

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**BIBLICAL CONCEPTS IN ACTION:
A CASE FOR DISCIPLESHIP IN THE WORSHIP MINISTRY**

by

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Liberty University

A THESIS PROJECT IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES

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A Thesis Project in Partial Fulfillment
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of Doctor of Worship Studies

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative historical study is to examine the discipleship of the worship ministry in the local church according to biblical principles of discipleship. Despite the biblical examples of discipleship benefits, worship ministry personnel are often not included in discipleship efforts from church leadership. The leadership and the congregation alike may assume their spiritual maturity. The preaching ministry and the worship ministry are the most public act of worship viewable by congregants. Some worship ministry volunteers and staff may feel they are expected to have already been discipled and may be reluctant to pursue discipleship engagement. This study allows church leaders and worship leaders to draw from these processes of discipling when making decisions regarding implementing discipleship in the worship ministry. Through the examination of existing literature concerning discipleship and the local church worship ministry, this study will identify possible benefits of discipling volunteer personnel in the worship ministry of the local church, examine the challenges associated with discipleship, and make suggestions for the implementation of discipleship within the worship ministry based on biblical principles.

Keywords: Worship ministry, volunteer personnel, disciple, discipleship, lifestyle worship, Christian formation, spiritual formation

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Church leadership can emphasize the worship ministry in terms of artistry, engaging performances, and quantity that discipleship training is often taken for granted. The prominent acts of worship are the worship ministry and the preaching ministry, and it would seem the church leadership has assured the worship ministry volunteers have been instructed in the ways of Christian discipleship. The reluctance toward discipleship is indicative of the undue emphasis the church places on evangelism, with numerical growth of the congregation being the main objective.¹ Apathy toward discipleship made subordinate to soul-winning may be one of the leading causes of the church's decline.² Consequently, persons serving in the choir, worship team, and band may not be receiving proper teaching regarding what it means to be a Christian disciple.

While discipleship is a gateway to knowledge of what it means to be a disciple of Christ, it is more about following Christ and becoming Christ-like, a learning journey with Jesus Christ as the master teacher, and fundamental on-the-job training.³ Jesus's ministry conveyed "hunger, satisfaction, life, and service"⁴ and, He wanted the disciples to display the kind of commitment

¹ Kevin Michael Brosius, "Culture and the Church's Discipleship Strategy" *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2017), 125.

² Dongjin Park, "Discipleship Principles and Applications to Help Local Church Pastors to Become Disciple-Makers in South Korea" (DMin thesis, Liberty University, 2014), 31.

³ Stephen Cherry, "Discipleship and Christian Character" *Theology* 119, no. 3 (May 2016): 196.

⁴ Ross Parsley, *Messy Church: A Multigenerational Mission for God's Family* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2012), 61–62.

He made to God—to save lives by giving their own as He would do (John 4:6-7). For volunteer personnel, private worship must first be cultivated before an attempt to lead public worship. The more we worship the Lord, the more we are transformed into the image of Christ.

Worship ministry volunteers in the local church should demonstrate humility and modesty while avoiding self-righteous attitudes,⁵ willing to follow Christ, and commit to His teachings.⁶ This means avoiding having a haughty spirit. Therefore, worship ministry volunteers and other personnel must avoid the *entertainment-and-performance mentality* [Keyes’s italics]⁷ as well as prideful, boastful, and unforgiving attitudes.⁸ The main objective of the worship ministry “is not [to] *impress* people. It is rather to *inspire* their hearts to worship the living God” [Williamson’s italics].⁹ Although musical skill is a significant element essential to the worship ministry, “now more than ever, the church needs to continue to make room for God to move, live, and breathe in our corporate gatherings.”¹⁰ The apostle Peter encouraged the churches in Asia-Minor, saying, “just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16).¹¹ In verse twenty-seven of chapter three of his

⁵ Andrew G. Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for Worshipping God and Serving in Worship Ministry* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2013), 25.

⁶ Aaron Keyes, “The Worship Leader and Disciple-Making,” in Matt Boswell, *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 134.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Tom Lane, *The Worship Band Book: Training and Empowering Your Worship Band* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2012), 11.

⁹ Dave Williamson, *God’s Singers: A Guidebook for the Worship Leading Choir in the 21st Century* (Director’s Edition), (Nashville: InCite Media, 2010), 58.

¹⁰ Lane, preface to *The Worship Band Book*, xii.

¹¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *New International Version* (Nashville: HarperCollins, 2011).

letter to the church at Galatia, Paul states, “for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal 3:27). When God looks upon the volunteers’ daily lives, He ought not to see sin, but the righteousness of Christ springing up from within (1 Pet. 3:18).¹²

Statement of the Problem

Notwithstanding the benefits of biblical discipleship, the church administration often overlooks the worship ministry volunteer personnel in discipleship efforts. While some research addresses discipling worship leaders, there is limited research regarding discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel in the local church. Some integral members of the congregation are the worship leaders; ministerial scholars who examine such matters opine that music ministers are on the platform’s front lines, only secondary to the senior pastor.¹³ Unless the worship ministry is properly disciplined, meaningless worship will occur. Without discipleship, authentic worship cannot happen (John 4:23-24),¹⁴ but deeper instruction through discipleship may result in a rich worship experience. Therefore, worship ministry volunteers must possess a level of spiritual maturity. Moreover, the church is engaged in the believer’s transformation process from an infant in Christ to a mature Christian disciple.¹⁵

Noland asserts that artists, including himself, experience Worship ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). Worship ADD involves “lack of focus, a faraway look in the eyes, and the

¹² Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 53, iBooks.

¹³ Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, 94; Birgitta J. Johnson, “Back to the Heart of Worship: Praise and Worship Music in a Los Angeles African-American Megachurch” *Black Music Research Journal* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 126.

¹⁴ Ossie X. McKinney, “Moving from Performance to Missional Worship: Five Biblical Principles and Practices to Infuse Discipleship into Worship” (DWS thesis, Liberty University, 2017), 39.

¹⁵ Andrew Burggraff, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum: Applying the Systems Approach Model for Designing Instruction by Dick, Carey, and Carey to the Construction of Church Discipleship Courses,” 397.

impression that I'm not all there.”¹⁶ Rather than a mindless pursuit, Noland encourages the artist to engage in corporate worship actively. Page and Gray suggest that if worship through the medium of music is not focused on God the Object of worship, it is merely entertainment, worship void of any meaning.¹⁷ Robbins suggests, “Honoring God in worship, being challenged to spiritual maturity, and coming to grips with our own areas of sin almost become secondary goals when the focus is drawing people in with a well-polished show.”¹⁸ In many ways, the worship ministry volunteers may be part of the unreached group of people with stunted spiritual maturity.¹⁹

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the challenges associated with discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel, discover the possible benefits of discipling these non-stipendiary staff,²⁰ and propose models of discipleship for the worship ministry in the local church. At this stage in the research, the notion of discipling volunteers serving in the worship ministry is shepherding ministry volunteer personnel in the attitudes, teachings, and lifestyle worship evident in the life of Jesus Christ situated in the faith community.²¹ These concepts address the

¹⁶ Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 46.

¹⁷ Frank Page and Lavon Gray, *Hungry for Worship: Challenges and Solutions for Today's Church* (Birmingham: New Hope, 2014), 65, iBooks.

¹⁸ Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, 151.

¹⁹ K. P. Du Preez, H. J. Hendriks, and A. E. Carl, “Missional Theological Curricula and Institutions” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35, no. 1 (August 2014): 7.

²⁰ Williamson, *God's Singers*, 105.

²¹ Jamie Harvill, *Worship Foundry: Shaping a New Generation of Worship Leaders* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow, 2013), 55, iBooks.

importance of one's faith, not compartmentalized but demonstrated in their day-to-day living.

The spiritual objectives of the worship ministry are generally simple to accomplish: to honor Jesus the object of our worship, loving others, putting the fruits of the Spirit into practice, demonstrating a firm honorable nature, cultivating right worship, and existing as persons exhibiting lifestyle worship in a very hostile world.²² As Christian disciples, one must put on the wisdom and understanding of Christ to know and do His will, acting in Godliness, kindness, love, and goodness. As disciples, believers have inherited Christ's goodness. Therefore, to exhibit Christ's goodness, the believer must be broken of themselves, including wrong attitudes, selfishness, self-sufficiency, and other sinful patterns. As disciples of Christ, one must also be Godly in their witness. Volunteers as sanctified and baptized believers are blessed with moral excellence and Christ's goodness enabling them to live above reproach privately and publicly.

Significance of the Study

This research project's topic is necessary for volunteers' on-going spiritual formation and a solid foundation for the worship ministry. The study's examination of the benefits, challenges, and suggestions for implementing discipleship will prove valuable to the local worship ministry. The study explores how the local worship ministry may benefit from discipleship. Any number of things may hinder spiritual growth in the worship ministry. Therefore, this study will include a focus on the need for discipleship in the worship ministry. Teaching discipleship in the worship ministry will yield a God-centered, more profound worship experience. The church is responsible for three primary activities: evangelism, teaching, and worship.²³ This study allows

²² Calvin M. Johansson, *Discipling Music Ministry: Twenty-First Century Directions* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 8.

²³ *Ibid.*, 15-18.

church leaders and worship leaders to draw from these methods of discipling when making decisions regarding the implementation of a discipleship process in the worship ministry.

Dr. Ossie McKinney's study focused on the worship ministry in missional worship through outreach in the form of *evangelism*—heeding Christ's instructions to go and make disciples (Matt. 28:19-20). Evangelism challenges the unsaved to yield to God and respond in gracious submission to the mercies of Christ.²⁴ Dr. McKinney sought to establish a comprehensive basis for advancing God's directive of missional worship, thereby offering a biblical analysis of training choir members in discipleship and spiritual formation. She gives attention to the disconnect between discipleship and missional worship.²⁵ She does make a good point regarding one's commitment to accountability toward realizing a personal spiritual transformation (39). She concludes that worshipping choir members are disciples who demonstrate love for others when they follow the Great Commission by making other disciples in God's image while living as one faith community (7).

Dr. Jeremy Sauskojus's study describes the need for a worship pedagogy as a component of small groups. His research focuses on nurturing the participants' spiritual needs to build a community. Dr. Sauskojus's observations, analysis, and documentation of small groups attest to the validity of acknowledging and addressing the personal spiritual needs of each participant.²⁶ He dispels the myth of a specialized calling to discipleship, as every believer has a call to discipleship.

²⁴ David G. Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 187.

²⁵ McKinney, "Moving from Performance to Missional Worship," 12.

²⁶ Jeremy G. Sauskojus, "Incorporating a Pedagogy of Worship in the Community Group Ministry of Grace Bible Church" (DWS thesis, Liberty University, 2019), 112.

Dr. Matthew Younger's study outlines a focused model of discipleship employed by The Village Church in Dallas, TX. The discipleship model included a framework for researching and identifying a disciple's qualities: *worship* with faithful obedience, *community*—communal unity, *service* (serving others with humility), and multiplication (making replicates of Jesus Christ). Dr. Younger points to the life experience deficits of leaders of various ministries and a need for strategic discipleship. The surveys assessed personal discipleship practices among a sample group and the degree to which each participant understood discipleship's significance and process. He notes, "The incarnational advantage sought to equip members to bring the gospel to bear in their spheres of life: home, neighborhood, workplace, etc."²⁷

McKinney, Sauskojus, and Younger's studies focus on discipling in the faith community. While McKinney believes there is no need for formal instruction in discipleship, Sauskojus's research points to evidence that supports a pedagogical approach to discipleship in the faith community. Younger's study sought to evaluate the current discipleship practices of a local congregation. Based on the assessment, the leadership prioritized the development of an effective discipleship process. Younger advocates lifestyle worship as a product of holistic discipleship, one that encourages believers to share and live out the Gospel in all aspects of daily life (4).

Research Questions

Addressed in this study are the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?

²⁷ Matthew A. Younger, "Creating a Model for Personal and Proactive Discipleship at the Village Church in Dallas, Texas" (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 4.

Research Question 2: What are the benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?

Research Question 3: What are some strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?

The core concept at the center of this study is the benefits of discipling the worship ministry volunteers in the local church. The challenges are another aspect of this study, and these may include unconscious patterns of behavior, time considerations, and accessible training in discipleship. Often discipleship is thought of as a means of teaching a new believer to follow Christ. However, many volunteers in the worship ministry are leading worship but may have never been disciplined themselves. Haglund proffers, “We cannot expect people to engage in meaningful worship inside the worship event if they have not been trained and equipped, that is disciplined, to be engaged with God and what He is doing throughout the rest of their week outside of the worship event.”²⁸ Likewise, one could not expect the worship ministry volunteers to lead others in a profound worship experience without participating in discipleship training. This last point will undoubtedly need to be addressed before continued participation in the worship ministry because God intends to mature every believer.²⁹

Another area of need that goes together with discipling is biblical literacy. There appears to be a regression in Scriptural knowledge “among believers today.”³⁰ The apostle Paul emphasizes the significance of Scripture because “it is an effective instrument from God: (1) for teaching what is correct, (2) for reproofing what is wrong, (3) for setting straight the misguided,

²⁸ Kevin L. Haglund, “Worship Renewal through Discipleship: How Discipleship and Mission Affects our Worship” (DWS thesis, Liberty University, 2017), 3.

²⁹ Johansson, *Discipling Music Ministry*, 14.

³⁰ Burggraaf, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum,” 397.

and (4) for guiding in the way of righteousness. . . . to develop mature people in God who focus their lives in worship and service for others” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).³¹ The apostle adds, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church include spiritual maturity, a cohesive and effectual ministry, and a more profound worship experience.

Hypothesis 2: The challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church include unawareness of the need for spiritual maturation, scheduling issues, lack of commitment, and a shortage of disciple-makers within the local worship ministry.

Hypothesis 3: Strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church may be implemented by taking time during rehearsals, push-in strategies, or employing a discipleship curriculum for worship ministry participants over sixteen weeks during Sunday school.

Research Methods

A qualitative design was appropriate for this study because it explores the benefits, challenges, and strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church. A qualitative method is appropriate for this study because, according to Creswell, “it is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human

³¹ Gerald L. Borchert, *Worship in the New Testament: Divine Mystery and Human Response* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2008), 164-165.

problem.”³² The historical approach is appropriate for this study because historical research is an on-going discourse, a perpetual investigation between different perceptions concerning events in history, and between various understandings of the importance of historical occurrences, and between conventional ideas and objections emerging from new revelations about the past.³³ The emerging themes are the product of the collection and analysis of multiple sources, and this is the case with various texts and their subsequent phenomenon.

Definition of Terms

1. *Worship Ministry*: Joins worship and music that aspires to excellence in spiritual formation and musical performance. The worship ministry includes music ensembles, singers, musicians, directors, and worship leaders.
2. *Volunteer Personnel*: Those persons who are unpaid singers, dancers, instrumentalists, actors, technicians, or serving some worship ministry capacity. The volunteer is one who gives of their free will and enters the service of another.³⁴
3. *Disciple*: A follower of Jesus Christ and His teachings; one who pays the high cost of denying oneself, forsaking worldly ways.
4. *Discipling*: Instructing and guiding new believers in the theology of Christian living.
5. *Discipleship*: It is about instructing others to follow Christ or becoming Christ-like;³⁵ a learning journey with Jesus Christ as the master teacher. Moreover, it is a way of living.

³² John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 4.

³³ Edward H. Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Random House, 1961), 35.

