devoted to teaching theology and ministry to its students. In seminary, students purposefully engage in an educational experience to learn from the institution that they attend. This setting is devoted entirely to the teaching and learning of the Bible and all the scholarly disciplines related to the Bible, including biblical languages, theology, doctrine, and ministry practice. Seminary involves a classroom setting and graded assignments. A seminary is a formal educational institution with the express purpose of raising the level of biblical understanding among its students. Furthermore, seminary is an academic endeavor designed to train the mind of a student for service in a ministry; it is not geared toward the church goer who has no desire to serve in a ministerial role.

Church Services

Church services are designed for all types of people, ranging from the common churchgoer to the most advanced expert theologian. Furthermore, church services are designed for people to engage in worship while being taught biblical truths. Church services occur in churches on Sundays, Wednesdays, and sometimes other days of the week. These services involve a preacher read a passage of Scripture to their audience and expounding upon it, similar to Moses's and Ezra's acts in the Old Testament. In this manner, a preacher can explain the Word of the Lord separated into individual parts to their congregation. Unlike seminary, a church service involves no graded assignments; church is strictly social in an academic sense because it is not designed to measure the growth of an individual's mind. Church services in the modern-day United States of America tend to focus on the discipleship of believers in the body of Christ rather than grading the level of academic prowess among congregants. However, this is not to say that churches do not measure spiritual growth to some degree, only that no standard system of measurement is employed.

A preacher can adopt several methods of preaching to spread the Word of God; as mentioned, the expository method was the method of focus in this DMIN thesis project because of its strict adherence to the intended meaning of the Bible.¹⁰⁹ Robert Page used the expository preaching method in order to conduct a study to determine whether expository preaching was

109. John MacArthur, Jr., "The Mandate of Biblical Inerrancy: Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching: Balancing the Science and Art of Biblical Exposition*, ed. Richard L. Mayhue (Dallas: Word, 1992), 23-24.

effective in raising the biblical literacy level of his congregation. He found that expository preaching delivered over an 8-week sermon series was moderately effective for this purpose.¹¹⁰

Sunday School

Sunday school can be considered a mixture of seminary and a church service. Sunday school combines the academic atmosphere of seminary with the setting of a church service. Sunday school is where many Bible teachers thrive in the church because it gives them the opportunity to teach the Bible in a local church setting. A Sunday school session, which tends to last from 45 minutes to 1 hour, generally precedes a regular church service and is usually devoted to teaching as opposed to preaching and proclamation. In a Sunday school session, a Bible story or a biblical character or theme is highlighted and expounded upon, and a light related discussion may arise after the lesson if sufficient time remains before the church service is due to begin. The main differences between Sunday school and seminary are the academic standards and graded assignments involved. Sunday schools may or may not use a curriculum and do not turn away any prospective students because of a lack of academic credentials. In fact, Elmer Towns stated that Robert Raikes created Sunday school with the intention of keeping delinquents off the streets.¹¹¹

Small Groups

Another modern method of explaining the Word of the Lord is the small group setting, which is similar to Sunday school in terms of its form and function. In a small group setting, a

110. Robert W. Page, "Increasing the Biblical Literacy of the Members of Sharon Baptist Church, Charlotte, North Carolina through Expository Preaching," (DMIN thesis project, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), x.

111. Elmer L. Towns, *Bicentennial Sunday School Bible*, (Nashville: Regal, 1976).

group leader usually facilitates discussion; however, depending on the layout of the group, this leader may be there primarily to facilitate, not lead. The small group setting focuses on group discussion regarding a passage of Scripture or theological topic in conjunction with a communal meal rather than having a single person explain and instruct regarding the Word of the Lord. The small group setting is less formal than a corporate group setting and more communal by nature.

Conclusion of the Theoretical Foundations

Many theoretical foundations on which to base this DMIN thesis project were available. The Bible details numerous examples of Bible readings and teachings that last for many hours, as well as letters of instruction given to churches and communal meals shared by groups of believers. In the modern-day United States of America, seminaries, church services, Sunday school sessions, and small group sessions are all employed. These theoretical foundations enabled this DMIN thesis project to construct a theoretical model for the implementation of a designed intervention.

Based on the perceived social norms of the congregants of Stonepath Church, a combination of the Sunday school model and the small group model was deemed the most suitable model for the purpose of this study, namely, to raise the level of understanding of biblical worship among the study participants. Therefore, a specific teaching element needed to be incorporated.

Furthermore, as mentioned, the communal meal is a key element of expository teaching in the Bible, and the small group model best allows for this addition. Therefore, this study prepared a communal meal setting where the participants could enjoy fellowship among themselves; the expository lessons begun during the meal to imitate a Sunday school session.

Conclusion

Based on the Literature Review, Theological Foundations, and Theoretical Foundations sections of this chapter, this study developed a series of expository teaching lessons tailor-made for the congregants of Stonepath Church and concerning the biblical passages Exodus 24, Nehemiah 8, and 1 Corinthians 14 to be delivered in a hybrid setting combining elements of Sunday school and the small group setting. This design was deemed ideal for the specific aim of clarifying understanding of biblical worship among the participants by raising their level of such understanding through expository teaching.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter provides a description of this study's intervention design and a narrative regarding how the design was implemented. Additionally, this chapter provides a step-by-step explanation of the tasks of the intervention followed by a description of the actual implementation of the intervention. This explanation includes descriptions of the recruitment of participants, the materials used to facilitate the research, the structure of the intervention, the schedule of the intervention, the progress of the research implementation, and the initial responses of the participants. Finally, this chapter discusses quantitative and qualitative data related to this research and describes how this data was collected and measured. This chapter is divided into two sections titled Intervention Design and Implementation of the Intervention Design. Each section contains multiple subsections.

Intervention Design

As mentioned, the purpose of this project's intervention is to raise the biblical understanding of the study participants. Three tasks are involved in the intervention design. The first task is the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval task, which involves the creation of this study alongside an explanation of it and documents to submit to the IRB for approval. After the IRB approval task comes the recruitment task, which is designed to recruit the desired maximum number of participants from the congregants of Stonepath Church. The final task is the intervention task, during which the action research will be conducted. Each of these three tasks contains multiple steps that are essential to the outcome of this study.

Liberty University Institutional Review Board

IRB approval will be sought and obtained first because no research can be conducted until IRB approval has been received. The initial submission for IRB approval must contain a description of the study in its entirety. In addition, all relevant documentation must be created and approved before the study design can be implemented. Furthermore, every detail must be carefully considered, and each document must be precise in what it states. The details of this study and its documents are presented in this section. The documents of this study comprise its recruitment survey, consent form, recruitment flyer, worship survey, and interview questions.

The recruitment survey covers the two criteria for admission to this study, as well as the participants' contact information. The two criteria are that each participant must be 18 years of age or older and an attendee of Stonepath Church. Stonepath Church is a recently independent church that broke away from the United Methodist Church; therefore, official membership documentation is unreliable because of the recent change in the church's legal documentation. Hence, the requirement of being an attendee of Stonepath Church is a specific criterion that does not include being a member of Stonepath Church. Therefore, admission into this study is based on the honor system and assumes that each prospective participant will answer this question truthfully and honestly and will not lie about their attendance.

The consent form details the legal requirements of this study with respect to its participants. The consent form to be provided to the IRB is based on a template modified by the researcher to contain the specific details of this study. These details comprise the study's location, participants, requirements, components (e.g., the worship survey, the interview questions, and this thesis), as well as the confidentiality agreement between the researcher and

each participant, how the data of the study will be stored, the rights of the researcher to use the data if consent has been given by a participant, and the rights of the participant.

A recruitment flyer will be used to announce this study to the congregants of Stonepath Church. This flyer includes a summary of the study informing the congregants that the study will focus on the biblical topic of worship and will include three lessons, two worship surveys, one interview, and a free meal during each lesson. The recruitment flyer also details the criteria for participation and the lesson dates: Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.; and Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. Finally, the recruitment flyer informs the congregants of Stonepath Church about the recruitment survey and the consent form. The recruitment flyer is designed to provide the congregants of Stonepath Church with all the relevant information regarding this study so that each congregant may consider and make an informed decision regarding whether to participate.

The worship survey is a quiz that the participants will take before the first lesson and after the final lesson to quantify their level of understanding of biblical worship. The first administration of the quiz is intended to establish a base knowledge of the specific biblical passages to be taught, and its results will serve as the control dataset, against which the growth of biblical knowledge among the participants can be measured. Furthermore, the first quiz administration is intended to measure the participants' understanding of the biblical material before receiving three expository teaching lessons related to this material. The results of the second administration of the quiz will serve as data to be measured against the first quiz's data. Since the second quiz will be administered after the three expository teaching lessons, it is hoped that the data obtained from it will serve as an accurate measure of the extent to which the participants' biblical knowledge has increased owing to the expository teaching lessons,

assuming that these lessons will be administered with skill and clarity and that the participants will engage in the lessons without distraction.

Finally, the interview questions are designed as follow-up questions for the participants to establish each participant's frame of mind during the three expository teaching lessons. As mentioned, this study assumes that the expository teaching lessons will be administered with skill and clarity and that the participants will engage in the lessons without distraction. Therefore, a follow-up stage is necessary to assess the participants' levels of engagement during each of the three expository teaching lessons.

These documents—the recruitment survey, consent form, recruitment flyer, worship survey, and interview questions—are the documents to be submitted to the IRB for the approval of this study. Alongside these documents, each section of the IRB submission form will be completed to provide the IRB with details related to Stonepath Church, the researcher, the study parameters, the intended study size, the study overview, and any other information required by the IRB. Each section of the IRB submission form will be completed; the form will contain the information in the aforementioned IRB documents as well as the personal information of the researcher.

Recruitment

Once IRB approval has been received, multiple announcements will be made over a 4-week period before the action research is due to begin. These announcements will be made at each church service during that period, namely the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services. An identical announcement will also be made on the church's Facebook page, and this announcement will be made shareable so that it can be shared by anybody involved in the study.

Finally, personal announcements to the people of the church will be made by the researcher in the casual setting of the church.