³⁴ Julian S. Suggs, “Music Training for Volunteer Church Music Leaders” *Review & Expositor* 93, no. 1 (January 1996): 43, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

³⁵ Cherry, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” 196.

In the eleventh chapter and twenty-ninth verse of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus invites His audience to listen, share, and follow the lifestyle He exemplifies. Burggraff suggests, “Discipleship, then, is the process of learning the teachings of Scripture, internalizing them to shape one’s belief system, and then acting upon them in one’s daily life.”³⁶

6. *Lifestyle Worship*: Lifestyle worship is the giving of one’s self in service to God and others. It involves establishing a Scriptural basis that guides and structures one’s day-to-day comportment as authentic and Godly servants.³⁷ It is a daily pursuit wherein one offers relationships, motivations, careers, joys, worries, and fates to the Lord as one worships Christ.³⁸
7. *Spiritual Formation*: In Christianity, spiritual formation is “the process of Christian formation: being formed into the image of Christ”³⁹ involving deliberative intent, systematic training, and compatibility concerning external public endeavor and one’s internal spiritual wellbeing.

³⁶ Burggraff, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum,” 399.

³⁷ David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship and Witness: Becoming a Great Commission Worshiper* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2012), 106.

³⁸ Harvill, *Worship Foundry*, 55.

³⁹ Alexis D. Abernethy et al., “Corporate Worship and Spiritual Formation: Insights from Worship Leaders” *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 34, no. 3 (Fall 2015): 267.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that pertains to various issues related to the challenges associated with discipleship, possible benefits of discipling volunteer personnel in the worship ministry of the local church, and models for the implementation of discipleship consistent with biblical principles. The following topics will be covered: the call to acceptable worship, the need for discipleship, transformational learning and small groups, Christian spiritual formation, intentional discipleship, and models of discipleship.

Literature Consulted

The Call to Acceptable Worship

Worship leaders are called to be prophets, preachers, and priests. The prophet conveys God's message by His divine Word proclaiming God's message, we preach the message of the gospel. Worship leaders are called to priestly functions assisting the priest in his or her charge. God instructed Moses to appoint the Levites to assist the priest Aaron (Num. 3:6).

The call of the worship leader and mission in life is to worship God and Him alone. Lane notes, "our first call is to minister to The Lord. . . . It's not enough to play, sing, and be talented; we can be good, even spiritual, and still miss it. Holiness is the call, not the music."⁴⁰ God has called believers to a vocation of worship. Believers are created, commanded, and called to worship the One True God. God created humankind to worship and give Him glory. God

⁴⁰ Lane, *The Worship Band Book*, 5.

commanded us to worship Him with unrestrained love and reverence, and God called us to a vocation of worship. Harvill asserts, “Worship is meant to be an around-the-clock exercise. During our day, as we go about our business, we offer our joys, our fears, our jobs, our friends, our family, our wills, and our future to Him as we worship.”⁴¹ In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, God commands us to love Him with all our heart, soul, and strength—our whole being. In Psalm 100, “Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. . . . It is he who made us. . . . For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.” Psalm 100 is indicative of the extraordinary calling we have as worship leaders. It is God's sovereign will that we serve Him, giving, and commit ourselves to the Lord's service.⁴²

We not only worship because we are created, commanded, and called to do so but also because of God's saving acts through Jesus Christ's atonement for our sins. Our worship is demanded by God's redemption plan, foreshadowed when He commanded the light to come forth—bringing the earth out of darkness into His radiant light. We worship the Lord with our love, devotion, faculties, and perceptions.

The basis of biblical worship is the connection between worship, revelation, response, and redemption. Revelation is fundamental to worship in that worship is the response to God's revelation. Worship as a response is participatory, points to God and is transforming. Worship is the response to the manifestation of God, for He is loving, sincere, and affectionate, and because of His redemption through His Son Jesus Christ on the cross.

⁴¹ Harvill, *Worship Foundry*, 55.

⁴² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 537.

In Gareth J. Goossen’s article,⁴³ “Integrating Worship into Life,” he summarizes two characteristics of the kind of worshiper God requires: those who worship in *spirit* and *truth* (John 4:23-24). Regarding spirit, it is with an honest and open heart (10). Goossen writes, “We worship God with an open, honest heart” (10). We worship without pretense, as we bear every emotion we are feeling. He contends that truth has to do with integrity, a lifestyle worship that integrates “the reality of [God’s] spirit being accessible at all times into the fabric our existence, so that, over time, the threads of His presence intertwine and permeate . . . each moment of every day” (10). Worship is a life that mirrors God’s righteousness, compassion, and mercy.⁴⁴

Dr. Daniel I. Block’s work, *For the Glory of God*, argues ethical conduct in daily life in line with God’s will, is true worship—humble submission and reverence to God, “an action, a response; it is something we do.”⁴⁵ And true worship exalts the Lord, edifies believers, encourage God’s people, proclaims the gospel message, cultivates a servant attitude, and promotes spiritual growth through knowledge in Jesus Christ.⁴⁶ In this way, the sacred and secular combine so that worship expressed through rituals are secondary to lifestyle worship. Dr. Block suggests principles of true worship in Deuteronomy and Jesus’s statement in John 14:15, wherein He confirms the central standards guiding worship in the Old Testament persist in the New Testament.⁴⁷

⁴³ Gareth J. Goossen, “Integrating Worship into Life,” 10.

⁴⁴ Lane, *The Worship Band Book*, xii.

⁴⁵ Noland, *The Worshiping Artist*, 63.

⁴⁶ Vernon M. Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship*, 2nd ed. (Virginia Beach: Academx, 2009), 29.

⁴⁷ Daniel I. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 107.

In the third chapter concerning “The Subject of Worship,” he examines worship by exploring true worship as a requisite for acceptable worship in the New Testament, the early church teachings on acceptable worship, and application to the church today. The central argument concerns “the nature of the *worshiper* who appears before God according to God’s will” [Block’s italics] (56). The premise centers around perimeters for acceptable worship in the Old and New Testament and Jesus’s teachings. He seeks to define the qualities of those who worship the Lord. In a perfect world, worship occurs as humankind appreciates God’s creation for God’s glory and humanity’s good (58).

Old Testament ceremonial worship and consecration restored “Israelites’ access to YHWH . . . welcoming them back to worship” (67). New Testament authors applied contextual expressions of holiness from the Old Testament. Here, worshipers are called saints or those who are sanctified. God sanctifies those who worship in proportion to His will. Moreover, Jesus the New Covenant emphasized the heart of the worshiper. In the New Testament, God is concerned about the worshiper’s heart, as this is where acceptable worship originates and not their offering as cultic rituals. God desires the worshiper to display righteousness in every aspect of life. Worship here is “ceremonial purity . . . moral and spiritual integrity” (62). Ceremonial purity involves consecrated worship space, priests, and worshipers. Moral and spiritual aspects include clean hands, a pure heart, uncompromised devotion to YHWH, and fidelity to one’s words (67-68).

True worshipers believe in Jesus the Son (John 3:15-18, 36); they accept Jesus’s testimony (5:39), follow Christ’s teachings (6:68; 10:27-29), know the Father (17:2-3), do God’s will (17:21), humble themselves as children (Matt. 18:2-3), and demonstrate true righteousness by aiding the needy (Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 10:25-37) (Block, 75). The worshiper must examine

themselves (1 Cor. 11:28-29), hear and submit to God's Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17), remove things that defile (1 Cor. 5:7), keep one's temple pure with the Holy Spirit's help (1 Cor. 6:18-20), flee from sin (2 Cor. 6:14-18), maintain the gift of sanctification (2 Cor. 6:14-18), and live a life holy and acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1-2; Block, 75). Here, Block outlines principles important to lifestyle worship.

Block ends the text by examining how worship leaders in the Scriptures are portrayed (333). His exposition is comprehensive, discussing leadership styles, roles, and responsibilities of key groups and individuals in the Old and New Testaments. The discussion here is vital to establishing a biblical foundation on which those leading worship, including volunteers, may stand. He notes that Israel's downfall may have resulted from the Levites' spiritual declination (339), which serves as a guide for things to avoid. Moses's valedictory address encouraged the Israelites to exhibit fear, faith, and covenant commitment (love) with joyful obedience to God. Block's text supports a God-centered devotion to lifestyle worship, which benefits discipling worship ministry personnel.

Zac Hicks's *The Worship Pastor* describes worship leaders' role in terms of church lover, disciple-maker, prayer leader, theologian, missionary, emotional shepherd, liturgist, and more. The text also benefits anyone who is leading worship at the forefront of the platform. The perfect worship leader does not exist in any of us. The problem Hicks points out is the dearth of contextual and missional focus. He cites pertinent differences in discipleship and worship. Everyone serving in the worship ministry has a calling. The worship leader is called to meet a high mark that may seem unobtainable—the worship pastor, even in their calling, can lose sight of cultivating a close walk with God. One only recognizes this need in the failure of ministry and worship. Nevertheless, one must start somewhere, even if it is from a place of defeat. The call to

acceptable worship involves holiness, contrite hearts, and service to God and others.⁴⁸ Hicks asserts that simple worship qualifications include anxiety, disquiet, and displeasure within oneself.⁴⁹ From these humble yearnings come repentance and a desire to become more like Christ. Then one may fulfill the call with joyous submission to “the one true Disciple Maker,” Jesus Christ (245).

Hicks’s work emphasizes discipleship and edification in the context of corporate worship service and includes essential principles regarding the Great Commission and spiritual formation. The core of the Great Commission is baptizing and teaching. These two acts are primarily expressed in worship (63). Therefore, the worship leader as a disciple-maker is mostly at the forefront of the worship service fulfilling the Great Commission (62). Instead of feeding one’s ego, he admonishes the worship leader to teach the body of Christ, the community of faith. Whatever occurs during worship ought to be filtered by asking the question: Does this edify the body of Christ? This aid volunteers in keeping their motivations pure. Worship situated amongst “corporate disciplines”⁵⁰ plays a central role in the believer’s spiritual formation (64).

Hicks reports that “pastors have a high call, and one perpetual temptation we all face is to get busy “doing stuff” for God while neglecting the faithful cultivation of a personal, intimate relationship with God” (220). Discipleship happens throughout worship because corporate worship is a formative experience (64). Corporate worship cultivates an environment that is committed to spiritual transformation in others’ lives through the gospel. The clarity of the

⁴⁸ Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomson Nelson, 2009), 94.

⁴⁹ Zac M. Hicks, *The Worship Pastor: A Call to Ministry for Worship Leaders and Teams* (Nashville: HarperCollins, 2016), 241, iBooks.

⁵⁰ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998), 157-174.

gospel measures the transformative and missional power of the faith community (123).

Christians gather for edification and ministering to the spiritual needs of one another through the Word of God, prayer, singing, praise, and thanksgiving, and it here that “our private spirituality is formed” (68). He introduces what he calls the “twofold ministry of *loving God* and *loving others* (italics added)” where the worship leader in his or her role as a disciple-maker equipping others in the ministry to God and people (65). To be adequately equipped, a disciple must commit themselves to the gospel, as worship’s formative power comes from “the gospel of God’s grace in Christ to sinners” (66). Some Christians have been tricked into thinking they should leave the gospel’s good news once they have received Christ.

Leading Christian worship requires a theology that demonstrates an accurate biblical theology in our understanding, belief, and worship practice. Those who lead worship are responsible for “shepherd[ing] the congregation into the green pastures of God-centered, gospel-centered songs, and away from the arid plains of theological vacuity, meditations on human experience, and emotional frenzy.”⁵¹ Here we must continue to study the gospel to understand theology and a clear perception of who God is and how we worship Him.

Studying the gospel reveals to us the Lord Jesus Christ's nature. Hicks admits, “For too long, we have believed that the gospel is our ticket in to be left at the door as we begin the long road of discipleship. We have unhelpfully held on to the idea that the gospel is for people who don’t know Jesus, but once we have received Him, it’s time to roll up our sleeves and get started on the hard work of becoming a disciple” (Hicks, 66). Paul, in verse sixteen of chapter one of his Epistle to the Romans, proclaims, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because *it is the power of*

⁵¹ Matt Boswell, ed., *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 13.

God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (italics added): first to the Jew, then to the Gentile” (Rom. 1:16).

The Need for Discipleship

Dr. Timothy Keller’s study, “The Call to Discipleship,” notes a common problem within the Christian community—the need for discipleship. Keller seeks to describe what a disciple of Jesus is according to the Gospel of Luke: 1) discipleship is not a choice, 2) discipleship is a journey, a process, 3) a disciple is gentle.⁵² He also outlines three critical aspects of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ: a new priority, a new identity, and living a new kind of mercy. C. S. Lewis wrote,

Give up yourself, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favourite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fiber of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will ever be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in.⁵³

Contrary to the behavior of Jesus’s disciples in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, Christian disciples are to be wholly committed to the cause of Christ (Luke 9:23-26). Their identities become transformed into Christ’s image. They are unlike others who are committed to strange doctrines, constitutional creeds, or religions. Here Jesus is saying His disciples do not look upon others in judgment because they recognize it is only through grace that they are saved (Keller, 6). Jesus invites us to follow Him, forsaking familial bonds (Luke 9:59-62), and lose ourselves

⁵² Timothy J. Keller, “The Call to Discipleship: Luke 9:20-25, 51-62” *Knowing & Doing*, (Winter 2011): 6.

⁵³ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: MacMillan, 1960), 190, quoted in Keller, “The Call to Discipleship,” 7.

(Luke 9:23) on the journey. Christian disciples hold Jesus's atonement dear to their hearts, and therefore, conceit, prejudice, bitterness, and callousness melt away under the power of salvation. These changes in heart and mind are the transformation of identity (6). This source supports the transformative nature of discipleship as a component of Christian Education.

In *Go: Returning Discipleship to the Front Lines of Faith*, Dr. Preston Sprinkle reevaluates Christian discipleship according to the Bible and dependent on God's leading. Sprinkle questions current discipleship practices in the global church. The central question he poses is, why are churches not doing an adequate job of reproducing disciples?⁵⁴ There are several reasons for this phenomenon. Very few Christians engage in discipleship beyond Sunday morning events. Many have left the church due to the lack of discipleship; American Christianity is on the decline because it lacks biblical literacy, leading to the 'how' of thinking, which comes with Godly wisdom inherent in Scriptural truth. He cites the Barna Group's report on *The State of Discipleship*. He admonishes the church to reexamine its discipleship efforts relative to Scripture (168). Sprinkle concludes his text with advice for pastors, lay leaders, laypeople. Pastors and churches ought to implement changes to discipleship gradually. If lay leaders want to see change, they must humbly submit one suggestion to the leadership, do not become frustrated since people are not where one figure they ought to be (174), do not call others out in public and begin changing their lives. This book provides insight into the state of discipleship in North America and provides remedies toward improving discipleship.

Dr. Bridgette L. Yancy's study, "Discipleship as Understood and Practiced by Worship Leaders, Pastors, and Congregations of Selected Southern Baptist Churches," centers on the need

⁵⁴ Preston Sprinkle, *Go: Returning Discipleship to the Front Lines of Faith* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2016), 7.

for discipling Christians, lay leaders, ministry members, and ministry leaders. Dr. Yancy argues, “it cannot be assumed that someone with the title of a worship pastor is necessarily active in discipleship.”⁵⁵ Dr. Yancy’s study suggests that the Southern Baptist Convention has experienced a sharp decline in its effectiveness in evangelism and preserving their membership. The Southern Baptist Convention has experienced a sharp decline in its effectiveness in evangelism and preserving their membership. According to Yancy, “a decline in evangelistic effectiveness and membership denotes either a change in how the Southern Baptist Convention implements evangelism and membership or a need to change how they implement evangelism and membership retention” (5).