These announcements will cover general information related to the study and will be provided in the form of the aforementioned recruitment flyer, which informs that the action research will be performed with the help of attendees of Stonepath Church. The recruitment flyer emphasizes that food will be provided, and a guarantee will be given that the participants will learn about biblical worship. Additionally, the flyer informs about the survey to be conducted at the beginning and end of the study to measure the participants' knowledge growth. Finally, the announcement will inform the congregants of Stonepath Church of the study's schedule. The recruitment flyer is intended to create enthusiasm regarding the study and in turn facilitate participant recruitment. Congregants will be able to sign up as participants throughout the aforementioned 4-week period.

During the announcement stage, two forms will be provided: the signup form for study participation and the IRB consent form. The IRB consent form must be signed first to obtain congregants' consent to participate in this research, and the signup sheet will be used to obtain their contact information. Each participant is to provide their name, phone number, and email address on the signup sheet. In addition, each participant is required to answer two yes/no questions regarding whether he or she is aged 18 years or older and whether he or she attends Stonepath Church. These are the only two criteria for participation in this study.

Upon completion of the announcement stage, each registered participant will receive a phone call to confirm their participation so that the researcher can obtain a final headcount. Each participant will also receive a phone call the week before each lesson to obtain a headcount for

that lesson so that enough food can be provided. This step is designed to maintain high attendance and enthusiasm for this action research.

Intervention

This subsection regarding the intervention is the focal point of this chapter. The intervention will be held in the fellowship hall of Stonepath Church and will take the form of a study conducted over 3 weeks designed to test the thesis statement, namely that if congregants of Stonepath Church receive a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, they will gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship. This subsection presents an overview of the intervention design and explains in detail the tasks and materials to be employed to conduct the intervention.

Overview

Three lessons will be conducted: one each week for 3 calendar weeks. A worship survey will be administered twice: once before the first lesson and again after the final lesson. The researcher will possess a weekly log to evaluate the delivery of each lesson. Finally, interviews with the participants will be conducted following the second administration of the worship survey. The resources required for each lesson will be provided for the participants and are described as follows: the church fellowship hall, a full dinner for the participants, Manila folders for the participants to organize their papers (signup sheet, consent form, and surveys), pens and paper for notetaking, the surveys for weeks 1 and 3, and an iPhone 8 to video the interviews with the participants after the second worship survey in week 3.

Week 1

The first week will begin with an announcement by the church's pastor. All food provisions will be prepared in advance and will be ready for the participants after a short prayer in the fellowship hall. After approximately half an hour of eating, the researcher will give a formal introduction to the research process, in which they will present the details of the research to remind the participants of what will be involved in the study. Immediately following these formalities, the first survey will be conducted. The participants will be encouraged to provide only answers that they are certain of and not to use guesswork. When all the participants have completed the worship survey, the lesson will begin. The expository lesson will be 30 minutes long, after which a closing prayer will be performed; attention will then be turned back to the pastor. The pastor will then end the lesson with a further word of prayer followed by a few words of thanks to the participants. The entire session of the first lesson is designed to last approximately 75 minutes from the beginning of the communal meal to the end of the pastor's words of thanks.

The materials to be used by each participant during the first lesson are the worship survey, a pen, and a Manila folder. The participants are to write their names on both the Manila folder and the worship survey. In addition, they are to write the number 1 on the worship survey to indicate that this is their first time completing it. Once each participant has completed the worship survey, they are to place it in their Manila folder. The Manila folders will then be collected by the researcher and stored in a filing folder for safe keeping. This filing folder will then be stored in a locked filing cabinet by the researcher.

Week 2

The lesson in week 2 will follow the same schedule as that in week 1 except that no survey will be conducted. The second lesson will begin with a greeting and a prayer led by the pastor immediately followed by a communal meal, during which the participants can relax and congregate with one another. Immediately following the meal, the second expository teaching lesson will begin. This lesson is designed to last approximately 30 minutes. The second lesson will end similarly with a word of prayer followed by a few words of thanks from the pastor to the participants.

Week 3

The third and final lesson will follow the same schedule as the first lesson except that the survey will be conducted after the expository teaching lesson rather than before it. The pastor will open the session, and a communal meal will be served to the participants before the lesson begins.

In addition, the participant interviews will be held in week 3. The interview sample will be a convenience sample taken from the participant group. The interviewees will be selected during the week-3 communal meal and asked to stay after the lesson for a short interview regarding the study. A privacy form will be provided to each interviewee, and the interviews will be filmed for accuracy. The interviewees will be told to ignore the camera because it is to be used only to ensure that the researcher will not later misrepresent what the interviewees have said. The camera is to be turned on immediately before the first interview question is asked and turned off immediately after the final interview question has been answered. Those being interviewed will be verbally informed of when the camera is being turned on and off.

The interviewees will be asked to quantify their level of involvement in each expository teaching lesson on a scale of 1 to 10; thus, they are to provide three numbers. Then, the interviewees will be asked why they think they engaged to that degree. Finally, the interviewees will be asked how they feel the study influenced their perspective on biblical study and whether the study changed how they will approach biblical study in the future.

Following each lesson, the researcher will log an entry in a reflective journal detailing the delivery of the exposition. Each journal entry will answer and describe how much time went into preparing each expository lesson, how prepared the researcher felt before each lesson, the extent to which each lesson fit the definition of expository teaching, how the participants' eyes appeared during the lesson (e.g., glazed, confused, interested), how the researcher feels about the delivery of each lesson, and why the researcher feels that way. This qualitative data will then be analyzed and quantified on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = "Poor Exposition"; 10 = "Proper Exposition") to determine how effectively each passage of Scripture was expounded. The resulting number will serve as the exposition rating, the purpose of which is for cross-referencing with the results discussed in Chapter 4. A correlation between the exposition rating and the study results may explain the results.

Following the conclusion of this study, the quantitative data of correct answers to the longitudinal survey questions will be calculated by grading each survey and sorting the scores into two groups of statistics. This data will be displayed in multiple forms: a side-by-side bar chart showing the means of both sets of data and two identically laid out dot charts showing the entire dataset of each group. Additionally, the specific data of each participant from the convenience sample interviews alongside an exposition rating will be illustrated using a quantitative representation of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. The purposes of

the interviews are to determine each interviewee's level of engagement during the expository lessons and to cross-examine their change in score between the two surveys with their level of engagement.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

As mentioned, the purpose of this project's intervention was to raise the biblical understanding of the study participants. Just as three tasks were involved in the intervention design, three tasks were also involved in the implementation of the intervention design. The first task was the Liberty University IRB approval task, which involved the creation of this study alongside an explanation of it and documents to submit to the IRB for approval. After the IRB approval task came the recruitment task for the implementation of the intervention design, which was designed to recruit the desired maximum number of participants from the congregants of Stonepath Church. The final task was the implementation of the intervention task, during which the action research was conducted. Each of these three tasks contained multiple steps that were essential to the outcome of this study. The implementation of the intervention design differed slightly from how the intervention design had been set up; however, ultimately, the implementation of the intervention design accomplished the purpose of successfully implementing this design.

Liberty University Institutional Review Board

IRB approval was sought and obtained first because no research could be conducted until IRB approval had been received. The initial submission for IRB approval needed to contain a description of the study in its entirety. In addition, all relevant documentation needed to be created and approved before the study design could be implemented. Furthermore, every detail

needed to be carefully considered, and each document needed to be precise in what it stated. The details of this study and its documents are presented in this section. The documents of this study contain its recruitment survey, consent form, recruitment flyer, worship survey, and interview questions. In addition to these documents, the IRB also required an outline of each of the three expository teaching lessons and a backup plan in case in-person contact became impossible because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These outlines and the backup plan for the COVID-19 pandemic are discussed in this section in addition to the other documents.

As mentioned, the recruitment survey covered the two criteria for admission to this study, as well as the participants' contact information. The two criteria were that each participant needed to be 18 years of age or older and an attendee of Stonepath Church. Stonepath Church is a recently independent church that broke away from the United Methodist Church; therefore, official membership documentation is unreliable because of the recent change in the church's legal documentation. Hence, the requirement of being an attendee of Stonepath Church is a specific criterion that does not include being a member of Stonepath Church. In addition, the threat of COVID-19 considerably influenced church attendees, and thus many of the people attending Stonepath were not members of the church but attended it because it was a church that was open at the time of this study. Therefore, membership was not a requirement, and emphasis was placed on the fact of attendance rather than the possession of membership documentation. Admission into the study was based on the honor system and assumed that each prospective participant had answered this question truthfully and honestly and had not lied about their attendance.

The consent form provided the legal requirements of this study to the participants and those of the participants to the study. The consent form provided to the IRB was based on a

template that was modified by the researcher to contain the specific details of this study. These details comprised the study's location, participants, requirements, components (e.g., the worship survey, the interview questions, and this thesis), as well as the confidentiality agreement between the researcher and each participant, how the data of the study would be stored, the rights of the researcher to use the data if consent has been given by a participant, and the rights of the participant.

A recruitment flyer was not used to announce this study to the congregants of Stonepath Church. This flyer would have included a summary of the study informing the congregants that the study would focus on the biblical topic of worship and would include three lessons, two worship surveys, one interview, and a free meal during each lesson. The recruitment flyer would have also detailed the criteria for participation. The problem with the recruitment flyer was the church goers' lack of accessibility to the bulletin board at Stonepath owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the pastor of Stonepath Church made phone calls to the regular attendees of the church to ask if they would like to participate in the study. The pastor informed his congregants of the dates of the study: Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.; and Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. He also gave the congregants all the relevant information regarding the study so that each congregant could consider and make an informed decision regarding whether to participate.

The worship survey was a quiz that the participants took before the first lesson and after the final lesson to quantify their level of understanding of biblical worship. The first administration of the quiz was intended to establish a base knowledge of the specific biblical passages to be taught, and its results would serve as the control dataset, against which the growth of biblical knowledge among the participants would be measured, as detailed in Chapter 4 of this

thesis. Furthermore, the first quiz administration was intended to measure the participants' understanding of the biblical material before receiving three expository teaching lessons related to this material. The results of the second administration of the quiz would serve as data to be measured against the first quiz's data. Since the second quiz would be administered after the three expository teaching lessons, it was hoped that the data obtained from it would serve as an accurate measure of the extent to which the participants' biblical knowledge has increased owing to the expository teaching lessons, assuming that these lessons had been administered with skill and clarity and that the participants had engaged in the lessons without distraction.

Finally, the interview questions differed in the implementation. The interview questions were designed as follow-up questions for the participants to establish each participant's frame of mind during the three expository teaching lessons. As mentioned, this study assumed that the participants would engage in the lessons without distraction. Therefore, the follow-up stage was necessary to assess the participants' levels of engagement during each of the three expository teaching lessons. The researcher's original intention was to video the participants as they answered the interview questions; however, one of the participants requested that the interview questions be printed out for everyone to answer at the same time in order to cut down on the amount of time needed to administer the interview questions to everyone. The researcher agreed to these terms and administered the interview questions to each participant on a printed sheet of paper so that all the participants could complete the interview questions simultaneously. The interview questions were administered immediately following the second worship survey.

The outlines for the expository teaching lessons were related to the aforementioned three passages of Scripture: Exodus 24:1-8, Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12, and 1 Corinthians 14:26-40. Each outline gave a brief overview of the passage of Scripture and how it would be presented in order

in the expository teaching lesson. Specifically, each passage of Scripture was divided into three sections in the outline, with each section containing at least one of the following elements: an explanation, an illustration, or an application. Therefore, some sections of the expository teaching lessons contained only an explanation, some contained only an illustration or an application, and some contained an explanation, an illustration, and an application. Many of the illustrations could be applied to the entire passage of Scripture; therefore, no section of the passage in question required its own illustration. Similarly, the application of the Scripture as a whole often represented the entire passage and thus did not require the individual application of each section. Each of the three outlines was submitted to the IRB for approval.

The backup plan for the COVID-19 pandemic is described as follows: If in-person meetings could not be conducted because of shelter-in-place orders from the state of Georgia, these meetings would be substituted with Zoom meetings where the participants would sign into the Zoom website or the Zoom phone app and listen to the expository teaching lessons remotely. In the backup plan, the recruitment stage of this study would have been conducted via phone calls from the researcher and the pastor of Stonepath Church, during which the details of the study would have been explained to each of the congregants of Stonepath Church. A SurveyMonkey website was set up so that the congregants could sign up for the study and sign the consent form, and a Google Form was created for the participants to complete the worship survey. Interviews would have been conducted over Zoom meetings. However, ultimately, the COVID-19 backup plan was not needed, and the study was able to be conducted in person at Stonepath Church.

These documents—the recruitment survey, consent form, recruitment flyer, worship survey, interview questions, outlines for the expository teaching lessons, and the backup plan for

the COVID-19 outbreak—were the documents to be submitted to the IRB for the approval of this study. Alongside these documents, each section of the IRB submission form was completed to provide the IRB with details related to Stonepath Church, the researcher, the study parameters, the intended study size, the study overview, and any other information required by the IRB. Each section of the IRB submission form was completed; the form contained the information in the aforementioned IRB documents as well as the personal information of the researcher. The IRB approved this study.

Recruitment

Once IRB approval had been received, multiple announcements were to be made over a 4-week period before the action research was due to begin. These announcements were to be made at each church service during that period, namely the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services. An identical announcement was to be made on the church's Facebook page, and this announcement was to be made shareable so that it could be shared by anybody involved in the study. Finally, personal announcements to the people of the church were to be made by the researcher in the casual setting of the church. Unfortunately, owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, the announcements to be made during the services were disrupted, and the Facebook announcements were scrapped altogether. All Wednesday evening services were cancelled in an effort to limit the number of gatherings for those who would attend, and, at the height of the pandemic, the church held no service at all on two consecutive Sundays. During that period, however, personal phone calls were made by the pastor and the researcher to spread the word about the study and to ensure that the congregants of Stonepath Church were well informed regarding this matter.

During these phone calls, the pastor and the researcher provided general information related to the study and told the congregants that the action research would be performed with attendees of Stonepath Church. These phone calls emphasized that food would be provided and that the aim was to increase the biblical understanding of the participants. Additionally, the phone calls informed the congregants about the survey to be conducted at the beginning and end of the study to measure the participants' knowledge growth. Finally, the phone calls informed the congregants of Stonepath Church of the study's schedule. These calls were made over a period of approximately three weeks in length and ensured that every congregant of Stonepath Church was well informed regarding the study. Finally, 11 congregants were recruited to participate in this study.

The initial plan for the announcements step involved two signup sheets for the congregants to sign: the IRB consent form and the signup sheet for the class. The IRB consent form was to be signed first and would obtain congregants' consent to participate in this research. The signup sheet was designed to obtain their contact information and for each participant to answer two yes/no questions regarding whether they were aged 18 or older and whether they attended Stonepath Church. Unfortunately, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pastor and the researcher decided to change the procedure for signing the consent form and the signup sheet by delaying the signing of these forms until the evening of the first lesson. Each participant was taken at their word that they would attend all three lessons of the study.

Implementation of the Intervention

As stated, the intervention is the focal point of this chapter. The intervention took place in the fellowship hall of Stonepath Church and was conducted over a period of 3 weeks to test the thesis statement that if congregants at Stonepath Church received a series of expository teaching

lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, they would gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship. This section presents an overview of the implementation of the intervention and explains in detail the tasks and materials that were used to conduct the intervention. In addition, this section describes differences between the intervention as it was originally designed and its actual implementation. This subsection has four further subsections titled Overview, Week 1, Week 2, and Week 3. The overview provides a broad summary of what actually happened during the implementation of the intervention; each of the other three subsection goes into further detail about what occurred during the week in question.

Overview

Three lessons were conducted: one each week for 3 calendar weeks. A worship survey was administered twice: once before the first lesson and again after the final lesson. The researcher was going to use a weekly log to evaluate the delivery of each lesson; however, rather than potentially cause confusion through excessive analysis of every minute detail, an overall impression of the expository lesson was provided instead of a detailed log. Finally, interviews were conducted with the participants following the second administration of the worship survey; however, these interviews were administered to all the participants simultaneously in the form of a printed sheet of interview questions rather than conducted one on one and video recorded.

The resources required for each lesson were provided for the participants and are described as follows: the church fellowship hall, a full dinner for the participants on only the second and third weeks, Manila folders for the participants to organize their papers, the consent forms, the worship surveys, the printed interview questions, and pens to complete the signup sheet, the consent form, the surveys in weeks 1 and 3, and the interview questions in week 3.

Week 1

After careful consideration, the researcher decided to invite the participants to share a meal at a restaurant after the lesson given the absence of a provided meal during the lesson. However, the participants ultimately rejected the invitation. The mistake was immediately recognized, and thus it was decided that food would be provided during each of the subsequent two lessons. The other resources—namely pens, the recruitment survey, the consent form, the first worship survey, and Manila folders—were stacked and ready to be distributed among the participants as soon as the pastor was ready to begin the lesson.

Before the lesson officially began, the researcher announced a seating arrangement that was in keeping with social distancing guidelines to protect the participants as much as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. As soon as all the participants were seated and comfortable, the researcher passed out pens, the recruitment surveys, the consent forms, the worship surveys, and the Manila folders. The participants were then instructed to await further instructions.

The first week started with a church announcement given by the pastor. Then, the pastor led a short prayer in the fellowship hall before the researcher formally introduced the research process. The researcher then described the details of the study for the participants to remind them of what the study would involve. Next, the researcher asked each participant to write their name on their Manila folder, explained the recruitment survey and the consent form, and then asked the participants to complete the form and place it in the Manila folder.

Subsequently, the participants were instructed to complete the survey by answering each question to the best of their ability while leaving questions to which an answer was not known blank. Everyone was encouraged to answer only the questions to which they were certain they could provide answers and not to use guesswork. The room was silent as the participants

completed the first worship survey. When all the participants had completed the worship survey, the lesson began.

The first expository lesson was on Exodus 24:1-8 and lasted approximately 25 minutes. After the lesson, the researcher offered a closing prayer and turned the service back over to the pastor. The pastor ended the lesson with a word of prayer followed by a few words of thanks to the participants. The first week's session lasted approximately one hour from the time when the seating arrangement was announced to the pastor's final offering of thanks.

The materials used during the first lesson were Manila folders, pens, the recruitment surveys, the consent forms, and the worship surveys. Each participant wrote their names on both their Manila folder and worship survey. In addition, they wrote the number 1 on the worship survey to indicate that this was their first time completing the survey. Once each participant had completed the worship survey, they placed the survey in the Manila folder. The researcher then collected all the Manila folders for storage in a filing folder for safe keeping. This filing folder was then locked in a filing cabinet by the researcher before the Manila folders therein were passed back to the participants during week 3 for the collection of the second worship survey.

Week 2

The second lesson included the provision of a communal meal while the lesson was being conducted. During the first lesson, a small number of the older participants had experienced difficulty keeping their eyes open, so the researcher decided to provide the communal meal during the lesson rather than immediately beforehand. This arrangement proved to be a huge success and did not hinder the participants from being able to take notes during the lesson. The researcher observed that hardly any of the participants had exhibited glazed or closing eyes during the second lesson.

The second lesson began with a greeting and prayer from the pastor, which was immediately followed by the communal meal. During the meal, the second expository teaching lesson began and lasted approximately 30 minutes. The researcher ended the second lesson with a word of prayer, and then the pastor again offered a few words of thanks to the participants. The second week's session lasted approximately 45 minutes from start to finish.

Week 3

The schedule of the third and final lesson combined that of the first lesson in reverse with the communal meal aspect of the second lesson. The pastor opened the session, and then the communal meal was served to the participants before the third and final lesson began; the participants ate their meals during the lesson. The expository teaching lesson lasted approximately 25 minutes. After the lesson, the Manila folders were passed out to the participants along with pens. Each participant also received a second copy of the worship survey and a copy of the interview questions. The participants were instructed to first complete the second worship survey before answering the interview questions. Once the participants had completed both the worship survey and the interview questions, they placed both these documents in their Manila folders, which the researcher then collected to grade and analyze the results of the study. The Manila folders were stored in a locked filing cabinet.

The interview questions were originally going to be asked verbally to the participants, but one participant requested that these questions be administered on paper so that all the participants could answer them simultaneously to save time during the third week's lesson. Everyone, including the researcher, agreed to this, and thus the interview questions were printed rather than being asked in the style of a traditional interview. The participants were asked to quantify from 1 to 10 their level of engagement in each expository teaching lesson as well as their level of

engagement overall; thus, they were required to provide four numbers. Subsequently, the interviewees were asked why they had engaged in the study to those levels. Finally, the interviewees were asked how the study had affected their perspective on biblical study and whether or not this study would change how they would study the Bible in the future.