There were 26 participants in the study: 13 worship leaders and 13 pastors. Each cohort was given a different questionnaire. The research found that 45 percent of worship leaders participated in required discipleship activities 12 months annually. It represents a disparity between the number of worship leaders active in discipleship activities and those involved in music training. Seventy-seven percent of worship leaders are engaged in required music ministry training. Worship leaders reported that they “direct team members to discover their spiritual gifts and [ways] to apply them to their ministries” (57). This disparity suggests that worship ministry leaders place value on professional artistry more than personal discipleship. The worship leaders described various resources they use in personal discipleship, including the Bible (59).

Nine worship leaders indicated they are involved in discipleship, ministry training, or leadership-focused training outside their churches (62). These activities include volunteering with youth and civic choirs, attending college and seminary courses and worship conferences,

⁵⁵ Bridgette L. Yancy, “Discipleship as Understood and Practiced by Worship Leaders, Pastors, and Congregations of Selected Southern Baptist Churches” (DWS thesis, Liberty University, 2020), 3.

group Bible study, and evangelism (62). Twelve worship leaders plan to engage in future ministry training, leadership, and discipleship activities (65). The Southern Baptist Churches' discipleship practices set an example of a successful growth model for the global Church (100).

Responding to two types of discipleship activities available at their churches, the pastors included student ministry, small group Bible study, Sunday and mid-week corporate worship, and one-on-one discipleship mentoring. Yancy reveals that “ten out of the thirteen Pastors in this study . . . reported that their worship leader or music minister had benefited personally and professionally from all training activities. These training activities include discipleship, music ministry, and leader-focused activities” (72). Twelve pastors made plans to implement discipleship activities for their worship leaders. These pastors seek to develop their worship leaders' “leadership [skills], faith, and knowledge of God” (74). This study provides insight into the degree to which discipling practices are geared toward worship ministry leaders. This study indicates that discipling worship leaders will result in a Spirit-filled worship experience where “others will be encouraged to become disciples of Jesus Christ” (5). The discipleship practices can be altered to include all worship ministry personnel.

Andrew Robbins's text, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, seeks to identify biblical guidelines of worship for worship leaders and worship ministry team members. In addition to this, Robbins questions whether defining a worship team member's effectiveness should solely be based on their musical skill. Further, the text highlights other elements less recognizable in developing a productive team member. Characteristics of successful team members besides musical talent involve a lifestyle of worship: obedience and repentance,⁵⁶ an

⁵⁶ Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, 7.

attitude of worship—giving your time and energy as a sacrifice of righteousness, an act of righteousness (Rom. 12:1-2) (13), self-control (Gal. 5:22-23) (37), and private worship (60).

Dr. Michael Plank’s research study, “The Relationship between the Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader in the Local Congregation,” zeros in on the central question: does the worship leader’s discipleship make them more effective in the corporate worship setting? To answer this question, Dr. Plank described a common problem among congregations: the valuation of the worship leader’s professional artistry over their spirituality and commitment to personal discipleship. Another objective of this research project was to encourage church leaders to acknowledge the worship leader’s need for personal discipleship.⁵⁷ Two questions stood out as they relate to this researcher’s study’s critical aspects in progress: *1) What makes corporate worship meaningful? 2) What makes a worship leader effective?* To summarize both inquiries: *Does the worship leader’s spiritual commitment translate to meaningful corporate worship?*

Plank found that participants agreed that worship is more than what occurs in “the corporate gathering” (225). Though they did not distinguish between one’s worship lifestyle and the body corporate, lifestyle worship includes personal discipleship (225). Behavior on or offstage and professional artistry were equal requisites due to the public nature of worshipping God through the medium of music. Pastors admitted their tendency to disregard character deficiencies because talent and charismatic energy are imperative to the congregation’s numerical growth (226). The participants noted their congregation’s ability to discern the worship leader’s authentic and intimate relationship with God (227). Participants identified four

⁵⁷ Michael Plank, “The Relationship between the Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader in the Local Congregation” (DMin diss., Biola University, 2016), 26-27.

levels of relationship regarding the worship leader's role in the faith community. First, they believed a camaraderie between the senior pastor and an effective worship leader was indicative of solid teamwork (227, 242-243). The second was the worship leader's ability to disciple the worship team in spiritual formation (243-244). Third, the worship leader gained a new perspective, credibility, and influence by fellowshiping with the faith community beyond the platform (244-245). Fourth, engaging congregants beyond the church's walls through missions affirms that God desires relationships with His people (228+245). Instead of gauging the worship leader's effectiveness on the congregation's visible and audible reactions, participants learned to look for changes in lifestyle and increased volunteer service. Plank's research supports the current project but will need to be broadened to include the worship ministry team members.

Cost of Discipleship

Brosius, Churn, and Drissi discuss the issue of the cost of discipleship. Brosius explains, "Salvation is just the beginning of the Christian life, and what Jesus envisioned was not just a crowd, but followers who knew the cost of their devotion."⁵⁸ Churn questions the popularism of the 'prosperity gospel' versus counting the real cost of discipleship.⁵⁹ She concludes that discipleship is dying to self rather than revelry in glory. Drissi adds a disciple's qualities to the discussion, its conditions and requirements, and outlines a transforming discipleship model. She

⁵⁸ Kevin M. Brosius, "Culture and the Church's Discipleship Strategy" *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 132.

⁵⁹ Moffett S. Churn, "Living by the Word: Reflections on the Lectionary [July 15, 2018]" *The Christian Century* 135, no. 13 (June 2018): 21.

lists four transformative discipleship requirements: a loving commitment to God, leave the past, self-denial, and counting the cost (Luke 14:25-33).⁶⁰

Jesus has a habit of warning people not to talk up his miracles. Apparently he knows people will fall all over themselves to see some special effects. Not that there's anything wrong with being a Marvel superhero, if what you're going for is a big box office. But Jesus didn't come to attract an audience. He came to make disciples. And he still calls people to take up a life that, one way or another, has a cross deeply embedded in it. C. S. Lewis said, "Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead." Following Jesus is not about taking center stage or taking up a heroic quest. It's about a suffering God who bids us come and die so we can rise and dance to the tune of our true humanity. Is there a line around the block yet?⁶¹

Transformational Learning and Small Groups

Dr. James Lang's study, "An Evaluation of a Discipleship Process Addressing Christians' Inner Life Issues," describes the efficacy of the Aphesis Group Ministries' small discipleship process and the resulting transformational learning. The works of Mezirow, Argyris, and Schon, and Kegan and Lahey influenced the theoretical framework of this article. Dr. Lang sheds light on the emotional baggage and personal brokenness Christians of all ages carry before conversion. The problem the author points out is overcoming a myriad of emotional barriers to Christian maturity. The "discipleship process must be understood as a deep small group experience, not just a curriculum."⁶² The Aphesis group provided a safe community and environment where Christians can acquaint themselves in a trusting relationship with God.⁶³

⁶⁰ Drissi, "What Is Transforming Discipleship?" 224.

⁶¹ Churn, "Living by the Word," 21.

⁶² James A. Lang and David J. Bochman, "Positive Outcomes of a Discipleship Process" *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 71.

⁶³ James A. Lang, "An Evaluation of a Discipleship Process Addressing Christians' Inner Life Issues" *Christian Education Journal* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 275.

Weekly gatherings in a secure environment with others faithful to confidentiality who bare their inner-life experiences through Jesus provide a safe setting that exceeds the kind of engagements commonly found in other group Bible studies (Lang and Bochman, 71).

The transformative learning, as demonstrated in this discipleship process, is not intellectual but emotional. A key aspect of transformative learning is “helping people evaluate their underlying assumptions and attachments, which can be detrimental to maturing in their faith . . . helping participants face the pain and hurt in their lives with God beside them encouraging them along the way” (276). Coming to grips with their emotional scars was essential to clearing a way for spiritual maturity. Here they were able to face the hurt and pain of life as God guides them in the process. At the end of the article, Lang offers recommendations for evaluating and creating a discipleship process that results in a transformative change (277). Lang’s study addresses research questions one and two of this project—overcoming obstacles to transformational learning, a benefit of discipling worship ministry volunteers, and negative feelings from past experiences as a challenge to discipling. This transformative process grounded in “Biblical Christianity should be a powerful, life-forming, paradigm-shifting experience leading to increasing levels of Christlikeness” (Lang and Bochman, 51).

Dr. Colin Meneely’s research, “Transformative Learning and Christian Spirituality,” cites Moyer’s previous investigation regarding learning and sustainable faith in Kenya as one aspect that connects faith-based education. The significance of that study was the function that the study of Scripture had “in providing [the] opportunity for discourse, participation and encouraging transformative learning through personal development, [life-changing] values, and

personal empowerment.”⁶⁴ Learning transformation is characterized by Mezirow partially as a rapid, intense, changing perception⁶⁵ hence demonstrating an individual’s being and personality experiencing a classic “transformative shift” in one’s frame of thinking, prompting another character and associated manners (88).

Church-based curricular projects encourage biographical, constructivist, experiential, and democratic components in instructional practices. Pedagogy and theology are “inter-connected and inter-dependent components for transformation, with shared patterns of common experience and [a natural] foundation for learning experiences of sometimes significant proportions” (99). The church is an integral part of the Christian journey. It can “bring about Christian transformation: learning that is life-changing, whole life and lifelong for Christian discipleship, as well as learning that created growth in knowledge and understanding applicable to all areas of life” (96). Pedagogy and theology, besides increasing knowledge of learning gaps and adult-centered instructional practices in a congregational-based situation that decreases polarized propaganda frequently typical in adult education, also place incredible worth on lifelong transformational knowledge (99).

Meneely’s study puts forth transformational learning as a curriculum situated in a community of believers, ensuring a successful learning proficiency in an appropriate atmosphere conducive to personal spiritual growth (93). Meneely reveals that he has “observed over many years that in the right conditions there is a very close linkage between Christian learning in the church and the power to transform the lives of adults” (94). This study demonstrates and

⁶⁴ Colin Meneely, “Transformative Learning and Christian Spirituality: Towards a Model for Pedagogical and Theological Clarity?” *Adult Learner* 88 (October 2015): 98.

⁶⁵ Jack Mezirow, *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*, Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 21.

supports the notion of discipleship under the umbrella of Christian Education and its impact on the believer's lifelong journey in discipleship (96).

Dr. Jeremy Sauskojus's thesis, "Incorporating a Pedagogy of Worship in the Community Group Ministry of Grace Bible Church," describes the need for a worship pedagogy as a component of small groups. Additionally, Dr. Sauskojus's research focuses on nurturing the participants' spiritual needs to build a community. The research problem theorizes that "a local church fellowship cannot meet the needs of every member of the congregation in a single corporate worship gathering (or multiple gatherings) on a Sunday" (8). Sunday morning gatherings such as Sunday School and corporate worship by themselves do not meet believers' spiritual needs in the faith community (Sauskojus, 8; Brooks, 94).

Sauskojus encourages the worshiper to view and act out worship as an "all-of-life attitude" (116) rather than separating corporate worship and everyday living. He highlights two areas for growth. The first connects corporate worship to one's daily life and the second area adds a worship component to the Community Group Ministry at Grace Church (114). Also, Community Group leaders should create and implement a worship pedagogy for group participants (117). Second, Community Groups must intentionally cultivate fellowship as a part of worship (117). The author claims, "the small group should be a place where discipleship takes place, and an intentional worship component is utilized to connect the actions of life with the heart and actions of worship" (61). Sauskojus's research shows that discipleship through small groups in the right context edifies the worship ministry and its community of believers (61).

Small Group Leadership

Dr. Thad D. Harvey's study, "Growing Together: A Study of Christian Discipleship," seeks to develop a system for training small group leaders to use a discipleship process in a local church incorporating personal reflection, missional projects, fellowship activities, and Scripture reading.⁶⁶ The model will "help the participants grow as disciples of Jesus Christ and closer to each other in the Christian community" (3). Dr. Harvey explains, "twelve disciple-makers were trained during ten lessons in how to use the discipleship model, how to conduct healthy small groups, and how to form their own discipleship small groups" (6). His discussion on small group leadership ties into this research project because it supports the second hypothesis: a shortage of qualified disciple-makers as one of the challenges to discipling worship ministry volunteers (68).

Christian Spiritual Formation

Caring for the souls of others is one of the most important jobs of a church leader. Noland posits, "God invites us to worship Him, abide in Christ, and walk in the Spirit, not just for our benefit, but ultimately for the benefit of others."⁶⁷ Caring for others has a powerful and long-lasting influence on others. In this way, we are demonstrating God's goodness and compassion. Noland submits, "Everything that God invites us to do on behalf of others can be summed up in one word: love" (173). We do so by tending to their needs, whatever they may be. As we practice the spiritual disciplines, we encourage others to do the same, and the cycle continues reproducing more disciples. Also, they experience spiritual formation. It is the top priority of church leadership to promote the spiritual welfare of those with whom they serve.

⁶⁶ Thad D. Harvey, "Growing Together: A Study of Christian Discipleship" (DMin diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2016), 3.

⁶⁷ Noland, *The Worshiping Artist*, 162.

Dr. Ossie McKinney's thesis, "Moving from Performance to Missional Worship," seeks to establish a comprehensive basis for advancing God's missional worship directive while providing a biblical analysis of training choir members in discipleship and spiritual formation. Dr. McKinney indicates that the problem is a disconnect between discipleship and missional worship.⁶⁸ McKinney argues that worshipping choir members are disciples who demonstrate love for others when they follow the Great Commission by making other disciples in God's image while living as one faith community. She asserts, "Discipleship takes time and individual attention. It is not a program to be mastered, but a relational life that the choir member lives with others" (113). While the current research project focuses solely on discipling worship ministry volunteers, her research gives the bigger picture of fulfilling the Great Commission.

She surmises God's mandate to humankind from creation was to be stewards of the earth (114). Stewardship of the earth is a lost aspect of worship in this modern era. The garden, in all its beauty, was where humankind would intimately worship God the Father. It was God's dwelling place on the earth. Here, the singer's public worship is an extension of their continual and personal communion with God, not a performance offered to the Lord (114). Choirs trained in discipleship are equipped for service within the local community of faith, allowing them to minister in such a way that the song texts exemplify Christ's image reflected in their lifestyle (115-116). After all, "your life is your ministry . . . an opportunity to let your life shine for His glory."⁶⁹ The concept of equipping within the faith community substantiates discipling worship ministry volunteers in the right environment, in the context of family. Their worship of God is manifested in their love toward others as they evangelize and fulfill the Great Commission

⁶⁸ McKinney, "Moving from Performance to Missional Worship," 112.

⁶⁹ Lane, *The Worship Band Book*, 7.

reproducing disciples in God’s image while living as one faith community. Spiritual formation in the Christian community often refers to the practice of “being conformed to the image of [Christ]” (Rom. 8:29). We often think of spiritual transformation as an ambitious development involving deliberative intent, systematic training, and compatibility concerning external public endeavor and one’s internal spiritual well-being.⁷⁰

Dr. Steven Porter’s study, “Will/Heart/Spirit: Discipleship that Forms the Christian Character,” utilizes Dallas Willard’s perception of the human will, heart, and spirit to examine the role the human will play in Christian formation. In so doing, Dr. Porter analyzes the functional value and formation of the human will, Jesus’s will in the Gospels, and uses Willard’s observations to advance his conception of the human will regarding the spiritual formation and its development. He provides a novel way of thinking about the various aspects of discipleship. This study cites Jesus’s model of teaching and discipleship as detailed by Willard’s handling of the human will, wherein the will of a born-again person comes into agreement with the Father’s will.