After the study had been concluded, the quantitative data of all correct answers to the longitudinal surveys was gathered in its raw form and calculated by the grading of each survey and the sorting of scores into two statistical groups. In Chapter 4, this data is presented in multiple forms: a side-by-side bar chart showing the means of both sets of data and two identically laid out dot charts showing the entire dataset of each group. Additionally, the specific data of each participant from the convenience sample interviews alongside an exposition rating is illustrated using a quantitative representation of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. The purposes of the interviews were to determine each interviewee's level of engagement during the expository lessons and to cross-examine their change in score between the two surveys with their level of engagement.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter outlines the results obtained from the data by providing graphs based on the data and analyses of relationships between the quantitative data from the longitudinal surveys and qualitative data from the interviews. Additionally, this chapter compares the collected data from the implementation of the intervention design with the following thesis statement: If the congregants of Stonepath Church receive a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, they will gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship.

For the purpose of this study, a statistically significant increase in the mean score of the participants' second survey compared with the mean score of their first survey constituted clearer understanding of biblical worship; the term "statistically significant" refers to a p-value of $>.05$. This chapter has two sections. The first section discusses the goal of this study, and the second discusses the data measurement of this study.

The Goal

The goal of this thesis project was to clarify understanding of biblical worship among congregants of Stonepath Church by teaching three expository lessons regarding three passages of Scripture. Since the longitudinal surveys comprised information found in the passages of Scripture to be explicated, this study expected a statistically significant increase in mean correct responses between the two surveys of two standard deviations, which would yield a p-value of $>.05$.

The expectation of this thesis project was that the expository teaching lessons would be prepared and delivered in such a manner that the study participants would increase their knowledge of biblical worship. A further expectation was that because the worship survey comprised information found in the Scriptures to be expounded, the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate would exhibit statistically significant increases in their survey scores on the second survey administration.

Data Measurement

This section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection describes the measurement of the data that was collected throughout this study. The second subsection presents the results of the data measurement.

Description of the Data Measurement

A longitudinal survey before and after the lessons was conducted to measure changes in the participants' understanding of biblical worship. The quantitative change in the number of correct answers on the surveys regarding biblical worship was analyzed. In addition, the interviews of the participants, which discussed how they felt during the lessons and how they felt they had developed as a result of the expository teaching lessons, were also analyzed. The first survey was conducted on week 1 of this study, and the second survey and the interviews were conducted on week 3. The scores of the first survey administration and those of the second administration were analyzed alongside the interview answers. These analyses were then cross-examined to determine whether any extenuating circumstances had affected the survey scores in either a positive or negative manner.

Regarding the longitudinal surveys, a one-tailed paired t-test was performed to determine whether the quantitative data from worship survey 2 was more than two standard deviations higher than the quantitative data from worship survey 1. The purpose of the one-tailed aspect of the test was to determine whether the scores had significantly increased, and the paired aspect was incorporated to compare the participants' pre- and post-intervention scores. The mean correct percentages from both surveys were used alongside the raw data from both surveys to assess whether individual improvements had been made.

Cross-referencing between the individual raw data and the interview data was performed to determine whether any correlation existed between the qualitative data and quantitative data. For example, one individual's score may have increased between the two surveys because they engaged heavily in the lessons, whereas another individual's score may have decreased because they were not so engaged in the lessons. Additionally, in light of the aforementioned expectation of a statistically verifiable increase in biblical knowledge, if no statistical increase in biblical knowledge between the mean scores of the two surveys was observed, in-depth cross-referencing between how well the researcher expounded each passage of Scripture and the participants' level of engagement would be performed. So long as each passage of Scripture was expounded effectively and the participants engaged in the lessons, it was anticipated that the scores of the second survey would be significantly higher than those of the first. If this prediction came true, meaning that a statistical increase in biblical knowledge among the participants of this study was observed, only surface-level cross-referencing between how well the researcher expounded each passage of Scripture and the participants' level of engagement would be performed because the prediction of this study would have been shown to be true, and thus no further analysis would be required.

Results of the Data Measurement

This subsection is divided into four further subsections titled Individual Data, Mean Data and Analysis, Cross-Examination Between the Individual Data and the Interviews, and Cross-Examination of the Exposition and Engagement.

Individual Data

This study recruited 11 participants, each of whom was assigned a number from 1 to 11 as part of the confidentiality agreement between the participants and the researcher. This subsection presents the raw data of each participant's score on the first administration of the worship survey, each participant's score on the second administration of the worship survey, and the difference between the two. This difference reveals how many correct responses became incorrect responses between the two surveys, and vice versa.

Participant 1 provided 10 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 17 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 2 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 9 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 2 questions became unclear.

Participant 2 provided 4 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 5 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 3 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 4 question on the worship survey was corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 3 questions became unclear.

Participant 3 provided 10 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 20 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 1 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 10 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 1 question became unclear.

Participant 4 provided 7 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 19 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 2 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 12 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 2 questions became unclear.

Participant 5 provided 7 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 15 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. Furthermore, Participant 5 again chose all of their correct responses from the first survey on the second survey. Therefore, 8 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, and 0 questions became unclear.

Participant 6 provided 4 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 17 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 1 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 13 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 1 question became unclear.

Participant 7 provided 5 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 19 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. Furthermore, Participant 7 again chose all of their correct responses from the first survey on the second survey. Therefore,

14 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, and 0 questions became unclear.

Participant 8 provided 15 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 17 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. Furthermore, Participant 8 again chose all of their correct responses from the first survey on the second survey. Therefore, 2 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, and 0 questions became unclear.

Participant 9 provided 9 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 21 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 1 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 12 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 1 question became unclear.

Participant 10 provided 9 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 11 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 4 of their correct responses on the first survey became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 2 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 4 questions became unclear.

Participant 11 provided 8 correct responses from 25 questions on the first worship survey and 14 correct responses from 25 questions on the second survey. However, 2 of their correct responses on the first became incorrect on the second survey. Therefore, 6 questions on the worship survey were corrected after the expository teaching lessons, whereas 2 questions became unclear.

The following graph is a bar graph showing the raw data of the participants' scores on the first survey and the second survey side by side for comparison. The horizontal axis, ranging from 1 to 11, represents the participants. The vertical axis represents the number of correct answers provided by each of the 11 participants.

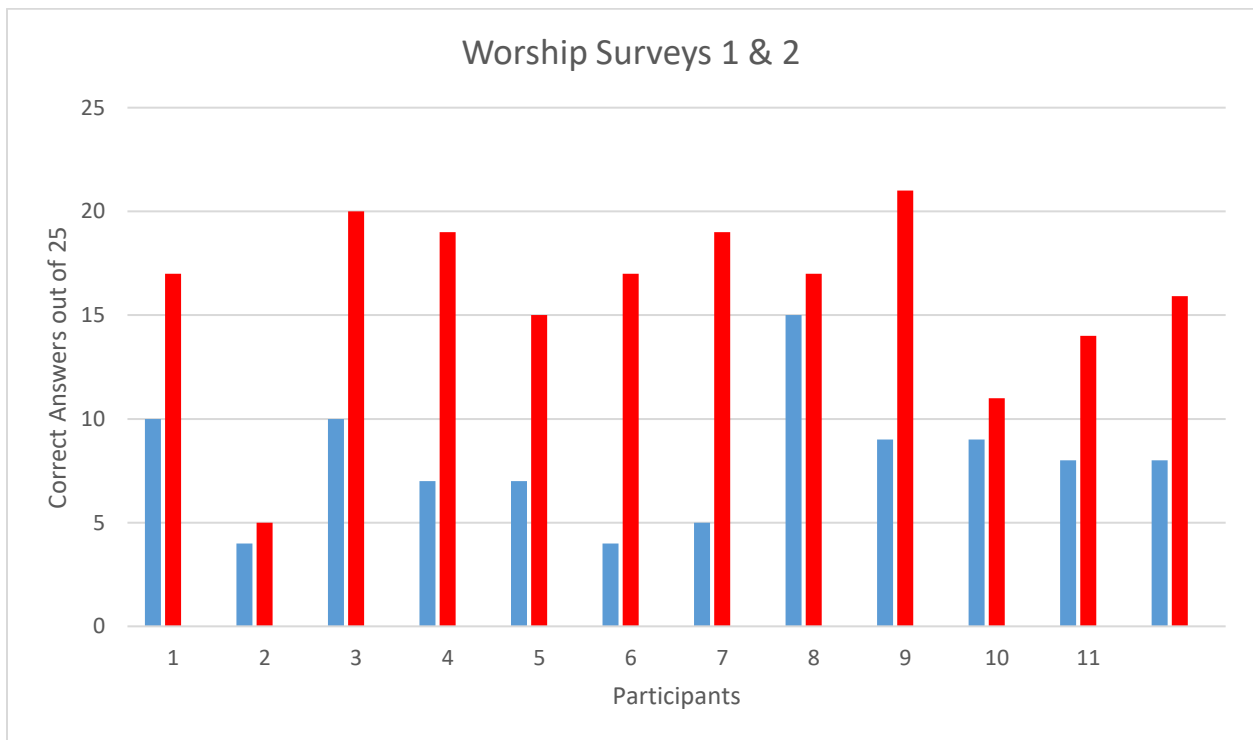


Figure 4.1

Mean Data and Analysis

This subsection describes the statistical analysis of the quantitative data obtained in this study. Calculations of the mean data of the participants' scores on both worship surveys are presented. After these data were calculated, a one-tailed paired t-test was conducted to determine whether the quantitative data from worship survey 2 was more than two standard deviations

above the quantitative data from worship survey 1. The graphs presented in this subsection show the data from both worship surveys alongside a p-value.

The mean correct score of the individual scores from the first worship survey was 8, and that from the second survey was a rounded score of 16 (actual value = 15.90909090). Based on these results, the difference between the mean correct scores of the two surveys was immediately apparent; 16 is double 8, and this difference strongly suggests that the three expository teaching lessons had a major impact on the level of understanding of biblical worship among the participants.