Despite the emphasis on spiritual formation, discipleship, and sanctification, there are still misconceptions about the nature of being conformed to Christ’s image.⁷¹ To develop one’s spiritual core, that is, the heart, or will, one must first understand what it means to be conformed to Christ’s image. The basis of care or development is understanding (82). Disciples learn to follow Christ’s commands and teach others to do the same (93). Jesus provides an example of how to align one’s will with God’s will. Jesus modeled this alignment to His disciples. God then

⁷⁰ Abernethy et al., “Corporate Worship and Spiritual Formation,” 267.

⁷¹ Steven L. Porter, “Will/Heart/Spirit: Discipleship that Forms the Christian Character” *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 1 (April 2019): 79.

rearranges the human will and every other element of the individual. Porter's work provides insight into the causal relationships between the human will, spiritual formation, and discipleship.

Dr. Ouida Harding's study, "A Pilot Project in Developing Standards for Key Music Leadership Positions in the Black Baptist Churches of New York City," addresses how music ministry leadership is selected. Dr. Harding explains that church leaders choose worship ministry leaders based on "musical skill" rather than the candidate's spirituality.⁷² Qualities such as personal character, virtues, and talents are significant requisites related to the church's spiritual mission. Consequently, she believes the clergy in her local denomination select worship ministry "leaders who do not have a solid theological foundation, knowledge of Baptist doctrine, technical training, a heart for ministry, or a disciple's pattern of following Jesus" (1). When pastors ignore the spiritual qualifications of potential worship ministry leaders, their churches end up with a performance-based worship ministry, a kind of counterfeit spirituality contributing to an unproductive worship ministry rather than an empowering and worshipful ministry (4).

Harding proposes a set of *Developed Standards* for worship ministry leadership positions based on three distinct leadership titles: Church Musician, Choir/Music Director, and Minister of Music. With the help of local pastors, Harding designed detailed requirements for leadership positions. Her research gave pastors the language for a comprehensive selection of musicians. It enabled the clergy to discern the kinds of worship ministry leaders appropriate for their respective congregations. She recommends specialized training for pastors, worship ministry leaders, and musicians to understand the other's role in the leadership hierarchy. She also

⁷² Ouida Waltryce Harding, "A Pilot Project in Developing Standards for Key Music Leadership Positions in the Black Baptist Churches of New York City" (DWS thesis, Robert E. Webster Institute for Worship Studies, 2011), 4.

endorses the licensing and ordination of worship ministry leaders to receive acknowledgment, respect and encouraging validation for their positions as pastoral musicians (54). She brings attention to the spirituality of worship ministry leaders as a principal area of growth over professional artistry. Harding's study is vital to the current project. It presents a solution to hiring and selecting worship ministry leaders based on their professional artistry rather than spiritual well-being. The concern for worship leaders' spiritual well-being can be transferred to standards for choosing ministry team members. The *Developed Standards* can be objectives for the growth of non-stipendiary ministry personnel.

Rory Noland's work, *The Heart of the Artist*, discusses the worship artist's character and integrity issues serving in the worship ministry. Such problems may be attributed to the artist's temperament, and they hinder worship. Humility, integrity, and servanthood are personal attributes essential for living in any community of faith. Character flaws such as defensiveness, jealousy, emotional insecurities, perfectionism, and selfishness are disastrous to their witness as Christians and team members.⁷³ Christian artists need the church for spiritual growth, accountability, fellowship, and opportunities to serve (450-51). Noland calls the artist to humble servanthood and encourages them to return to the biblical model (456). The pursuit of "excellence is also a powerful witness for Christ" (175). Finally, there are several differences noted among volunteers and people called by God (95-96).

For Noland, the issue is the difference between being called to serve by God versus an obligation to volunteer (94). He provides a list of differences: 1) "volunteers see their involvement at church as community service, but people called of God see it as ministry, 2)

⁷³ Rory Noland, *The Heart of the Artist: A Character-Building Guide for You and Your Ministry Team* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 61-62, iBooks.

volunteers whine about what it's going to cost to serve, but people who are called are committed to serving, 3) volunteers shrink back from resolving relational conflict, people called of God seek to resolve relational conflict for the sake of unity in the church, 4) volunteers loon upon rehearsal as another commitment they're obligated to fulfill, but people called of God look forward to rehearsal as another opportunity to be used by God, 5) volunteers do no outside practicing or preparation, but people who are called of God come to rehearsals and a performance as prepared as possible, 6) volunteers are not open to constructive criticism; they get defensive about it, but people called of God are grateful for feedback because they want to be the best they can be, 7) volunteers feel threatened by the talents of others, but people called of God praise him for distributing gifts and talents as he chooses, 8) volunteers want to quit at the first sign of adversity or discouragement, but people called of God dig in and persevere, 9) volunteers find their main source of fulfillment in their talents and abilities, but people called of God know that being used of God is the most fulfilling thing you can do with your life, and 10) volunteers can't handle being put in situations in which they're going to be stretched, but people called of God respond to God's call with humble dependence on Him." In summary, those who are called by God are more ministry-minded (95-97). Noland (60-62) and Plank (226) write about character flaws & deficiencies. Noland (50-51) and Harding (4) talk about skills versus spirituality. Noland's *The Heart of the Artist* provides insight into some challenges that may be unique to volunteer personnel's discipleship. He encourages worship artists to observe spiritual disciplines.

The central question in Dr. Michael Plank's study, "The Relationship between the Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader in the Local Congregation," zeros in on this central question: does the worship leader's discipleship make them more effective in the corporate worship setting? To answer this question, Dr. Plank described a common problem

among congregations: the valuation of the worship leader's professional artistry over their spirituality and commitment to personal discipleship. Another objective of this research project was to encourage church leaders to acknowledge the worship leader's need for personal discipleship.⁷⁴

Utilizing the qualitative method and a grounded theory approach, Plank interviewed worship leaders and pastors to generate a narrative design of inquiry. The participants agreed that worship is more than what occurs in "the corporate gathering" (225). Though they did not distinguish between one's worship lifestyle and the body corporate, lifestyle worship includes personal discipleship (225). Behavior on or offstage and professional artistry were equal requisites due to the public nature of worshipping God through the medium of music. Pastors admitted their tendency to disregard character deficiencies because talent and charismatic energy are imperative to the congregation's numerical growth (226).

Participants identified four levels of relationship regarding the worship leader's role in the faith community. First, they believed a camaraderie between the senior pastor and an effective worship leader was indicative of solid teamwork. The second was the worship leader's ability to disciple the worship team in terms of spiritual formation. Third, the worship leader gained a new perspective and, therefore, credibility and influence through engaging the congregation beyond the platform. Fourth, engaging congregants beyond the church's walls through missions affirms that God desires relationships with His people. Instead of gauging the worship leader's effectiveness on the congregation's visible and audible reactions, participants learned to look for changes in lifestyle and increased volunteer service. Plank's research supports the current project but will need to be transposed to include the worship ministry team members.

⁷⁴ Plank, "The Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader," 26-27.

The effectiveness of the worship ministry personnel's discipleship (21) should be evidenced by their relationship with one another, fellowshipping with the congregation beyond the platform, participating in ministry-wide mission projects (226). When these interactions are established, we will witness a heightened worship experience because the congregation will see worship ministry personnel living what they sing or perform.

Biblical literacy

Biblical literacy is essential to discipleship, and several scholars indicate how important it is to discipleship. Some churches are ineffective about making disciples is because biblical illiteracy is high, even though access to the Bible is more significant than ever.⁷⁵ Sprinkle asserts, "Despite owning several Bibles and having instant access to the Bible online and through smartphone apps, Christians don't appear to be opening it up very often" (15). Michael Walters asserts that knowledge of Scripture adds vigor and wisdom that influences believers' personal and corporate worship.⁷⁶ Kevin Vanhoozer claims that God uses Scripture to nurture mature disciples transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.⁷⁷ Sprinkle and Burggraff agree that biblical literacy is most relevant to discipleship. Burggraff poses an important question: "How can one be a true follower (disciple) of the Savior if he does not know Christ's message and instruction?"⁷⁸ Sprinkle suggests reading Scripture affects *right thinking* and *right living*, as

⁷⁵ Sprinkle, *Go*, 15.

⁷⁶ Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday*, 204.

⁷⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Putting on Christ: Spiritual Formation and the Drama of Discipleship" *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 151.

⁷⁸ Burggraff, "Developing Discipleship Curriculum," 401.

discipleship is not solely about transferring information. Discipleship includes transformation—the renewing of the mind (16).

There is an illustration of how God’s Word encourages transformation: as the Lord commands Joshua, saying, “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (Josh. 1:8). From this passage of Scripture, we can glean three commands: keep the Scripture on your lips, meditate on the Scripture day and night, and practice—being careful to do what it says.⁷⁹

Scripture, not tradition, must always guide discipleship. Discipleship is girded by Scriptural authority. Lang and Bochman’s study illustrates the beneficial aspects of guiding others through a biblical discipleship process while promoting biblical literacy. Weekly gatherings in a secure environment with others faithful to confidentiality who bare their inner-life experiences through Jesus provide a safe setting that exceeds the kind of engagements commonly found in other group Bible studies.⁸⁰

Spiritual transformation occurs when we make the application of Scripture to our daily lives. Noland encourages worship leaders to “read God’s Word with every intention of doing what it says, and it’ll change your behavior.”⁸¹ Reading God’s Word is formational worship. As one reads the Word, he or she learns more about the Lord and begin to understand His nature and way of doing things. For example, when we read Psalm 119:9-16, we learn how to follow God’s Word. In verse 9, the psalmist asks, “How can a young man keep his way pure?” He answers the

⁷⁹ Robert J. Morgan, *Reclaiming the Lost Art of Biblical Meditation: Find True Peace in Jesus* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 103.

⁸⁰ Lang and Bochman, *Positive Outcomes of a Discipleship Process*, 71

⁸¹ Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 458.

question in the following sentence, “By living according to your word” (Psalm 119:9). God shapes our understanding of His nature as we learn to seek the Lord with all our hearts continually. The more we worship in God’s Word, the further we stay from corruption. Scripture reading is also formational because it “is based on theology (understanding of God), Scripture (God’s revealed truth), and doctrine (our belief system upon which we base our life philosophy).”⁸² Eugene Peterson posits, “Discipleship is a process of paying more and more attention to God’s righteousness and less and less attention to our own.”⁸³

Relational Discipleship

God created us in His likeness as relational beings placing “within us the desire to know Him, walk with Him, fellowship with Him, and love Him supremely.”⁸⁴ Wheeler and Whaley note, “A relationship with God is something He intended us to experience and enjoy.”⁸⁵ Adam and Eve’s relationship “is modeled after God, who does not exist in isolation but is a triunity, surrounded by a heavenly court.”⁸⁶ Park adds, “Jesus’s discipleship was relational,”⁸⁷ and the work of the Great Commission is also relational. The apostle Paul also practiced relational discipleship. When Paul was evangelizing, there would be at least two others co-laboring with

⁸² David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism* (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 79.

⁸³ Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 133.

⁸⁴ Elmer L. Towns and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship through the Ages: How the Great Awakenings Shape Evangelical Worship* (Nashville: B&H, 2012), 17, iBooks.

⁸⁵ Wheeler and Whaley, *Worship and Witness*, 79.

⁸⁶ Don Shepson, “A Scriptural Model of Relational Christian Formation” *Christian Education Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 182.

⁸⁷ Park, “Discipleship Principles and Applications,” 36.

him, mainly Barnabas. The book of Acts is replete with accounts of their ministry together throughout the region. Then there was Timothy, a disciple of Paul, and later his co-laborer.⁸⁸

Great Commission worship is relational on the vertical plane, as the Lord is our closest friend, companion, the one in whom we trust, and the only one who expresses authentic unconditional love for us. This bond, camaraderie, and kinship we share with God are the basis of relational worship.⁸⁹ The relationship we have with God helps us live lifestyle worship, eager to change the world through Christ's redemption. Here we are reminded that our calling is also relational on the horizontal plane because one of the most powerful tools in building relationships is serving others.⁹⁰ The cliché 'No man is an island' is timely regarding our relationship with God, for we depend on His divine providence, and we are strengthened in our commitment to personal discipleship. Dr. Conley H. Hughes confirms,

The church as a congregational system is not only essential for a believer's growth and maturation, but the local fellowship also should be a strategic environment for the development of strong relational bonds. Various branches of psychology, in general, have been instrumental in describing the basic needs of people and how the quest for mature development can be facilitated through relational interaction. Outside of one's family of origin, the Body of Christ is the most relational environment that will likely affect a Christian's choices, inform his or her values, transform and mold one's character.⁹¹

Therefore, as Christians, we are called to a life of service. The term *epistrephein* signifies giving oneself to the service of God and others.⁹² The calling of a worship leader regarding the Great

⁸⁸ Glenn S. Holland, "The Companions of Paul in Acts" in "Alpha: Studies in Early Christianity," ed. E. Bruce Brooks, Alvin P. Cohen, and Glenn S. Holland, special issue, *Early Christianity* 1 (2017), 127–33.

⁸⁹ Wheeler and Whaley, *Worship and Witness*, 72.

⁹⁰ Harvey, "Growing Together," 68.

⁹¹ Conley H. Hughes Jr., "A Discipleship Mentoring Ministry as a Model for Member Retention" (DMin thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2002), 24.

⁹² Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 167.

Commission worship is to service, worship, and ministry that will influence the saved and unsaved.

Intentional Discipleship

Jesus spent a significant portion of His time with the disciples because that was the only way to transfer His manner, message, and mission into their lives. In following Jesus’s model, “disciples are made through intentional relationships where we walk alongside one another, encouraging, equipping, and challenging each other to grow toward maturity in Christ. It includes equipping the disciple to teach others as well.”⁹³

Aaron Keyes describes the worship leader on an endless journey of reforming their minds and hearts to reflect God’s Word. Keyes’s work, “The Worship Leader and Disciple-Making,” encourages the worship leader to venture beyond leading songs and towards intentional disciple-making leading others.⁹⁴ Discipleship ought to conform to biblical standards. Keyes cites pertinent differences in the artistry and discipleship of the worship leader. The text concludes with a focus on the gospel—the reason the worship ministry exists. The gospel’s message boils down to three main concepts: God, man, Christ, and response. These four words give the impetus for Christ-centered worship, including songs that teach Christ and what He has done for us and life application. This book provides insight as to how better to shepherd worshipers in biblical discipleship.

⁹³ Greg Ogden, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple: Eight Sessions for Mentoring and Discipleship* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity, 2016), 73.

⁹⁴ Keyes, “The Worship Leader and Disciple-Making,” in *Doxology & Theology*, ed. Boswell, 138.

Models of Discipleship

In her article, Dr. Ani G. Drissi, “What Is Transforming Discipleship?” discusses the qualities of a disciple, its conditions, and requirements. Dr. Drissi also outlines a model for transforming discipleship. Four of the requirements include a loving commitment to God, leaving the past, self-denial, and counting the cost. Much like the early Christians, transforming discipleship calls for a radical approach to following Jesus. She proffers, “Discipleship is about challenging idolatries that try to replace God with human power and money.”⁹⁵ The Holy Spirit empowers and transforms the disciple so that the world is converted.

To change the world for God, the disciple must love God, deny themselves, abandoning all, and take up their cross. The Holy Spirit empowers the disciple to impact the world through the universality of the gospel, issuing a challenge to money and power (222). In the fourteenth chapter of Luke’s Gospel, Jesus sets forth the conditions for those who would follow Him. Those who would become disciples of Christ are admonished to first “count the cost” (Matt. 14:19) of leaving loved ones, things behind and of following Jesus. Drissi notes, “In the gospels, the verb “to follow” (ὀπίσω) always expresses attachment to the person of Jesus” (219). Here, the disciple is not committed to the Rabbinical Law or doctrine but devoted to Jesus Christ. A connection can be drawn between materialism (Drissi, 222) and the prosperity gospel (Churn, 21). Drissi’s article provides a framework for transformative discipleship, one that follows and is attached to the person of Jesus, reproducing others and destroying the status quo.

⁹⁵ Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, “What Is Transforming Discipleship?” *Ecumenical Review* 71, no. 1–2 (January 2019): 222.

Dr. Kevin Brooks's study, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," examines apathy and the lack of spiritual gifts in the church and proposes a discipleship model to solve the two issues. Dr. Brooks analyzes responses from pastors and congregants concerning discipleship processes, spiritual gifts, pervasive apathy, and its effects on church ministries' participation. He notes that focused discipleship is essential and recommends several models for improving disciples' development.

Some things that have affected discipleship include church leadership, improper discipleship, indifference, and lack of accountability. He claims, "The leadership in many churches has failed the body because of a lack of proper discipleship."⁹⁶ Therefore, "[some] church members do not understand their responsibility as a member of the body of Christ, and they fail to see the value in using their spiritual gifts consistently" (2). There exists "a lack of passion and desire among God's people to grow" (3). Some believers are satisfied with being 'pew members' rather than committing themselves to serve God and others. Brooks confirms, "Many church members simply do not want to take part in a discipleship process whereby spiritual growth is achieved, gifts are discovered, and then effectively used in the ministry" (3).

When church leadership stresses discipleship's importance and promotes the need for all believers to serve, then the church is a functionally effective and healthy ministry as God intended (3). To support the thesis, the author cites the apostle Paul: "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:4-7). Lane comments, "Worship leaders and bands should know their spiritual gifts and

⁹⁶ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 1.

how to serve the Church with them.”⁹⁷ There is a difference between talents and gifts. Believers gather to exercise the gifts Christ has given them for the edification of *the body*. Malphurs cautions that the church exists “to provide Christ-honoring ministry through people with the right divine wiring in the right positions.”⁹⁸

Brooks contends that every mature believer must put their spiritual gifts to use for edification in the Body of Christ. Several models are mentioned: Community Model, Missional Model, Neighborhood Model, Worldview Model, Lecture-Lab Model, Traditional Church Model, Attractional Church Model, Organic Church Model, and the Hybrid Church Model (100-106). Here the author selects the “Community Model” of discipleship because discipleship is the chief area where spiritual gifts are utilized (118).

The community model

The discipleship model in the early church is shown in the second chapter of the book of Acts. Jesus supplants Temple worship, indicating a new covenant’s inauguration because He replaced the Temple as the center of worship. Here worship occurred in a community at people’s homes in moderate size groups. Brooks and Cherry see discipleship as an apprenticeship—on the job training. Brooks remarks, “Jesus gave [the disciples] on the job training, and as they grew through the process, they eventually reached a point of becoming a spiritual leader seeking to make [other] disciples.”⁹⁹ Cherry confirms that discipleship is fundamentally on-the-job

⁹⁷ Lane, *The Worship Band Book*, 20.

⁹⁸ Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 97.

⁹⁹ Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 107.

training.¹⁰⁰ Wheeler and Whaley agree that “Real disciples are called to join Christ as He goes on mission to bring the world to Himself.”¹⁰¹ It is a learning journey with Jesus Christ as the master teacher, becoming Christ-like while following His teachings.

Personal and proactive discipleship

Dr. Matthew Younger’s thesis, “Creating a Model for Personal and Proactive Discipleship,” evaluates the local congregation's current discipleship practices, The Village Church (TVC). Based on the assessment, the leadership prioritized the development of an effective discipleship process. The problem is the life experience deficits of leaders from various ministries and the need for strategic discipleship. The surveys assessed personal discipleship practices among a sample group and the degree to which each participant understood personal discipleship’s significance and process.

Dr. Younger makes several recommendations to broaden the discipleship efforts at TVC. First, he proposes specialized instruction for practicing faith in the workplace.¹⁰² Second, he suggests additional training in evangelism through the Campus Outreach ministry (97). The third is to enhance small groups with a focus on discipling nonbelievers (101). Younger (103) and Sauskojus (7) recognize the significance of small group ministry to discipleship. Younger advocates for an external gospel-centered community evangelizing the unsaved. This study supports the current research project because it outlines a focused model of discipleship identifying qualities of a disciple: worship with faithful obedience, community—communal

¹⁰⁰ Cherry, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” 196.

¹⁰¹ Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 21.

¹⁰² Younger, “Creating a Model for Personal and Proactive Discipleship,” 97.

unity, service (serving others with humility), and multiplication (making replicates of Jesus Christ).

Cultural discipleship strategy

In “Culture and the Church’s Discipleship Strategy,” Kevin M. Brosius argues from a different perspective regarding discipleship. The church is suffering in the area of spiritual maturity. This phenomenon is evident in their quest to conform to worldly customs, seeking to draw the world through the proclamation of the gospel at the expense of a new attitude of mind as believers in the holiness and righteousness of God (Eph. 4:22-24). The first section deals with returning to the church’s original mission—to fulfill the Great Commission the general objective of ministry. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus is saying to be intentional about disciple-making and in teaching others to follow Him.¹⁰³

The development of mature, reproducing disciples is the Great Commission's primary message, and church leaders will be held accountable for this shepherding responsibility (132). Brosius declares, “The bottom line is that the church should be making disciples; it should witness new birth (conversion) and spiritual growth (discipleship) in the people under its ministry” (126). He points out two aspects of the Great Commission: “evangelistic and spiritual growth” (126). The author asks a poignant question: “How do church leaders go about reversing the declining condition of the church and establish a church culture where the gospel not only thrives, but people are transformed into mature disciples?” (132). He emphasizes culture as an essential medium of discipleship. Reaching others involves cultural contextualization. Jesus is the perfect example of contextualization because “He took upon Himself the culture of

¹⁰³ Brosius, “Culture and the Church’s Discipleship Strategy,” 126.

humankind” (132). In the second section, the author asserts that the church must develop a strategy for discipleship. He encourages churches to create measurable discipleship strategies. He proposes a discipleship assimilation model involving the Attractional Stage of Discipleship and the Commitment Stage of Discipleship.

The church needs a new disciple-making model for the twenty-first century to reverse the decline in attendance in this postmodern society. In designing the new process, the church must prefer the quality of its members rather than quantity. The discipleship strategy must be a process and system that is measurable. Brosius explains,

This process is often referred to as the assimilation process. The purpose of the assimilation process is to develop a flow of how Christians should be moving in their spiritual life and how they will function in the church during each stage of their growth. A good assimilation process considers where people are in their spiritual life and moves them forward toward maturity. . . . The discipleship process is important because it provides reason for the existence of all ministries of the church. . . . The process should be built to accommodate the whole church; from the children’s ministries to adult ministries, everything is contributing to the process of building mature disciples (134).

Any program that does not have a clear direction and purpose for developing disciples are fruitless and should be discontinued (135).

To experience the faith community’s advantages, people must find it easy to connect the church’s ministry. It is here that they have a responsibility to cultivate the right environment for the kind of spiritual growth that will equip members to use spiritual gifts “to carry out the ministry of the church” (156). Harvey’s research study supports Brosius’s notion of fostering an environment conducive to spiritual transformation. Harvey describes, “Some of the core components of Jesus’ discipleship are that he “taught the disciples (Mk 4:10–12), corrected them (Mt 16:5–12), admonished them (Mt 17:19–20), supported them (Lk 22:31–34), comforted them

(Jn 20:19–22), and restored them (21:15–19).”¹⁰⁴ According to Harvey, “Discipleship groups need to create space for people to be able to bring to light their doubts, fears, and struggles alongside their great joys and accomplishments” (Harvey, 74). Brosius believes churches must recognize that disciples go through phases of development on the Christian journey as they develop into mature leaders (156). He concludes the church’s future will not be determined by Sunday morning attendees but by the depth of those who are indeed followers of Jesus Christ, its disciples (157). Brosius places reproducible worship at the forefront of the Great Commission. Brosius’s article supports the need for spiritual maturity—the formation of a new attitude of mind as believers in the holiness and righteousness of God (Eph. 4:23-24).

Brosius and Brooks’ studies argue that church leaders have been distracted from God’s mission by programmatic concerns. Brosius posits that all churches at one time or another were passionate about evangelism and reproducing disciples. Then they got busy maintaining the organization’s operations.¹⁰⁵ Brooks proffers that church administrators have been redirected toward accomplishing other tasks while neglecting the church’s mission.¹⁰⁶ Both authors recognize that apathy also plays a role.

Discipleship and Christian character

Dr. Stephen Cherry’s work, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” describes an in-depth, comprehensive, and realistic discipleship model. This model is prefaced by the true nature

¹⁰⁴ Harvey, “Growing Together,” 69.

¹⁰⁵ Brosius, “Culture and the Church’s Discipleship Strategy,” 125.

¹⁰⁶ Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 92.

of discipleship—learning on the way.¹⁰⁷ From the author’s perspective, the problem with discipleship is that its goal is to follow Jesus and be more like Christ. Dr. Cherry suggests that discipleship is a learning journey (195). Growth for the Christian disciple does not necessarily occur through formal instruction but in community, worship, and mission (195). Christians mature in discipleship through their witness in the workplace, in their leisure time, prayer, and worship. Disciples are shaped and kept by their times of trouble and distress in addition to happiness. Prescribed Christian Education is an important, however, a subordinate function to the development of the Church’s existence through the study of Scripture, via opportunities to reflect on Christian experience preparing the believers for the ministry of service until everyone becomes perfected to the glory of Christ in heaven.¹⁰⁸ Cherry thinks, “discipleship is grounded in a mode of living that is open to learning from all observations and experiences” (193).

He refutes a condescending approach to discipleship, one wrought with wrong assumptions about the Christian people’s intelligence and self-awareness (196-197). He proposes a process that is a deeper, more progressive, sensible model of discipleship (196). He maintains that the virtue of humility is central to discipleship. It is characteristic of being humbly receptive to experience, acknowledging it as both infinitely fertile and considerably instructive. It is learning for a profound understanding of truth. The disciple is one who approaches learning with ambition and passion in a childlike manner. The core of teaching for discipleship is the ambitious and unquenchable learning to be disciples, which is simultaneously our spiritual formation into a genuine Christian disciple whose knowledge is freed and whose imaginative mind is entirely

¹⁰⁷ Cherry, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” 196.

¹⁰⁸ Church of England, “General Synod February 2015 Paper 1977: Developing Discipleship,” paragraph 19; Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary*, 1149–50.

alive (199). Cherry (198) and Keller (3) both refer to discipleship as a journey. Both authors also deal with discipleship as denying one's self. Cherry ascribes the notion of passionate humility to discipleship's process will propel the current research project's trajectory towards a holistic view of Jesus's teachings and ministry.

Greg Ogden's discipleship guides

Dr. Greg Ogden's text, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*, presents a study guide for leading small groups through the discipleship process. There are eight mentoring sessions, and each of them includes a core truth, inductive Bible study, other readings, and a suggested time format. Each lesson is taught in two parts. The first part is called *Relationship Building*, with a thirty-minute timeframe.¹⁰⁹ The second part: *Walk through the Study Material*, is sixty-minutes. Dr. Ogden points out that the problem is a need for a solid foundation because there was no evidence they knew what it truly means to follow Christ. There seem to be cracks and missing building blocks in the lives of some Christians. Many profess to be Christians, "but being a disciple of Jesus was not their identity" (6). The guide concludes with a challenge to adhere to the profile and teachings of a disciple of Jesus Christ. Although he lists eight discipleship points, he suggests a disciple's life may be captured under the following headings: 1) *Disciples join Jesus's life*, 4) *Disciples join Jesus's community*, and 3) *Disciples join Jesus's mission*. (109-110).

Dr. Ogden's most recent book, *Discipleship Essentials*, presents a comprehensive guide for leading small group discipleship. The twenty-five mentoring sessions are designed to span twenty-five weeks will include a core truth, memory verse, inductive Bible study, and other

¹⁰⁹ Ogden, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*, 10-11.

readings. The author points out the lack of a solid plan for discipleship that is comprehensive and provides practical application of the foundations for the Christian life. Ogden realized that if discipleship were a transformative experience, he would need to tread closely beside others for a specific period.¹¹⁰ This text is pertinent to the current research project because it supports a healthy discipleship plan.

The author postulates, “Reproducing disciples are grown in a transformative environment” that promotes spiritual development (226). This guide combines three features that facilitate the Holy Spirit’s environment to produce rapid growth: 1) the unchanging truth of God’s Word releases its *transformational* power, 2) *transparent relationships* where the disciple can let their guard down among a community of believers, and 3) life-change *accountability* holding one another to maintain personal and communal commitments.¹¹¹ God’s Word is powerful. Those habitual sins that are natural and rooted deeply in the soul, so to speak, are removed and severed by the Word of God, which is His sword (Heb. 4:12). The study concludes with an appeal much like Paul’s exhortation to Timothy to carry on multiplying disciples. Paul encouraged Timothy to appoint faithful persons for discipleship who are able and possess the gift of teaching. Paul said, “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul’s method was not programmatic, but people-centered (207). Paul further encouraged Timothy to use his method of discipleship by personally investing in the lives of others.¹¹² Ogden’s latest text

¹¹⁰ Greg Ogden, preface to *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019), ix.

¹¹¹ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016), 145.

¹¹² Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 206.

provides an alternative method for teaching discipleship to develop a stronger case for transformational learning based on the research. Further, his research outlines a strategy for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church.

Personal discipleship for worship leaders

Dr. Byron Spradlin's project, "Discipling Worship Leadership," seeks to establish a formal curriculum for training worship leaders in discipleship and personal worship. Worship leaders and musicians need to be equipped as spiritually developing artists. Spradlin places the task of equipping worship ministry personnel on the spiritual leadership of the local church body. He explains the dire need to equip worship leaders and musicians as spiritually developing artistic professionals.¹¹³ Church leaders have failed in their responsibility to engage worship leaders in discipleship. Therefore, few worship artists "receive adequate, intentional, and specialized worship-ministry or personal-worship discipling" (4). The main problem is that ministry personnel do not have a private worship life as a foundation for cultivating lifestyle and formational worship by observing the spiritual disciplines, influencing corporate worship (6-7). These issues "serves as a reminder of why a discipleship curriculum for worship leadership training is needed" (7).

Spradlin found five major theological principles of lifestyle worship. First, our worship of God takes priority in every Christian believer and congregation (111). Second, if worship is the central focus of corporate worship, we must address who God is (112). The third principle lies in the way worship is defined. He found that worship is defined as theologically and experientially as applied to life experiences (112). Fourth, worship is the value ascribed to a person or thing,

¹¹³ Byron Spradlin, "Discipling Worship Leadership: Biblical and Theological Rationale for Discipling Worship Leaders" (DMin thesis, Liberty University, 2012), 4.

and God expects to receive the highest priority as the object of worship (113). Fifth, worship is ultimately a reflection of who or what we love (113). Spradlin’s study supports the argument that the lives of worship ministry personnel must reflect the image of Christ.