Analyzing the mean scores relative to the total number of possible correct answers provided a useful vantage point from which to consider and compare the two means. The total possible number of correct responses was 25. The mean score of 8 is almost one third of this total number, and the mean score of 16 is almost two thirds of it.

Doubling a one-third average understanding to a two-thirds average understanding of the material in three passages of Scripture is considerable considering that these passages were expounded only once each and for only 30 minutes. Therefore, this finding suggests that biblical exposition was an excellent method of imparting knowledge of biblical understanding that was not present before the expository teaching lessons.

The expository teaching lessons seemed useful for the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study; after just an hour and a half of expository teaching, the participants were able to cover considerable ground in terms of their ability to clarify their understanding of biblical worship related to the three passages that were expounded.

On the surface, the data obtained in this study seems significant, and a case could be made based on the aforementioned two mean scores alone as to how significant was the increase

in understanding of biblical worship among the participants. However, further statistical analysis is required to show that the paired data is significant for all scores from both surveys.

Using the data from the first and second surveys, a one-tailed paired t-test was performed using Microsoft Excel. Figure 4.2 shows the technical input of information into Microsoft Excel so that the program could run a statistical analysis of the two datasets from both administrations of the worship survey. This statistical analysis yielded a p-value located just below the dataset, as shown by the blue arrow in Figure 4.2.

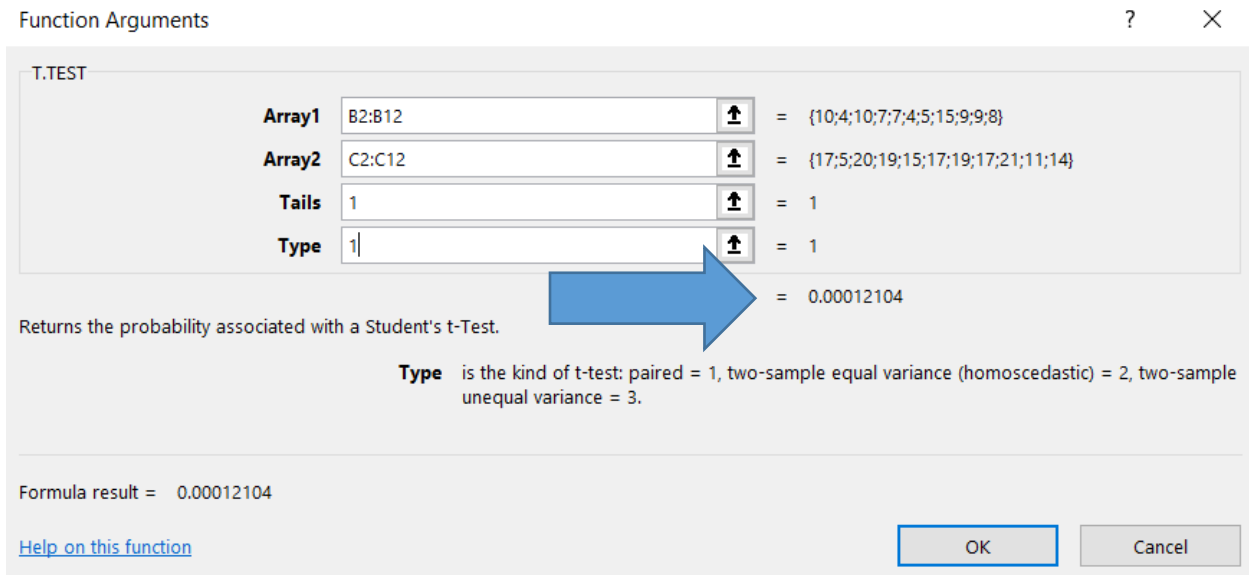


Figure 4.2

With a p-value of 0.00012104, which is less than 0.05, the data represents a significant statistical increase in the mean score. This suggests that the statistics obtained in this study supported the thesis statement.

However, three participants' scores did not change significantly. Participants 2, 8, and 10 did not see huge growth in their scores, although they each increased their scores slightly. In fact,

every participant was able to increase their score on the worship survey. Fortunately, these three scores did not affect the overall statistical performance of this study.

Figure 4.3 compares the scores of Participants 2, 8, and 10 from the first and second worship surveys. These comparisons are notable because of the major impact their lack of increases could have made on the statistical data. However, the other data had such a significant statistical increase that these three small increases did not skew the results out of the statistically significant p-value range.

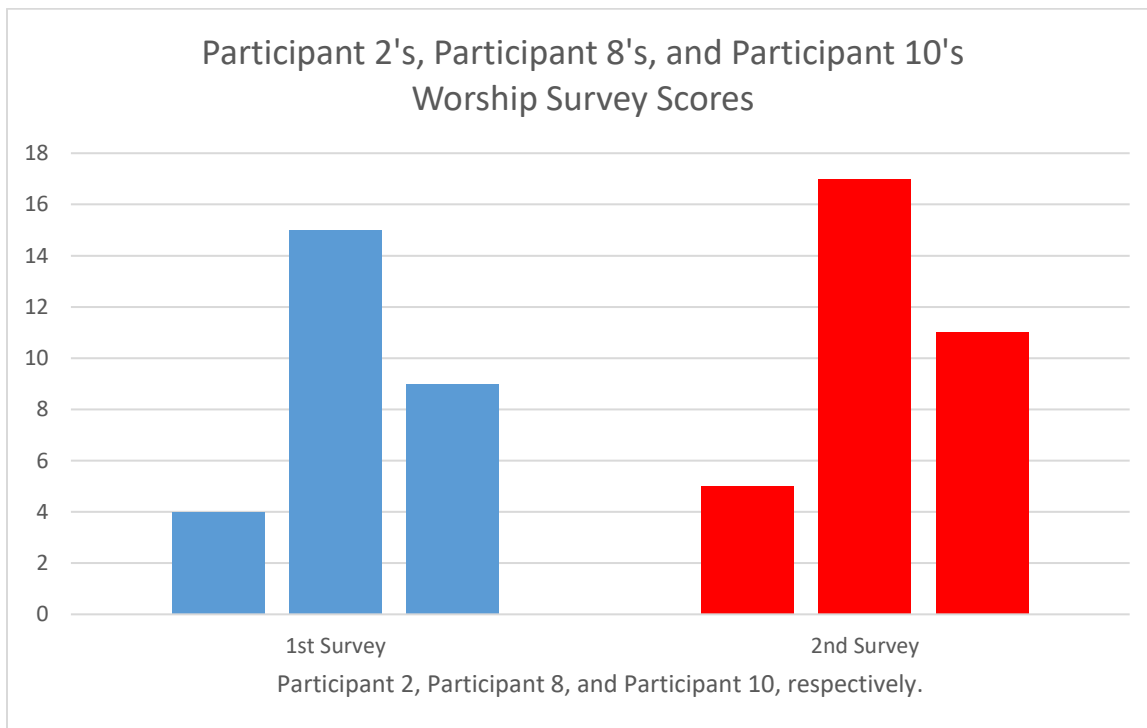


Figure 4.3

Cross-Examination Between the Individual Data and the Interviews

Every participant except for Participant 2 indicated that they were engaged in each of the expository teaching lessons to a reasonable degree. Participant 2 is discussed in the next paragraph. Each of the other 10 participants engaged at least to a level of 7 out of 10, which seems to be the main reason why the survey scores improved so much. Each of the expository teaching lessons was filled with a considerable amount of passage-specific information, and thus the participants' level of engagement needed to be relatively high to retain the information that was presented. The observed high engagement level and effective biblical exposition (discussed in the next subsection) were the two main causes of the increase in biblical knowledge among the participants.

Participant 2 was notable for their lack of improvement. Participant 2 noted that they were not heavily engaged in the expository teaching lessons and indicated that they knew they required far more biblical study. This study determined that Participant 2's score did not improve considerably because of their lack of engagement with the expository teaching lessons. It should also be noted that most of Participant 2's correct responses on the first worship survey were changed to incorrect responses on the second survey. Therefore, this study concluded that Participant 2 lacked focus and the ability to pay attention during the expository teaching lessons. Since the lessons were heavily laden with passage-specific information, it stands to reason that Participant 2's lack of engagement was the sole cause of their lack of retention of correct information between the two surveys and their lack of development of biblical understanding as a whole.

Cross-Examination of the Exposition and Engagement

Overall, the researcher felt pleased with the standard of biblical exposition in this study; each lesson effectively conveyed the biblical information that was necessary for an increase in biblical understanding among the participants. The first lesson was expounded more passionately than the other two and thus was more akin to expository preaching than expository teaching. However, the information conveyed in the first lesson was just as comprehensive as that conveyed in the other two lessons.

One notable aspect lacking from the exposition was the explanation that every language has meaning, as stated in 1 Corinthians 14. The lack of this explanation from the expositor meant that the participants were not given this knowledge. Therefore, since this information was the focal point of one question on the worship survey, it was expected that the participants' answers to this particular question would be random rather than biblically accurate. Thus, the scores obtained from this question could arguably be disregarded in this study, meaning that the scores obtained from the other 24 questions could then more accurately describe the effects of the expository teaching lessons on the biblical knowledge of the participants.

Conclusion

The intervention in this study yielded the expected result put forward in the thesis statement. This DMIN thesis project suggests that the observed increase in understanding of biblical worship in relation to three passages of Scripture from Exodus, Nehemiah, and 1 Corinthians was a direct result of the participants' attendance of the three expository teaching lessons.

Based on the in-depth analysis of data obtained from a survey administered before and after the three expository teaching lessons, a significant statistical increase in the mean survey

score was achieved, as shown by the p-value of the dataset being less than 0.05. This mean score increase suggests that an increase in understanding of biblical worship occurred among the congregants of Stonepath Church who participated in this study.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The data obtained in this study suggests that by attending a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, the participants of this study gained a clearer understanding of biblical worship. This chapter includes three sections titled Conclusions, Replication, and Next Steps. These sections discuss several conclusions drawn that can be drawn from this study, how the study could be replicated, and possible next steps to take after this study to further the research. The Conclusions section discusses what the researcher learned through the project and how the results of this project compare with related information gained in previous studies. The Replication section suggests how the results could be applied in other settings and if any findings emerged during this study that merit future research that others could conduct. The Next Steps section discusses how the problem addressed in this research could be studied further.