Situational discipleship

Richard C. West and Dan Noel’s article, “Situational Discipleship,” examine discipleship models comparing them to Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Model to determine discipleship stages and critical biblical leadership roles. West and Noel consider the debate in current literature regarding applying modern leadership principles to Scriptural references. There have been limited efforts to clarify “the roles between leaders, followers, and overall mission of the universal (ecclesia) church regarding the practice of spiritual growth—also termed discipleship.”¹¹⁴ The conversation is broadened by introducing the five-fold ministry roles found in Ephesians 4:11: evangelist, pastor, teacher, apostle, and prophet.

The Situational Leadership Model involves a “leader-follower relationship necessary for spiritual growth” (101). This study sought to define the giftings of evangelists, pastors, teachers, prophets, and apostles and how each leadership role aids discipleship in fulfilling the developing needs of individuals longing for spiritual growth (97). Awareness empowers Christian leaders to provide disciples with the materials and tools that are most beneficial to spiritual development. Despite having historically similar definitions, West and Noel combined the terms evangelizing, establishing, encouraging, empowering, and categorized each to align them according to their usage in Ephesians 4:11.

¹¹⁴ Richard C. West and Dan Noel, “Situational Discipleship: The Five-Fold Ministry Roles of Ephesians 4:11 and Their Relationship to the Situational Leadership Model” *Feature Edition* 2013, no. 4 (December 2013): 97.

Biblical Principles of Discipleship for Disciple-Makers

Dr. Dongjin Park's research study, "Discipleship Principles and Applications to Help Local Church Pastors to Become Disciple-Makers in South Korea," advocates a return to Jesus's discipleship ministry that describes the Christian disciple's true nature. The problem is the Korean churches have experienced a spiritual and numerical deficit due to the disparate unfocused discipleship, particularly disciple-makers.¹¹⁵ Dr. Park provides an examination and illustrative application of Jesus's discipleship ministry that will produce the kind of disciple-makers needed in the South Korean congregations.

Discipleship includes all believers, no matter their phase of the journey, "so they may become more and more mature until Jesus Christ returns for His bride returns" (110). Park presents a biblical model of discipleship based on six principles. Five principles will be highlighted for the current research project: developing, growing, training, equipping, and sending. Peterson argues that Jesus Christ "builds His church through the people He provides as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers."¹¹⁶ Therefore, *developing* denotes training and equipping, which are the overarching elements in this principle of biblical discipleship (120).

Growing is to become Christ-like, where believers must be taught how to resist sin, therefore increasing in obedience to the Spirit (121). *Training* occurs through practicing spiritual disciplines: solitude, Scripture study, prayer, worship, fasting, fellowship, and observing the sacraments (122). Training refers to developing faith, as in *the shield of faith* (Eph. 6:16) —

¹¹⁵ Park, "Discipleship Principles and Applications," 2-3.

¹¹⁶ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 207; Ephesians 4:11.

unwavering trust and faith in Christ's redemption (Eph. 6:16) and His righteousness planted in the disciple, strengthens their spirit against Satan's attacks.¹¹⁷

Equipping: Christ has given the Church *gifts of ministry* to align the spiritual condition of persons who were separated from God by sin, thereby establishing, encouraging, and helping them so that in their appropriate position and purpose, they may benefit the body of Christ.¹¹⁸ Park explains, "The reason why all believers have to be equipped to grow is [that] they have to serve God and people and they cannot do that well if they are not equipped" (Eph. 4:11-13) (123). *Sending:* Discipleship is about missions. The disciple is trained and sent forth into the world to expand God's kingdom. In this way, we imitate Jesus as disciple-makers. Dempsey explains that "Jesus was sent as a missionary to the world to make disciples. He has sent His disciples into the world to make disciples. To follow Jesus fully means that you and I must follow His example and be missionaries."¹¹⁹ Park's study defines biblical principles of discipleship that will serve as a foundation for discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel. Also, the study illustrates one of the challenges of discipling.

Summary

Discipleship is not a program to be followed or relegated to the faith community's fringes, but it happens in a relationally dynamic community. Although discipleship is not a set of curricula for mastery, it is included under the Christian Education ministry's auspices. It is a process and personal approach, a relational one that happens while living in a community with

¹¹⁷ Henry, *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, 1154.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is...: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 79.

other disciples. It is the Christian's life mission, an entire reorientation of life, and ought to be woven throughout the fabric of all believers' lives.

There are many benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel to include the transformative learning theory. When paired with transformative learning, discipleship results in profound spiritual maturity. A critical factor in transformative learning is the opportunity to help others confront the damage and torment caused by their past as God guides and strengthens them along the journey. A second benefit gives disciples the environment, tools, and support they may need to conquer the innumerable barriers to Christian maturity.

Pedagogy and theology in a congregational setting reduce propaganda frequently found in adult education and place incredible worth on lifelong transformational knowledge. Discipleship is a lifetime endeavor, a learning journey, and on-the-job training with Jesus Christ as the master teacher, becoming Christ-like while following His teachings. Paul's words, "I die daily" (1 Cor. 15:31), reiterates Jesus's charge to the Twelve: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Robert E. Webber adds, "Continue to live out of the death and resurrection of Jesus by continually dying to sin and rising to the new life of the Spirit staying in God's divine embrace."¹²⁰ Thus, discipleship is the act of denying oneself, dying daily to one's desires in humble submission to God's will and mission. The notion of passionate humility to the process of discipleship will guide this research project towards a holistic view of Christ's ministry.

Lifestyle worship is a critical trait of worship ministry personnel must demonstrate. Without it, leading corporate worship has very little significance to God. The day-to-day

¹²⁰ Robert E. Webber, *Divine Embrace: Recovering the Passionate Spiritual Life*, Ancient-Future (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 319.

attitudes of Christian are a representation of worshipping God. These include reverence, communion, righteous living, obedience, trust in God's salvation, sacrificial thanksgiving, and fruitfully multiplying the earth are a representation of worshipping God. As the priests appointed to the Temple in the Old Testament, we must serve God and love Him consistently. In this way, worship is intended to be a ceaseless act. It is what occurs beyond the corporate gathering. It is inseparable from one's daily living and the body corporate; lifestyle worship includes personal discipleship. Lifestyle worship is a product of personal discipleship, sharing the gospel, and demonstrating qualities of a Christian disciple in all aspects of daily life.

There is an established connection between discipleship and worship. When the personal discipleship of worship ministry personnel is evident in fellowship with the congregation, there will be a heightened worship experience. Church members will see worship ministry personnel living what they sing or perform. Moreover, when worship leaders engage in spiritual disciplines, it positively affects their relationship with Christ and the faith community. If worship ministry volunteer personnel were committed to discipleship, then corporate worship services would be Holy Spirit-filled, and people would be compelled to follow Jesus Christ. Likewise, one could not expect the worship ministry to lead others in a profound worship experience without participating in discipleship training. Therefore, if worship ministry volunteer personnel are equipped, trained in discipleship toward spiritual formation, they will likely be more attuned to God's work in their lives while leading the believing community in a profound worship experience.

Some challenges to discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel include church leadership, improper discipleship, indifference, lack of accountability, misaligned priorities, conforming to worldly customs, materialism, low biblical literacy, focus on programs, and a lack of qualified disciple-makers. Others include negative past experiences, character and integrity issues, volunteer mentality, and strategic discipleship plans, favoring ministry personnel's musical skills without considering their spiritual maturity.

One of the challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers is a shortage of qualified disciple-makers. Every believer is called to discipleship. So, it is difficult to fathom long-time believers "have never been disciplined."¹²¹ This statement indicates that finding qualified disciple-makers even among the laity would be challenging. The disciple-maker follows Jesus and His discipleship ministry: building relationships and creating an environment of accountability with a servant's attitude. He or she must teach, correct, admonish, support, comfort, and restore persons being disciplined. Another challenge to discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel is that some see their church's involvement as a community service.¹²² Volunteers typically do not consider the ministry to be a worthwhile endeavor. They feel it is a perfunctory job with no impact, no Godly distinction or advantage. They tend to think it is something anyone can do.

The worship leader's professional artistry valuation over their spirituality and commitment to personal discipleship is prevalent among many Christian congregations. Churches often overlook worship ministry personnel's character flaws and deficiencies at the expense of their spirituality. They value professional artistry more than personal discipleship. Worshiping communities must have exact requisites for worship ministry volunteers, including

¹²¹ Haglund, "Worship Renewal Through Discipleship," 26.

¹²² Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 95.

personal discipleship and musical skills. Churches should be hiring and selecting worship ministry personnel first, assessing their spiritual well-being, and second, their professional artistry.

Biblical illiteracy is a significant concern as it relates to discipleship. It is one of many reasons some churches are ineffective in reproducing disciples. Even though there is easy access to the Bible today, biblical illiteracy is more significant than still.¹²³ To be a genuine Christian disciple, one must know and understand the message of the gospel. Knowledge of Scripture influences every part of our being. As one reads God's Word, his or her living and thinking are transformed and renewed by the Holy Spirit. Scripture declares, "the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The Word of God is the source of our Christian beliefs, which ultimately leads to what we do; hence, the importance of engaging in biblical meditation and memorization.

The church is returning to the communal nature of New Testament discipleship practices that are closely following Jesus's discipleship ministry. His discipleship ministry involves worship, community, service, and multiplication. Jesus regularly took the time to worship God the Father in prayer. He invested in a small group of men, traveling and preaching His message of salvation, and all the while illustrating how to reproduce other disciples. The major problem is that there is no discerning use of spiritual gifts to advance the body of Christ and God's kingdom and general apathy towards participation in ministry service. If discipleship is to have a transformative influence over believers' lives, then one must walk lovingly beside others for a

¹²³ Sprinkle, *Go*, 15.

specified period. While we should not treat discipleship as a program, we must have an intentional guide for reproducing disciples.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Introduction

To have a thorough understanding of a lack of discipleship among many worship ministry volunteer personnel, a comprehensive study of the topic must address discipleship practices for worship ministry volunteer personnel. Volunteer personnel in the worship ministry are often neglected by church leadership in their systematic discipleship efforts. Therefore, it is essential to understand that the notion of discipling volunteer personnel serving in the worship ministry is shepherding ministry participants in the attitudes, teachings, and lifestyle worship evident in the life of Jesus Christ situated in the faith community.

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to describe the challenges associated with discipleship in the faith community, identify the possible benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers and its impact on ministry effectiveness, and propose models of discipleship that contribute to the vigor of the church. Sensing maintains that “qualitative research produces culturally specific and contextually rich data critical for the design, evaluation, and ongoing health of institutions like churches.”¹²⁴ Based on the literature reviewed, the issue of discipling worship ministry personnel ties directly into the discipleship and spiritual maturity of those who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, joining a congregation, and accepting Jesus’s call to serve in the local worship ministry. This chapter addresses the method, planned type of study, research design, data gathering process, source analysis, and data analysis. These methods include acquiring data on interpretations and descriptive insights for patterned activity,

¹²⁴ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 61.

ceremonies, rituals, professional and casual organizational and social relationships, historical events, established behaviors, viewpoints and shared perspectives, and narratives representing central themes or interests in the study environment.¹²⁵ The research design type will be fully defined to include a historical summary of the design type, a concise rationale for the research design, and a description of the design implementation utilized to answer the research questions.

Research Design

The qualitative historical method is the planned type of study used to identify and assess benefits, challenges, and strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church. Therefore, this study will utilize a mixed-method research project. According to Swinton and Mowatt, “the most effective way that practical theologians can use qualitative research methods is by developing an eclectic and multi-method approach that seeks to take the best of what is available within the accepted models of qualitative research, but is not necessarily bound by any one model.”¹²⁶ A qualitative method was appropriate for this study because it facilitates exploring and evaluating the data collection.¹²⁷ Qualitative research is a method for probing and comprehending the significance of meanings attributed to a human or social problem by an individual or a group. This research method includes emerging procedures and questions, information commonly gathered in the local setting, examining this information using inductive reasoning working from specific themes to general themes, and the researcher interpreting the

¹²⁵ Jean J. Schensul, “Methodology,” in *SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M. Given (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2008), 520.

¹²⁶ John Swinton and Harriet Mowatt, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: Hymns Ancient & Modern, 2006), 50.

¹²⁷ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2018), 192.

data's meaning. A key aspect of qualitative research is certifying a holistic account by recording various viewpoints in deliberately choosing through an examination of source materials to understand both the research problem and research questions (Creswell, 182).

The structure of the finished research document is flexible. Individuals who conduct this type of study endorses a perspective that respects an inductive technique, emphasizes singular significance, and the importance of writing about an issue's multifaceted nature (4). The historical approach is appropriate for this study because historical research is an ongoing discourse, a perpetual investigation between distinct perceptions concerning events in history and between various understandings of the importance of historical occurrences, and between conventional ideas and objections emerging from new revelations about the past.¹²⁸ The emerging themes are the product of the collection and analysis of multiple sources, and this is the case with various texts and their subsequent phenomenon.

This project's research design is a case study, and the specific approach is an intrinsic case study. Case studies are a strategy of investigation used in several disciplines, particularly evaluation. The researcher constructs "an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals" (14). They are constrained by activity and time, and scientists gather comprehensive data utilizing a range of information compiled over a prolonged timeframe (14). The intrinsic case study "is the study of a case (e.g., person, specific group, occupation, department, organization) where the case itself is of primary interest in the exploration."¹²⁹ Grandy explains, "The intrinsic case is often exploratory in nature, and the

¹²⁸ Carr, *What is History?* 35.

¹²⁹ Gina Grandy, "Intrinsic Case Study," in *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, ed. edited by Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2008), 500.

researcher is guided by his or her interest in the case itself rather than in extending theory or generalizing across cases” (500). It is compelled by the researcher’s desire to discover the circumstantial characteristics of the topic as opposed to constructing a theory or how the case exemplifies different situations, and this type of case study “offers an opportunity to understand particularities” (500). As stated earlier, this project’s primary interest is the difficulties, advantages, and processes of discipling volunteer personnel in the worship ministry.

The process for conducting this qualitative historical case study began with the identification of the problem. There were three phases of selecting a research topic on ministry. The main topic of interest was discipleship training and the worship ministry. However, this needed to be a narrower focus. The first step involved a database search using the terms *discipleship* and *music, worship ministry* and *discipleship*, and other combinations. Second, the topic was narrowed to discipleship within the worship ministry. Third, the subject was further narrowed down to a more focused problem: discipling worship ministry volunteers. The database searches yielded many sources on discipling, discipleship, and discipleship in the worship ministry, but few focused on discipling volunteer personnel in the worship ministry. Therefore, the topic was now decided: “Discipling Volunteer Personnel in the Worship Ministry.” The problem is suitable because it is of great interest to this researcher, and it represents a gap in the literature on discipleship for worship ministry volunteer personnel.

Research questions and hypotheses were formulated for each inquiry. Then data was collected and examined, and the source material was analyzed for applicability, credibility, and validity (Creswell, 199-201). *Winnowing the data* is a component of the data analysis process that was used in this research project. It involves giving attention to selected data and excluding other portions, then aggregating them into smaller units of themes (192). Following the

winnowing process, an interpretation and analysis of the data were performed, which led to conclusions and recommendations based on the research questions (193-199).

Creative Intervention Design

A fourfold paradigm for understanding the theological nature of the project thesis includes 1) Theology as a communal activity—Faith relating to others, 2) Theology as a formative activity—Faith shaping identity, 3) Theology as a critical activity—Faith seeking understanding in practice, and 4) Theology as a public activity—Faith expressing itself in the worshiping community.¹³⁰ Theology as a communal activity would involve theological discussions that include diverse voices of all members. It usually involves participants; however, this current thesis is based on document analysis. Olson reports,

“Document analysis begins as documents are identified and/or selected [based on] their usefulness or relevance as data for the particular research. A parallel step is to validate the source and authenticity of the chosen documents. Knowing the source of documents enables the researcher to determine their likely purpose or intent as well as determine the perspective from which they were created. . . . Document analysis can provide a window into a variety of historical, political, social, economic, and personal dimensions of the case *beyond the immediacy of interviews and observations*” (emphasis added).¹³¹

This researcher has gathered various scholarly literature and documents, all of which use varied approaches to problem features.

Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What are the challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?

¹³⁰ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 10.

¹³¹ Margaret Olson, “Document Analysis,” in *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, edited by Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe, 319–20.

2. What are the benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?
3. What are some strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church include unawareness of the need for spiritual maturation, scheduling issues, lack of commitment, and a shortage of disciple-makers within the local worship ministry.

Despite serving in the worship ministry as a singer, musician, or worship leader, one may think that skill is adequate for their calling; it is not. The tenor, guitarist, or psalmist may not have realized their need for spiritual development. Scheduling time for discipleship is a challenge because ministry volunteers already dedicate a great deal of time to the ministry's technical side (i.e., band rehearsal, personal practice time). So, they may not see the value of nurturing one's spirit, especially during group practices. Another challenge is the shortage of disciple-makers in any given congregation. Here the issue is not so much about people being willing and able to disciple, but about community. Discipling must be done in the right environment, in the context of a family.¹³²

Hypothesis 2: The benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church include spiritual maturity, a cohesive and effectual ministry, and a more profound worship experience.

The church's top priority includes encouraging the spiritual welfare of those who serve in every ministry. Spiritual maturity is a result of childlike perpetual learning that is central to Christian formation. When volunteers receive guidance through discipleship, they experience

¹³² Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture: How to Release a Missional Movement by Discipling People Like Jesus Did*, 2nd ed. (Pawleys Island, SC: 3DM, 2014), 32, iBooks.

spiritual growth. Unity is the cornerstone of an effective worship ministry and is essential to its development. Therefore, spiritual maturity yields a worship experience void of an inward focus. It is directed to God, the object of worship.¹³³

Hypothesis 3: Strategies for discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church may be implemented by taking time during rehearsals, push-in strategies, or employing a discipleship curriculum for worship ministry participants over sixteen weeks during Sunday school. Gladstone suggests that rehearsal goals should also be to make better disciples in addition to practicing music.¹³⁴

There are two significant terms to discipleship: *system* and *process*. Stetzer and Rainer assert, “A system is an environment. A process is a path with a purpose.”¹³⁵ A system is the “how,” and the process is the “where.” The leading of the Holy Spirit determines the how (system) and where (process) of discipling volunteers in the worship ministry. Not that the Spirit needs help, but the Spirit must lead us toward a system and process of discipleship that will address the spiritual needs of the worship ministry in its local context. Churches who are serious about spiritual transformation must ask how they may create an environment that will empower the worship ministry volunteers to live as faithful disciples of Christ transformed in heart and mind.¹³⁶

¹³³ Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday*, 62.

¹³⁴ Graham Gladstone, “Worship as Team Discipleship” Leadership, *Worship Leader*, February 10, 2015, <https://worshipleader.com/magazine/worship-as-team-discipleship/>.

¹³⁵ Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 118.

¹³⁶ Drissi, “What Is Transforming Discipleship?” 223.

Process of Gathering Data

In the early stages of research for this study, a gap in the literature was found in discipleship for worship ministry volunteer personnel. Gathering data began with identifying, selecting, and reviewing relevant sources, addressing discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel within the local church. Schensul notes, “Qualitative data collection techniques (research methods) focus on data collection at the sociocultural (collective) and individual levels.”¹³⁷ This research was concerned with the sociocultural aspect because discipleship practices vary by congregation since social and cultural dynamics influence each church’s practices. Sensing argues,

Although biblical texts and Christian tradition address individual transformation into the image of Christ, predominantly, those theological resources emphasize the communal nature of Christian formation. Therefore, it must be remembered, even when talking about the minister’s development or a particular team member’s maturation, the individual parts are all contributing to the building up of the whole body of Christ.¹³⁸

Numerous books, dissertations, theses, journals, and magazines were examined. First, sources that dealt with the broader topics of Christian spiritual formation and discipleship were gathered and reviewed. Second, sources were collected and evaluated regarding the relationship between the worship ministry and discipleship. Third, as part of the research regarding the broader topic of discipleship, sources that document how worship ministries practice discipleship, including models and strategies for discipleship, were analyzed.

There were three phases of selecting a research topic on ministry. The main topic of interest was discipleship and the worship ministry. However, this needed to be a narrower focus.

¹³⁷ Schensul, “Methodology,” 520.

¹³⁸ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 13.

The first step involved a database search using the terms *discipleship* and *music, worship ministry* and *discipleship*, and other combinations. Second, the topic was narrowed to discipleship within the worship ministry. Third, the topic was further winnowed to a more focused problem: discipling worship ministry volunteers. The database searches yielded many sources on discipling, discipleship, and discipleship in the worship ministry, but few focused on discipling volunteer personnel in the worship ministry. Therefore, the topic was now decided: “Discipling Volunteer Personnel in the Worship Ministry.” The problem is suitable because it is of great interest to this researcher, and it represents a gap in the literature on discipleship for worship ministry volunteer personnel.

Analysis of Sources

Sources were analyzed for validity and reliability. As sources were deemed acceptable and appropriate for this study, they were compared for a natural emergence of common themes. Converging evidence from multiple sources was identified as credible.¹³⁹ Creswell and Schensul agree that notetaking and data collection are simultaneous procedures, including other evolving qualitative study elements.¹⁴⁰ The collection of data requires self-reflection upon personal notes and potential biases. One’s values, along with preconceptions, may combine with investigating the issue or affect the context, change the information gathered, or restrict or, in any case, twist or impact the researcher’s notes or observations.¹⁴¹ Schensul and Nowell et al. places emphasis

¹³⁹ Creswell, *Research Design*, 200.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 192; Schensul, “Methodology,” 520.

¹⁴¹ Schensul, “Methodology,” 520-21.

on the researcher as the instrument for collecting data.¹⁴² A synthesis matrix was used to aid the researcher in evaluating source material. In this regard, the researcher created an Excel spreadsheet to review, evaluate, and synthesize data gleaned from common themes and patterns among the various source material.

The principal technique used in this study is *thematic analysis*. Thematic analysis is a system for finding, evaluating, and recording themes or patterns contained in the data.¹⁴³ A theoretical thematic analysis is appropriate for this case study because it provides “a more detailed analysis of some aspect of the data [where the researcher codes] for a quite specific research question.”¹⁴⁴ When reporting the process, Braun and Clarke recommend the researcher provide enough information to describe the procedure and “detail of analysis” (80). This source analysis adds to the study’s validity when themes are established based on the convergence of various information.¹⁴⁵ Further, a *rich, thick description* was used to specify a complete account of the phenomenon and multiple viewpoints concerning themes, which rendered the results more accurate and abundant (Creswell, 200).

Analysis of Data

As Creswell describes, data analysis is akin to layers of an onion peeled away, including fragmenting and dismantling, then reconstructing the data (Creswell, 190-192). The data is arranged by category and sequentially evaluated during the data analysis (208). Swinton and

¹⁴² Schensul, “Methodology,” 520; Nowell et al., “Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16, no. 1 (October 2017): 2.

¹⁴³ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (July 2008): 79.

¹⁴⁴ Braun and Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis,” 84; see also Grandy, “Intrinsic Case Study,” 500.

¹⁴⁵ Creswell, *Research and Design*, 200.

Mowatt describe data analysis as a way to create order, organization, and direction to the complex number of qualitative data the researcher produces throughout the research.¹⁴⁶ Sensing acknowledges that “qualitative analysis requires some creativity, for the challenge is to place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories, to examine data in a holistic fashion, and to find a way to communicate the interpretation to others.”¹⁴⁷

Step one in the data analysis process involved taking personal notes and arranging and categorizing source material into various topics. The researcher created a synthesis matrix adapted from a Microsoft Excel workbook template used at John Hopkins University’s Sheridan Library.¹⁴⁸ The matrix included three worksheets: study summary table, source evaluation, and the synthesis matrix. The study summary table contained the topic or main idea, summary, results or conclusions, connection to other studies, and relation to each source material’s research project. The source evaluation asked questions about each source to include its currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose for selected documents. The synthesis matrix then provided notes on how each source connects to, provides information or insight on, and increases knowledge of emergent themes.

Step two: the sources were reviewed in detail, categorized by topic using thematic analysis, and notes studied for each source’s data (Creswell, 193). Thematic analysis is used to label, evaluate, classify, define, and record themes discovered in a data set.¹⁴⁹ At this stage, step three, a coding system was utilized to identify common themes evident in the source material

¹⁴⁶ Swinton and Mowatt, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 57.

¹⁴⁷ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 162.

¹⁴⁸ “Write a Literature Review, Synthesize Your Information,” John Hopkins University, accessed October 14, 2019, <https://guides.library.jhu.edu/lit-review>.

¹⁴⁹ Nowell et al., “Thematic Analysis,” 2.

(Creswell, 193-195). Step three: Main thematic categories were reevaluated in each source; continuous links were discovered, forming subthemes and a coding system. Schensul confirms that “continuous comparisons, as analytic codes emerge, should produce a final set of codes that can be applied to the entire data set and a set of comments, memos, and analytic summaries that can be utilized for overall analysis and interpretation.”¹⁵⁰ In step four, the coding system was used to evaluate the themes, subthemes, and categories generated (Creswell, 194).

¹⁵⁰ Schensul, “Methodology,” 521.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers, identify the benefits of discipling volunteer personnel, and propose models of discipleship for the worship ministry in the local church. The first three chapters of this study offered an introduction to the problem surrounding discipleship and spiritual formation in the worship ministry, a review of the literature regarding the relationship between the worship ministry and discipleship, and a survey of how worship ministries practice discipleship, including models and strategies for discipleship. This chapter will present the findings emerging from the data collected and analyzed to answer the research questions. In response to the first research question, the literature suggests that the challenges unique to discipling worship ministry personnel include the following:

1. A shift in focus from discipleship to programmatic concerns
2. A shortage of disciple-makers
3. Preference for musical skill over personal discipleship
4. Biblical literacy

Regarding the second question, the research produced two categories of advantages to include community and spiritual transformation. In response to the third research question, the literature review involved the following models: The Community Model, Personal-Proactive Discipleship, Cultural Discipleship, and Situational Discipleship; however, this chapter will only focus on the Community Model.

Challenges of Discipling Worship Ministry Volunteer Personnel

The Shift in Focus to Programs

As stated earlier, some of the challenges to discipleship include a shift in focus from discipleship to programmatic concerns, absence of discipleship, shortage of disciple-makers, and preference for musical skill over personal discipleship. What is the state of discipleship in the church? This question is essential to the corporate body's life and vitality; however, programming has prioritized the country. Programming is a restriction faced by church leaders implementing discipleship, as church leaders have been distracted from God's mission by programmatic concerns.¹⁵¹ It is a significant challenge for discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel and discipleship at large. It is a predictable shift in focus in terms of the church's mission. Brosius explains that most congregations have at one time started with a substantial emphasis on evangelism and "growing believers."¹⁵² This focus was accompanied by a desire to evangelize beyond the four walls of the church. By and large, this happened in the beginning phases when the church was first planted. Nevertheless, during the growth phase, the evangelistic worshipping communities began an inward shift to in-house issues, including traditions, programs, meetings, and committees. Here pastors tend to get busy with programs, neglecting to cultivate a faithful, "personal, intimate relationship with God."¹⁵³

Measuring church growth by the numbers has also taken away the focus on Jesus's mission of reproducing disciples.¹⁵⁴ The energy of many churches is spent on preserving "a

¹⁵¹ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 92-93.

¹⁵² Brosius, *Culture and the Church's Discipleship Strategy*, 125.

¹⁵³ Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 205.

¹⁵⁴ Churn, "Living By the Word," 21.

program of activities and church buildings.”¹⁵⁵ While these issues might not be entirely wrong, they effectively move the church’s attention to maintaining operations rather than on the Great Commission. Brosius further explains the steps to remedy the misguided shift.

Churches must ask the original questions that were asked from the beginning and that have become lost during the busyness of church life. These questions relate to the church’s purpose, mission, vision, and strategy to minister to the community. What does God want us to do? How are we going to minister? These questions are necessary to keep the church from straying into areas that will cause diversion from its most important task—following the mission. The church can do a lot of ministry, but that does not mean it is following its Great Commission mandate.¹⁵⁶

Misguided programmatic concerns are some of the reasons the Christian church has experienced a spiritual decline, a flatlining of its zeal. The shift to programmatic concerns has led to a lack of discipleship within the church, which, in turn, leads to spiritual decline. Yancy’s study noted sharp decreases in the Southern Baptist Church’s effectiveness in evangelism and membership preservation.¹⁵⁷ She proffers “that a decline in evangelistic effectiveness and membership denotes either a change in how the Southern Baptist Convention implements evangelism and membership or a need to change how they implement evangelism and membership retention.”¹⁵⁸ While the current research project does not focus on evangelism, it is the Great Commission’s first step. This research study focuses on spiritual growth through discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel.

One might think, “Is not discipleship a type of program?” On the contrary. Discipleship instructs others in following Christ or becoming Christ-like; a learning journey with Jesus Christ

¹⁵⁵ Brosius, “Culture and the Church’s Discipleship Strategy,” 125-126.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁵⁷ Yancy, “Discipleship as Understood and Practiced,” 5.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

as the master teacher.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, it is a way of living. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus invites His audience to listen, share, and follow the lifestyle He exemplifies (Matt. 11:29). McKinney asserts, “Discipleship takes time and individual attention. It is not a program to be mastered, but a relational life that the choir member lives with others.”¹⁶⁰ Discipleship is formational, studying the Scripture, adopting its principles to form one’s system of beliefs, resulting in the transformation of one’s mind as evident in their actions.¹⁶¹

There is a conflict between what Christians profess and the actual practice of their faith lived out in the world and the faith community—the body of Christ. The problem stems from historical developments where the overall trend has been away from God as the source and sound biblical theism imposed upon human culture. Church leaders, particularly pastors, are responsible for leading their ministry and lay personnel in discipleship. According to Yancy, “Senior pastors have a God-given responsibility to disciple the staff they lead.”¹⁶² The arrested spiritual growth within the church is caused by unfocused discipleship. In many aspects, church leaders have “failed the body because of a lack of proper discipleship.”¹⁶³ The lack of discipleship is most apparent in the church’s spiritual decline. Not only is this apparent in the congregation, but it is also evident in some worship ministries. Meaningful worship is hindered by institutional barriers, including the congregation’s and church leaders’ perceptions regarding

¹⁵⁹ Cherry, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” 196.

¹⁶⁰ McKinney, “Moving from Performance to Missional Worship,” 113.

¹⁶¹ Burggraff, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum,” 399.

¹⁶² Yancy, “Discipleship as Understood and Practiced,” 27.