Conclusions

As mentioned, this section discusses what the researcher learned through the project and how the results of this project compare with related information gained in previous studies. Several conclusions were drawn from this study, whose results differ considerably from those of another study conducted by Robert Page.

What Was Learned

The conclusion that expository teaching clarifies a person's understanding of biblical worship is the primary conclusion drawn in this thesis project. The increase in biblical understanding provided by the three expository teaching lessons was significant, suggesting that expository teaching, at least within the confines of this particular thesis project, is an excellent method of increasing biblical understanding among the congregants of a church.

Since the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this study were able to increase their understanding of biblical worship by attending three expository teaching lessons on three passages of Scripture dealing with biblical worship, the same congregants would likely be able to increase their understanding of any biblical topic by attending a similar series of expository teaching lessons on said topic based on relevant biblical passages.

Therefore, since the congregants of Stonepath Church who chose to participate in this thesis project represent the entire congregation of Stonepath Church, this study concludes that this entire congregation would be able to increase their understanding of biblical worship or any other biblical topic by attending a series of expository teaching lessons on the topic in question.

Additionally, based on this conclusion, any church could likely raise its congregants understanding of any biblical topic by providing a series of expository teaching lessons on said topic with relevant biblical passages.

Finally, this research suggests that the expositional approach is a desirable method of delivery of biblical knowledge to church goers, as are the topical and contextual approaches. Many of the participants in this study were pleased after each lesson by the depth of knowledge that had been given to them during the lesson. Furthermore, many of the participants indicated that they would like to continue to receive expository teaching lessons on the Bible as a whole

because of the base of knowledge they were able to obtain from the lessons in this study. In summary, the expositional approach seemed to be an effective approach to teach the participants of this study.

However, this research also suggests that the expository teaching approach may be too in-depth an approach for individuals who prefer simpler approaches to Bible study and biblical explanation because a high level of engagement in the academic side of the Bible is difficult for some individuals to maintain. Many of the participants in this study experienced difficulty keeping their eyes open during the three expository teaching lessons. One participant did not even answer all of the questions on the second worship survey because they had not been awake during all of the expository teaching lessons and, therefore, missed the subject matter for some questions.

Replication

Replicating this DMIN thesis project would involve determining another setting in which a group of people could gather to enjoy one another's company and fellowship and listen to an individual talk for approximately 30 minutes. Additionally, because the scope of this thesis project was limited with respect to the topic of biblical worship, many other areas of research for engagement in related further research are available.

Other Settings

This research could certainly be replicated in other settings. For example, this study was conducted in the fellowship hall of a church but could just as easily have been conducted in an individual's home or a reserved space in a restaurant. Additionally, this research could be conducted in the sanctuary of a church on a series of Sunday mornings.

Further Research

This research could be replicated using any topic or theme found in the Bible. These topics may include character studies, narrative studies, or New Testament themes found in the Pauline epistles. In addition, this research could be adapted to fit the Sunday morning sermons of a pastor to be delivered in the main sanctuary of a church. A pastor could adopt the expositional approach to preaching for comparison with the topical or contextual approach to determine which approach has the greatest positive impact on their church attendees.

Next Steps

The first next step following the conclusion of this research project is to analyze the future possibilities of biblical exposition for the congregants of Stonepath Church or any other church. Since this thesis project was successful in clarifying understanding of biblical worship among its participants through the use of expositional teaching, the topic of biblical exposition could be further discussed with pastors to determine whether this study on biblical worship could or should be replicated with another group of participants at Stonepath Church using another biblical topic.

In addition, biblical exposition training could be offered to the pastor of Stonepath Church if the pastor wishes to implement this style of preaching on Sunday mornings, especially given how well expository teaching was received by the congregants who chose to participate in this study. The results of this study suggest that expository teaching and expository preaching could greatly influence the spiritual lives of the congregants of Stonepath Church.

Furthermore, this research suggests that any church could benefit from expository teaching or expository preaching. Therefore, another potential next step following this research is

to design a series of expository sermons for multiple pastors and a trained biblical expositor to deliver. This measure could enable the same sermon to be delivered by these pastors to their respective congregations and by the trained biblical expositor to a group of individuals. Using another data-gathering survey, the participants from each participating church could complete pre- and post-intervention surveys, the mean scores of which could then be compared with the mean scores of the trained expositor's group. In this manner, these pastors could be analyzed regarding their ability to deliver a series of expository sermons based on the resulting scores of their respective congregations.

Conclusion

The thesis statement of this DMIN thesis project was as follows: If congregants of Stonepath Church receive a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, they congregants will gain a clearer understanding of biblical worship. The results of this study suggest that after receiving a series of expository teaching lessons on biblical worship using pericopes from biblical passages, several congregants of Stonepath Church gained a clearer understanding of biblical worship.

APPENDIX A

Teaching Transcripts

Exodus 24:1-8

- I. Survey (15 minutes)
- II. Lesson on Exodus 24:1-8 (30 minutes)
 - A. **Verses 1-2**
 - 1. *Explanation*
 - a. The Lord is setting up the general parameters for how the Israelites can interact with Him personally. God is telling the Israelites that there are restrictions for how they can approach Him, and they can only come so close to Him. Sin had prevented people from being able to draw nigh unto God and forced them to keep their distance from Him. It was not like it is today where we can freely interact with God and approach Him directly with whatever we have on our hearts. The Israelites had to abide by these parameters and had to keep their distance.
 - b. The parameters were not the same for everyone, either. The parameters for Moses are different from the parameters for the elders, and the parameters for the elders are different from the parameters for the people. Moses is the only person that God would allow to come close to Him. He would not allow anyone else to come close to Him.
 - 2. *Illustration*
 - a. The parameters for interacting with the President of the United States. Not just anyone is allowed to approach the President. Only certain people can approach the President, and those people have to abide by a certain code of conduct.
 - 3. *Application*
 - a. We need to treat our interaction with the Lord seriously. It is nothing to trifle with. We have the distinct privilege to approach Jesus Christ our Lord in whatever manner we choose, and this is the greatest gift God has ever given us. Ephesians 2:13 says, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
 - b. We have the grace of Jesus Christ at our disposal. Let us use this grace to approach God and be near Him at all times.
 - B. **Verses 3-7**
 - 1. *Explanation*

- a. There is a lot to unpack in these verses, but the scope will be limited to the overall layout of what Moses did as well as the explanation of the blood sacrifice in this passage.
- b. First, the people promise to do what God says, but we know from history that they do not keep that promise. The promises we make to the Lord and to Jesus Christ are more important than anything else. Come hell or high water, it is our responsibility to keep our promises to God.
- c. The people made empty promises, but Moses did something different. Moses wrote down everything the Lord said. He knew it not only needed to be said but needed to be written down as well in order to keep the Lord's instructions clear for the people of Israel. Moses acted in order to make sure he remembered what the Lord had instructed him to do.
- d. Verses 5 and 6 show how Moses reacted to what the Lord had said. He wrote down the Lord's commands and he worshipped the Lord after receiving His commands. He acted on the movement of the Lord, and we need to follow his example by acting when the Lord moves in our lives. He wrote down what the Lord had said, and He worshipped the Lord for what He had done. This is the example we are to follow.
- e. The Bible says Moses got up early in the morning. He placed emphasis on what the Lord had done and made sure that he attended to the Lord's commands first before anything else. He did not let anything take the primacy away from the Lord.
- f. The sacrifice is interesting because Moses split the blood of the sacrifice into two halves. One half was shed on the altar, and the other half was sprinkled on the people, which we will get to in a minute.
- g. After the sacrifice, Moses then turned his attention back to the word of God.

2. *Illustration*

- a. Sunday morning worship involves a sacrifice of praise followed by the reading and preaching of the word of God. This is the same method used by Moses in this passage. Early Sunday morning, we all go to church. Sunday morning is the first part of the week just like how the early morning is the first part of the day. Our worship services each week are just like what Moses did, with the exception that we worship differently because Jesus' sacrifice on the cross fulfilled the sacrificial system of the Old Testament.

3. *Application*

- a. We need to live our lives in such a way that is in keeping with the Bible and what Jesus did to redeem our souls and reconcile mankind back to God, and we need to give primacy to following after the Lord. Jesus Christ is the central figure of history because history is His story. The story of redemption is the central story of the Bible and Jesus is the central figure of redemption. His story needs to be lived out throughout history is each of our lives one by one.

- b. We cannot forsake the word of Jesus Christ because of the situations we find ourselves in. The Israelites forsook their promise to God, but Moses upheld his promise to the Lord by acting. We cannot let go of the word of the Lord because it is the easy way out. Pragmatism is doing whatever works, and sometimes we might feel like God is not what works. However, we cannot forsake the Lord. Ravi Zacharias says, “Time has proven, in an even stronger voice, that pragmatism, which by definition is to do whatever works, in the long run, does not work because it is captive to the moment. The foundation of moral action must go deeper and farther than utilitarianism.”¹¹² By this he means that we must stick to the commands of the Lord on your life and on mine even when we cannot see how following the Lord will be what is best for us.
- c. The fact of the matter is this – when we find ourselves in a situation in life where we face a difficult struggle and we cannot see the way to victory, we have to make a decision based on God, because inevitably there will come a point where my opinion and God’s opinion will not line up together. Do I follow God or do I follow myself? One of us is right, and the other is wrong. Do not fool yourself into thinking that God is the one who is wrong.

C. Verse 8

1. *Explanation*

- a. Moses ends the narrative by sprinkling the other half of the blood of the covenant on the people.
- b. The comparison here is obvious. The blood of the covenant of the Old Testament is found in the blood of the sacrifice, but the blood of the covenant of the New Testament is the shed blood of Jesus Christ for your sins and for mine.
- c. Jesus said at the Lord’s Supper in Matthew 26:28, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” His wording ties his blood back to Exodus 24:8. Jesus blood is the true blood of the covenant between God and Man.

2. *Illustration*

- a. The shed blood of Jesus on the cross.

3. *Application*

- a. Accepting Jesus blood to cover our sins and the taking of Communion.
- b. Let Jesus’ blood wash over you and live in such a way as to display the fact that the blood of Jesus has been sprinkled on you.
- c. Jesus’ blood was sprinkled in two ways as well. It was spilled physically on the cross, and it is applied spiritually onto each one of us. Accept His blood and let it wash over you.
- d. Remember to also break bread with one another. Communal meals are an important concept in the Bible. After this passage in Exodus 24:11, the elders ate a communal meal with God. Throughout the law of

¹¹² Ravi Zacharias, *A Shattered Visage: The Real Face of Atheism* (Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1990), 25.

Moses, God commands the people to feast together after worshipping. And even Jesus ties in the communal meal by the taking of Communion together. This is proof that church people should go out to eat together after the service.

III. Dismissal Prayer (30 seconds)

Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12

I. Lesson on Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12 (30 minutes)

A. Verses 7:73b-8:4

1. *Explanation*

- a. The Israelites were reuniting as a people and were listening to the Law of Moses being read by Ezra, who was both a scribe and a priest which means he could read and explain the law of Moses and also minister to the people in the Temple. The first day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar is the Jewish New Year's Day. In this particular setting, the Jews are acting like Moses when he got up early the next morning, as we discussed last week. The Jews gave God the first part of their year by coming together and having Ezra read and explain the Scriptures to them on their New Year's Day.
- b. Also, the Bible is specific in telling us who all gathered. The Bible uses the phrase "all who were able to understand." This is an important detail because it affirms the need for the ability to understand the word of the Lord. Children were absent from the reading and exposition of the word because they could not understand. Is it important for the family unit to engage in worship together? Of course! But is it also important for the children to be separated so that everyone can learn at their own level? Yes, this is true as well.
- c. Those who were able to understand were gathering together just like the Israelites did at Mount Sinai in Exodus 24, which is what we discussed last week. The difference is that the Israelites have been through hundreds of years of history and have gone through untold agony and pain along the way because of the disobedience they had towards the law of God. The children of Israel had completely lost the law of God at one point during their history. King Josiah found the law when he had the temple cleaned up. **THEY LOST THE BIBLE.** They were so careless with the word of God that they lost everything He had said to them.
- d. Nehemiah says in 1:7, "We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses." Perhaps just as important, Ezra recognized the tiny opportunity God had granted them by allowing them to return to their homeland after exile. Ezra says in Ezra 9:8-9a, "But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant

and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. ^{9a}Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage.”

2. *Application*

- a. We need to honor the reading of the Word of God, because it is our greatest blessing. We need to treat the blessings of the Lord with reverence and give them the respect they deserve.
- b. What God has blessed us with is not eternal. The blessing is not eternal. Only God is eternal. Let us treat the blessings of God with the proper respect they deserve.
- c. It is the relationships in our lives that matter. These are the blessings from God. The only thing we can take from this world to the next is the many relationships we have with Jesus Christ and one another. Honor your relationship with the Lord. Honor your parents. Honor your children. Honor your spouse. Honor the relationships you have with your family and your friends. Heaven is all about relationships, and Hell is all about isolation. So, honor the relationships God has blessed you with, including the relationship you have with Him.

B. Verses 8:5-8

1. *Explanation*

- a. The people actively listened and engaged in the reading and explanation of the Word of God. Remember what verse 3 said? It said Ezra read the Book of the Law from sunrise until noon. The people listened attentively for 6 hours to the reading of the word of God.
- b. This does not need to be taken out of context, though, because many people might get upset that our modern church services only last an hour and the Bible seems to suggest that we take our time with our services. We need to understand that the people of Israel had been away from Jerusalem and the land of Israel for 70 years, and they had not had a proper worship service in that time – not like the worship service they are currently engaged in. They have been severely starved for the word of God, so they were eager and ready to spend this large amount of time hearing it for the first time in 70 years.
- c. This excitement is seen when Ezra opens the Book of the Law and everybody breaks out in a Pentecostal praise session. The air was electric as Ezra opened the Book, and Ezra could not hold in his praise and just let it out. This was the spark that caused the entire assembly to raise their hands and shout out loud their praises to God. Then, with reverence, they bowed down on the ground before the Lord and worshipped Him.
- d. Ezra read the Book of the Law, and the Levites who accompanied him explained what was written to the people. It was a massive joint effort to read the entire Law to the people and make sure that everyone understood exactly what was written. This is why it took so long.

2. *Application*

- a. The application is clear – we need to engage in reading our Bibles. We need to dive deep into the Scriptures themselves and understand exactly what they say.
- b. We need to abandon this idea of learning “life lessons” from the Bible. The Bible was written with specific content by a specific author for a specific audience. We need to dive deep into the texts and find out their original meanings, and then we need to learn the universal truths therein, so that we might live and abide by them.

C. Verses 8:9-12

1. *Explanation*

- a. Nehemiah finally joins the party in verse 9. Nehemiah was the governor of the people, and he had been put in charge by the king. However, Nehemiah understood his place was to govern the people, not to lead the instruction of the Book of the Law to the people. We all have our roles we must play, and not all roles are inside the church walls. Play your part well, and do not get in the way of the role of other people. If everyone plays their part, then God moves in a mighty way.
- b. Ezra and the Levites had successfully explained the entire law of Moses to the people, which is an incredible feat in light of the fact that the lack of understanding of the word of God led directly to the enslavement of the Israelites. The lack of understanding of the word of God is what led the Israelites to sin against God, thereby causing the exile from their homeland.
- c. Verse 12 tells us that all the people now understood the words of the Law that had just been read to them.
- d. The next step in the process was for the Israelites to have a meal together. The aspect of a communal meal, as we discussed last week, plays a bigger role in the word of God than I ever imagined before doing this doctoral research. The communal meal is a way of allowing the community of God to come together and gel as a family unit.

2. *Illustration*

- a. My family get-togethers are great because of the incredible community aspect of my family. Even in this place my family makes up most of the participants in this room. We have communed together so many times that we have gelled together in such a way that we can never be broken apart, and that is exactly what God wants for each of us in this room this evening.

3. *Application*

- a. We need to embrace the reading and comprehension of the Bible together. We need to make sure that everyone understands the words that are written in this book. And we need to have Christian fellowship over a meal, because it brings us together in a family atmosphere that allows love to flow over, in, and through all of us, and it ushers in the joy of the Lord, which is our strength.

II. Dismissal Prayer (30 seconds)

1 Corinthians 14:24-40

I. Lesson on 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 (30 minutes)

A. Verses 26-33a

1. *Explanation*

- a. Church needs to be orderly. Paul is not saying that the church cannot operate in the gifts of the Spirit, because he emphasizes the fact that he operates in the gifts of the Spirit and speaks in tongues more than everybody else does. However, Paul is telling the Corinthian church to get themselves under control because things have gotten out of hand in their services.
- b. 2-3 Prophets and 2-3 Tongues. Not everybody needs to talk. In fact, most people need to keep their mouths shut. **THE WOMEN NEED TO BE SILENT.** Haha! I am going to explain that little conundrum in a moment, and it is good news for the women, so please stop plotting my murder.
- c. What is prophecy? Prophecy, according to this chapter in 1 Corinthians, is God speaking through an individual with a message to the church. God does not necessarily speak to this individual in an audible voice, but He impresses a message onto their hearts, and this message is to be spoken to the church. Anyone with a prophecy from God is in complete control of their minds, and they do not go into a trance or anything like that. Order must still be maintained even though God has spoken to you. When the time is appropriate, you can give the prophecy.
- d. What is speaking in tongues? Speaking in tongues, according to this chapter in 1 Corinthians, is speaking mysteries by the Spirit, and speaking in tongues is directed to God, not to the church.
- e. What is the difference in speaking in tongues to oneself and speaking in tongues to the entire church? According to the Scriptures, there are two separate kinds of “speaking in tongues.” The first kind is where you speak in tongues to yourself, and this is the kind of speaking in tongues Paul was talking about when he said he spoke in tongues more than anybody else. The second kind is where you give a message in tongues to the church, and someone else interprets this message. Paul advises to refrain from speaking in tongues in public because of the confusing nature of it. He says it is infinitely better to prophesy in public and to speak in tongues in private.
- f. The key to this passage is this – prophecy and speaking in tongues are biblical and necessary, and they should be practiced by every believer, but prophecy and speaking in tongues should never take away from the decency and orderliness of God’s presence.

2. *Illustration*

- a. An orderly business meeting vs. a disorderly business meeting.

3. *Application*

- a. Church services should always be orderly.

B. Verses 33b-35

1. *Explanation*

- a. The format of the Corinthian church was in all likelihood fashioned after the synagogue layout, which separated the men and the women into groups. The men sat on one side and the women sat on the other side.
- b. What seems to have been going on was the fact that many of the wives had gotten into the habit of calling out to their husbands to explain
- c. This does not mean women cannot speak in church. It means women need to quit speaking in church while the service is going on, which is the same for everyone else.

C. Verses 36-40

1. *Explanation*

- a. These verses provide a summary for what Paul has been saying. Order can be verified throughout the word of God. We can clearly see the order in creation as well as the order of the human body and the human mind. Romans 1:20 KJV says, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”
- b. We can clearly see how complex reality is, but there is also the most amazing logic and order to our universe and our existence. Therefore, just like the order we see in our universe, in our bodies, and in our minds, we need to have order in our spiritual gatherings as well.
- c. The entire body of Christ should desire to prophecy and speak in tongues, but not at the expense of order.

2. *Illustration*

- a. I am Pentecostal, which means I have been in a few crazy services. I have heard cussing in the altar service (more than once), I have heard infidelity praised from the pulpit, and I have been injured in a “healing service.”

3. *Application*

- a. Let us have some church – but keep it biblical.

II. Survey and Interviews (30 minutes)

III. Prayer (30 seconds)

APPENDIX B

Worship Surveys

Worship Survey

1. In Exodus 24, who could come near the Lord and worship Him?
 - a. Moses.
 - b. Moses and Aaron.
 - c. Moses and Joshua.
 - d. Moses, Aaron, and Joshua.
 - e. Moses and all the elders of Israel (which includes Aaron and Joshua).
 - f. All of Israel.
 - g. All peoples of the Earth.

2. What was the physical sign of the covenant between God and Israel?
 - a. The Ten Commandments.
 - b. The sacrificial system.
 - c. The Law of Moses.
 - d. Blood.
 - e. Worship.
 - f. The Exodus.
 - g. The Bible.

3. Where was the initial blood applied after God made a covenant with Israel?
 - a. It was discarded.
 - b. The people.
 - c. Between two birds.
 - d. There was so much sacrifice that it made rivers of blood flow from the mountain.

- e. There was no blood because sacrifice came after the covenant.
 - f. Half against the altar and half over the people.
 - g. In bowls.
 - h. The altar.
4. What common act often accompanied the formality of the major worship ceremonies?
- a. A celebration.
 - b. Silence.
 - c. Fellowship.
 - d. Food.
 - e. Singing.
5. What was Ezra?
- a. A priest.
 - b. A scribe.
 - c. A priest and a scribe.
 - d. A Levite.
 - e. A Pharisee.
 - f. A doctor.
6. What did Ezra do for the Israelites after the wall was rebuilt around Jerusalem?
- a. He prayed the prayer found in Nehemiah 8.
 - b. He preached the sermon found in Nehemiah 8.
 - c. He read the scrolls.
 - d. He condemned them.
 - e. He prophesied.
7. Who was Nehemiah?
- a. A priest.
 - b. A scribe.

- c. The governor.
 - d. The king.
 - e. A Levite.
8. According to 1 Corinthians 14, what builds up the church?
- a. Church services.
 - b. Unity in the body of Christ.
 - c. Fellowship.
 - d. Prophecy.
 - e. Worship.
9. At most, how many prophets can speak in a church meeting?
- a. 1.
 - b. 2.
 - c. 3.
 - d. 4.
 - e. 5.
10. When a person speaks in tongues, they speak _____ by the Spirit.
- a. Knowledge.
 - b. Wisdom.
 - c. Understanding.
 - d. Mysteries.
 - e. Another language.
 - f. A heavenly language.
11. According to 1 Corinthians 14, every _____ has meaning.
- a. Prophecy.
 - b. Bible verse.
 - c. Breath.
 - d. Person.

- e. Language.
- f. Minister.

12. Speaking in Tongues builds up _____.

- a. The Church.
- b. The speaker.
- c. The preacher.
- d. The interpreter.
- e. The people listening, including the speaker.

13. What is the emphasis of 1 Corinthians 14?

- a. Peace.
- b. Love.
- c. Order.
- d. Tongues.
- e. Prophecy.
- f. Both d and e.

14. Speaking in Tongues is directed to _____.

- a. The Church.
- b. People who understand what is said.
- c. God.
- d. The speaker.

15. What did God do with the elders of Israel after the covenant ceremony in Exodus 24?

- a. He allowed them to worship Him.
- b. He gave them the Ten Commandments.
- c. He blessed them.
- d. They all ate supper together.
- e. He appointed them as Israel's leaders.

16. What did the Israelites do when they heard Ezra read the Instruction of the Lord?
- a. They rejoiced.
 - b. They cried.
 - c. They ripped their clothes and put on sack cloth and ashes.
 - d. They worshipped the Lord.
 - e. They ridiculed Ezra.
17. True or False: Listening to the reading of the Bible as a church is worship.
- a. True.
 - b. False.
18. True or False: Eating a meal together as a church can be worship.
- a. True.
 - b. False.
19. True or False: Speaking in Tongues builds up the church.
- a. True.
 - b. False.
20. True or False: Prophecy builds up the church.
- a. True.
 - b. False.
21. True or False: Nehemiah also read to the Israelites from the Instruction of the Lord.
- a. True.
 - b. False.

22. What was the strength the Israelites from the Lord in Nehemiah 8:10?
- The Lord.
 - The joy of the Lord.
 - The presence of the Lord.
 - The strength of the Lord.
 - The spirit of the Lord.
 - The word of the Lord.
23. How did the Israelites respond to Moses when he read the Law to them in Exodus 24:3?
- They said they would do what the Lord said.
 - They argued with Moses about the Law.
 - They rebelled against the Lord by building a golden calf.
 - They made Aaron their leader instead of Moses.
24. What connection is there between the blood in Exodus 24 and the New Testament?
- Animal sacrifice was required before the New Testament, but animal sacrifice was erased after the New Testament.
 - Blood was the life force in Exodus 24, and the Holy Spirit is the life force in the New Testament.
 - The blood in Exodus 24 is like the blood we drink in Communion.
 - Animal blood was shed many times in sacrifice, but Jesus blood was shed only once.
25. How was the physical copy of the Law for Israelites made?
- God gave Moses the Law.
 - Moses wrote down God's words.
 - Moses spoke the Law to the people, and the scribes wrote his words.
 - There was no physical copy of the Law made for the Israelites – there was only an Oral Law.

Worship Survey Key

1. In Exodus 24, who could come near the Lord and worship Him?
 - h. Moses.**
 - i. Moses and Aaron.
 - j. Moses and Joshua.
 - k. Moses, Aaron, and Joshua.
 - l. Moses and all the elders of Israel (which includes Aaron and Joshua).
 - m. All of Israel.
 - n. All peoples of the Earth.

2. What was the physical sign of the covenant between God and Israel?
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 - i. The sacrificial system.
 - j. The Law of Moses.
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 - l. Worship.
 - m. The Exodus.
 - n. The Bible.

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 - j. The people.
 - k. Between two birds.
 - l. There was so much sacrifice that it made rivers of blood flow from the mountain.
 - m. There was no blood because sacrifice came after the covenant.
 - n. Half against the altar and half over the people.**
 - o. In bowls.
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 - g. Silence.
 - h. Fellowship.
 - i. Food.
 - j. Singing.
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 - i. A priest and a scribe.
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 - k. A Pharisee.
 - l. A doctor.
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8. According to 1 Corinthians 14, what builds up the church?

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- g. Unity in the body of Christ.
- h. Fellowship.
- i. Prophecy.
- j. Worship.

9. At most, how many prophets can speak in a church meeting?

- f. 1.
- g. 2.
- h. 3.
- i. 4.
- j. 5.

10. When a person speaks in tongues, they speak _____ by the Spirit.

- g. Knowledge.
- h. Wisdom.
- i. Understanding.
- j. Mysteries.
- k. Another language.
- l. A heavenly language.

11. According to 1 Corinthians 14, every _____ has meaning.

- g. Prophecy.
- h. Bible verse.
- i. Breath.
- j. Person.
- k. Language.
- l. Minister.

12. Speaking in Tongues builds up _____.

- f. The Church.
- g. The speaker.
- h. The preacher.
- i. The interpreter.
- j. The people listening, including the speaker.

13. What is the emphasis of 1 Corinthians 14?

- g. Peace.
- h. Love.
- i. Order.
- j. Tongues.
- k. Prophecy.
- l. Both d and e.

14. Speaking in Tongues is directed to _____.

- e. The Church.
- f. People who understand what is said.
- g. God.
- h. The speaker.

15. What did God do with the elders of Israel after the covenant ceremony in Exodus 24?

- f. He allowed them to worship Him.
- g. He gave them the Ten Commandments.
- h. He blessed them.
- i. They all ate supper together.
- j. He appointed them as Israel's leaders.

16. What did the Israelites do when they heard Ezra read the Instruction of the Lord?

- f. They rejoiced.
- g. They cried.

- h. They ripped their clothes and put on sack cloth and ashes.
- i. They worshipped the Lord.
- j. They ridiculed Ezra.

17. True or False: Listening to the reading of the Bible as a church is worship.

- c. True.
- d. False.

18. True or False: Eating a meal together as a church can be worship.

- c. True.
- d. False.

19. True or False: Speaking in Tongues builds up the church.

- c. True.
- d. False.

20. True or False: Prophecy builds up the church.

- c. True.
- d. False.

21. True or False: Nehemiah also read to the Israelites from the Instruction of the Lord.

- c. True.
- d. False.

22. What was the strength the Israelites from the Lord in Nehemiah 8:10?

- g. The Lord.
- h. The joy of the Lord.**
- i. The presence of the Lord.
- j. The strength of the Lord.
- k. The spirit of the Lord.
- l. The word of the Lord.

23. How did the Israelites respond to Moses when he read the Law to them in Exodus 24:3?

- e. They said they would do what the Lord said.**
- f. They argued with Moses about the Law.
- g. They rebelled against the Lord by building a golden calf.
- h. They made Aaron their leader instead of Moses.

24. What connection is there between the blood in Exodus 24 and the New Testament?

- e. Animal sacrifice was required before the New Testament, but animal sacrifice was erased after the New Testament.
- f. Blood was the life force in Exodus 24, and the Holy Spirit is the life force in the New Testament.
- g. The blood in Exodus 24 is like the blood we drink in Communion.**
- h. Animal blood was shed many times in sacrifice, but Jesus blood was shed only once.

25. How was the physical copy of the Law for Israelites made?

- e. God gave Moses the Law.
- f. Moses wrote down God's words.**
- g. Moses spoke the Law to the people, and the scribes wrote his words.
- h. There was no physical copy of the Law made for the Israelites – there was only an Oral Law.

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

Opening

Overall, how involved were you in the lessons? Would you say you engaged a lot or only a little?

Lesson 1

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest, how involved were you in the first lesson?

Why did you engage at that level?

Did any extenuating circumstances impact your level of engagement during this lesson?

Did anything distract you during this lesson?

Lesson 2

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest, how involved were you in the second lesson?

Why did you engage at that level?

Did any extenuating circumstances impact your level of engagement during this lesson?

Did anything distract you during this lesson?

Lesson 3

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest, how involved were you in the third lesson?

Why did you engage at that level?

Did any extenuating circumstances impact your level of engagement during this lesson?

Did anything distract you during this lesson?

General

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest, how involved were you overall?

Why did you engage at that level?

Did any extenuating circumstances impact your level of engagement overall?

How did these lessons impact your view of biblical study?

Do you feel like these lessons will change how you study the Bible in the future?

Would you be willing to participate in another study like this one?

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IRB Approval

June 8, 2020

Cassidy Kesler
William Curtis

Re: Modification - IRB-FY19-20-281 Expository Teaching for the Braswell Church's Understanding of Worship

Dear Cassidy Kesler, William Curtis:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has rendered the decision below for IRB-FY19-20-281 Expository Teaching for the Braswell Church's Understanding of Worship.

Decision: Exempt - Limited IRB

Your request to add Stonepath Church as a study site for your research has been approved. Thank you for submitting documentation of permission from Stonepath and your revised study documents for our review and documentation. Your revised, stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the consent document should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Sincerely,

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