¹⁶³ Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 1.

music and singing. They think the ministry of music is a prelude to the sermon. They also have a misplaced focus on church growth and misguided standards of evaluation.¹⁶⁴

The church needs a new disciple-making model for the twenty-first century to reverse its spiritual decline in this postmodern society. In designing the new process, the church must prefer the quality of its members rather than quantity. The discipleship strategy must be a process and system that is measurable. Brosius notes,

This process is often referred to as the assimilation process. The purpose of the assimilation process is to develop a flow of how Christians should be moving in their spiritual life and how they will function in the church during each stage of their growth. A good assimilation process considers where people are in their spiritual life and moves them forward toward maturity. . . . The discipleship process is important because it provides reason for the existence of all ministries of the church. . . . The process should be built to accommodate the whole church; from the children's ministries to adult ministries, everything is contributing to the process of building mature disciples.¹⁶⁵

Any program that does not have a clear direction and purpose for developing disciples are fruitless and should be discontinued.¹⁶⁶

Paul encouraged Timothy to appoint faithful persons for discipleship who are able and possess the gift of teaching. The time the disciples spent with Jesus was on-the-job training. It was an apprenticeship. As they developed in Christ's discipleship ministry, they became spiritual leaders on the Savior's mission to reproduce other disciples.¹⁶⁷ Before Jesus gave the Great Commission mandate, He recruited disciples, taught them to live. Paul comments, "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also

¹⁶⁴ Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, 29-31.

¹⁶⁵ Brosius, "Culture and the Church's Discipleship Strategy," 134.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁶⁷ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 107.

be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul’s method was not programmatic, but people-centered, as he encouraged Timothy to use his discipleship process by personally investing in the lives of others.¹⁶⁸

Discipleship is not a program to be followed or relegated to the faith community’s fringes, but it happens in a relationally dynamic community. Although discipleship is not a set of curricula for mastery, it is included under the Christian Education ministry. It is a process and personal approach, a relational one that happens while living in a community with other disciples. It is the Christian’s life mission, an entire reorientation of life, and ought to be woven throughout the fabric of all believers’ lives.

Shortage of Disciple-Makers

Many churches are experiencing spiritual and numerical deficit due to the disparate unfocused discipleship, particularly disciple-makers. It stems from “an acceptance of inactivity among current evangelical Christians [and] a de-emphasis in discipleship training within the church.”¹⁶⁹ This statement indicates that it would be challenging to find qualified disciple-makers even among the laity, as some Christians are content attending Sunday morning worship services and nothing more. They do not realize that the gifts they possess are to benefit the worshiping community. This shortage of disciple-makers is because Christians do not give any thought to the Great Commission and the role they have in carrying out God’s mission, and this is the beginning of the priesthood of all believers.

¹⁶⁸ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 206-207.

¹⁶⁹ Burggraaf, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum,” 397-398.

The commitment to discipleship as a lifelong endeavor is a requisite of effective disciple-makers. The church and its members must be disciples before they can make disciples. It would require strong faith with an accurate knowledge of the Scriptures to explain the gospel clearly. These persons must have undergone previous discipleship and spiritual growth.¹⁷⁰ Members and individuals in the congregation should demonstrate a life of discipleship, vital to a successful ministry.¹⁷¹ These requisites would help the church find disciple-makers who can disciple others the way Jesus did, and that is to teach, correct, admonish, support, comfort, and restore persons being discipled.¹⁷²

Worship in the Early Church began with the participation of believers throughout the worship experience. It starts with Jesus's call to discipleship, followed by baptism. Baptism is "the ritual act of worship by which the believer is identified with Christ and begins a new life of worship."¹⁷³ The worshiper is then empowered to worship with spirit and truth through the works of the Holy Spirit. These works involve the gifts of the Spirit. Challenges faced by the shortage of disciple-makers could be solved if church members discover and consistently use their spiritual gifts to serve God and others, primarily through discipleship.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 111.

¹⁷¹ Brenda B. Coljin, "A Biblical and Contemporary Model of Ministry" *Ashland Theological Journal* 27 (1995): 5.

¹⁷² Harvey, "Growing Together," 69.

¹⁷³ Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 419.

¹⁷⁴ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 2.

The apostle Paul tells us that every blood-washed believer has a spiritual gift, and it is not only for the one who receives it, but it is to spread the gospel and edify the body of Christ. Paul declares,

To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (1 Cor. 12:8-11).

The Holy Spirit was made manifest using spiritual gifts, and His power and authority were made known. The gifts were not to be kept by those who received them. They were for the instruction and advancement of the gospel and the body of Christ.¹⁷⁵ A good discipleship ministry requires spiritually mature Christian disciple-makers. The discipleship ministry also requires a biblically-based approach to discipling.

Preference for Musical Skill Over Personal Discipleship

A common occurrence among many worshiping communities is the tendency to focus on music as entertainment. The main problem is that church leaders choose worship ministry leaders based on “musical skill” rather than the candidate’s discipleship.¹⁷⁶ Sometimes that may be ok because once the worship leader has been hired, it is the church leader’s responsibility, particularly the pastor, to reproduce spiritually mature servants who are fully prepared for ministry positions.¹⁷⁷ The worship ministry volunteer personnel as artists are prone to such

¹⁷⁵ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Unabridged* (Electronically Developed by MobileReference), 23472, iBooks.

¹⁷⁶ Harding, “A Pilot Project,” 4.

¹⁷⁷ Boswell, ed., *Doxology & Theology*, 136.

character flaws as defensiveness, jealousy, emotional insecurities, perfectionism, and selfishness. These flaws are sometimes encouraged during the selection process; even in the day-to-day operations, church leaders are more impressed with the professional artistry of worship ministry personnel than with the candidate's heart posture. Consequently, worship leaders have a tremendous obligation to facilitate and instruct others, serving alongside them the same biblical training they received—the sound doctrine and the words of faith.¹⁷⁸

Biblical Literacy

Biblical literacy is essential to discipleship, and several scholars indicate how important it is to discipleship. One of the reasons why some churches are ineffective about making disciples is due to biblical illiteracy. Scriptural knowledge is vital to worship ministry volunteer personnel. They must be able to recall the teachings of Scripture to understand song texts and apply its principles to life. The study of Scripture adds vigor and wisdom that influences believers' personal and corporate worship.¹⁷⁹ God uses Scripture to nurture mature disciples transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁰ Without Scriptural knowledge, spiritual transformation is incomplete. Burggraff poses an important question: "How can one be a true follower (disciple) of the Savior if he does not know Christ's message and instruction?"¹⁸¹ Knowledge of the gospel message and teaching are marks of a true Christian disciple. Sprinkle suggests reading Scripture

¹⁷⁸ Michael Bleecker, "The Worship Leader and Scripture," in *Doxology & Theology*, Boswell, ed., 28.

¹⁷⁹ Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday*, 204.

¹⁸⁰ Vanhoozer, "Putting on Christ," 151.

¹⁸¹ Burggraff, "Developing Discipleship Curriculum," 401.

affects *right thinking* and *right living*, as discipleship is not solely about transferring information. Discipleship includes transformation—the renewing of the mind.¹⁸²

Spiritual transformation occurs when one applies biblical principles to his or her daily life. Noland encourages worship leaders to “read God’s Word with every intention of doing what it says, and it’ll change your behavior.”¹⁸³ Reading God’s Word is formational worship. As one reads the Word, one learns more about God and understands His nature and way of doing things. For example, when reading Psalm 119:9-16, one learns to follow God’s Word. In verse nine, the psalmist asks, “How can a young man keep his way pure?” He answers the question in the following sentence, “By living according to your word” (Psalm 119:9). God shapes one’s understanding of His nature, as one learns to seek the Lord with all their hearts continually. The more one worships in God’s Word; the further one stays from corruption. Bible reading is also formational because it is founded on theology, Scripture, and doctrine.¹⁸⁴

Benefits of Discipling Worship Ministry Volunteer Personnel

Community

Identifying and understanding the benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers is imperative to a productive ministry. The advantages of discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church include spiritual maturity, community, a cohesive and effectual ministry, and a more profound worship experience. After His death and resurrection, worship was no longer restricted to any single building because Christ is the New Temple, and His followers are called

¹⁸² Sprinkle, *Go*, 16.

¹⁸³ Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 458.

¹⁸⁴ Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 79.

the body of Christ. The body of Christ began as a worshiping community with the Twelve meeting often on Sundays to commemorate Christ's death and resurrection and, they did so in synagogues and temples. Later, Christians formed a new community of faith and worshiped in peoples' homes due to persecution. When the Early Church met, they did so to minister to one another's spiritual needs through the Word of God, prayer, singing, praise, and thanksgiving. Worship was more of an experience than the location, as it was about service to God and others.

As Christian artists, worship ministry volunteers are prone to character flaws such as defensiveness, jealousy, emotional insecurities, perfectionism, and selfishness.¹⁸⁵ These deficiencies detract from the Christian artists' ministry. So, Christian artists, and as is the case of this research study, worship ministry volunteers need the faith community for spiritual growth (Eph. 4:15), accountability (Eph. 5:21), fellowship (Heb. 10:23-25), and opportunities to serve (1 Cor. 12:7).¹⁸⁶ The basis of Christianity and, for that matter, discipleship is not so much a transformation but substitution. It is in the community that believers are formed, conformed, transformed into the image of Christ.

Believers are linked together in the church family through the blood and body of Jesus Christ. Parsley notes, "We are part of something greater than our own personal preferences."¹⁸⁷ The worship leader demonstrates and promotes an attitude of giving out of unselfish motivations. The leader implores team members to shift their focus from receiving to giving. In other words, "You think about what you can add to this family rather than what it can do for you."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 61-62.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 450-451.

¹⁸⁷ Parsley, *Messy Church*, 34.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

Scripture encourages Christians to draw near to Christ with a pure heart, and with the hope of enduring faith, serve one another and continue gathering for worship and mutual support (Heb. 10:22-25). This passage drives home the significance of forming relationships first with Christ and second with the new covenant believers. It is here in the worshiping community where believers are nurtured “in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). There is a relational aspect to discipleship in the community because it presents an atmosphere conducive to spiritual growth.¹⁸⁹ It allows for the coming together of peoples from different walks of life but having one foundational thing in common: their faith in Jesus Christ. It is one’s faith that unites them with their kindred.

The character and integrity of volunteer personnel as worship artists and ordinary persons serving in the worship ministry are as visible as their musical skills. Such problems as character and integrity may be attributed to the artist’s temperament and can hinder worship; however, life in the worshiping community requires personal attributes such as humility, integrity, and servanthood essential for living and serving in the faith community. Therefore, spiritual preparation is key to artistic ministry, as it readies one’s minds and hearts before performing or creating.¹⁹⁰ The faith community is the perfect place for the spiritual formation of the worship ministry volunteer through discipleship. This kind of discipleship is the body of Christ worshipping the Lord in communion with other believers representing principled service and working to instill “the truth that Christ has revealed”¹⁹¹ to reproduce other disciples.

¹⁸⁹ Meneely, “Transformative Learning and Christian Spirituality,” 93.

¹⁹⁰ Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 184.

¹⁹¹ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 209.

Spiritual transformation

Spiritual formation in the Christian community often refers to the practice of “being conformed to the image of [Christ]” (Rom. 8:29). Despite the emphasis on spiritual formation, discipleship, and sanctification, there are still misconceptions about the nature of being conformed to Christ’s image.¹⁹² One thinks of spiritual transformation “as a dynamic process, involving intentionality, structure, discipline, and congruence between outward communal activity and one’s interior spiritual life.”¹⁹³ Thus, one looks for signs of a changed life. Hicks argues that a changed life “is not the heart of our faith.”¹⁹⁴ He affirms, “At the root of my faith, it is not about me or my transformed life; it is about Christ and His life and death. Christianity does not begin with the good news of my life changed, but Christ’s life exchanged” (123). The mature Christian must understand that Jesus’s substitutionary atonement is the core of the Christian faith, and only with Christ’s atonement in mind can they freely proclaim and live the gospel message. It is evident in verses fourteen through nineteen of the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians:

For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So, from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:14-19).

¹⁹² Porter, “Will/Heart/Spirit,” 79.

¹⁹³ Abernethy et al., “Corporate Worship and Spiritual Formation,” 267.

¹⁹⁴ Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 122.

The power of transformation is the kind of unconditional love Jesus demonstrated for all when He died on the cross. That is what should compel spiritual transformation. The new creature is reconciled to Christ as they follow Him beginning this new transformation.¹⁹⁵ Spiritual growth takes place in the worship ministry volunteer personnel as they minister and receive ministry. This ministry received is in the worshiping community's transformative and missional power dispensing the Gospel's clear message. The gospel and the focus on Christ's substitutionary atonement is the power of salvation. Deliverance from habitual sins that are natural and rooted deeply in the soul, so to speak, are removed and severed by the Word of God, which is His sword (Heb. 4:12).

Participation in the worship ministry requires a focus on the believer's spiritual maturity. If worship team members are not disciplined and equipped, they cannot lead where they have not been. Johansson says, "Maturity is not an addition to Christian character at all. Rather, we exhibit Christian characteristics to the extent that we are mature. Maturity is the degree to which we have become like our Lord. It is a lifelong quest."¹⁹⁶ Haglund proffers, "We cannot expect people to engage in meaningful worship inside the worship event if they have not been trained and equipped, that is disciplined, to be engaged with God and what He is doing throughout the rest of their week outside of the worship event."¹⁹⁷ Likewise, one could not expect the worship ministry volunteers to lead others in a profound worship experience without participating in

¹⁹⁵ Richard L. Pratt, Jr., *Holman New Testament Commentary—1 and 2 Corinthians*, edited by Max Anders (Nashville: B&H, 2000), 326.

¹⁹⁶ Johansson, *Discipling Music Ministry*, 14.

¹⁹⁷ Haglund, "Worship Renewal through Discipleship," 3.

discipleship training. This last point will undoubtedly need to be addressed before continued participation in the worship ministry because God intends to mature every believer.¹⁹⁸

Models for Discipling Worship Ministry Volunteer Personnel

The purpose of this study was not only to examine the unique challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteers but to propose models of discipleship for the worship ministry in the local church. It was hypothesized that discipling worship ministry volunteers in the local church might be implemented by taking time during rehearsals, push-in strategies, or employing a discipleship curriculum for worship ministry participants over sixteen weeks during Sunday school. A review of the literature did not find evidence of the methods specified above. Research indicated that the church is returning to the communal nature of New Testament discipleship practices that are closely following Jesus's discipleship ministry. His discipleship ministry involves worship, community, service, and multiplication.

Jesus regularly took the time to worship God the Father in prayer. He invested in a small group of people, traveling and preaching His message of salvation, and all the while illustrating how to reproduce other disciples. The major problem is that there is no discerning use of spiritual gifts to advance the body of Christ and God's kingdom and general apathy towards participation in ministry service. If discipleship is to have a transformative influence over believers' lives, then one must walk lovingly beside others for a specified period. While we should not treat discipleship as a program, we must have an intentional guide for reproducing disciples.

¹⁹⁸ Johansson, *Discipling Music Ministry*, 14.

When the church's leaders emphasize discipleship and promote the need for service, the church becomes the functionally effective and healthy ministry God intended.¹⁹⁹ In the fourth through seventh verses in the twelfth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul highlights, "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:4-7). Christian believers gather to exercise the gifts Christ has given them for the edification of the body. Therefore, believers should understand the spiritual gifts God has given them and how they may be used to serve the worshiping community.²⁰⁰ Further, these believers must exercise their spiritual gifts for the upbuilding of God's kingdom. It involves reproducing other disciples with intentionality, thereby encouraging, preparing, and motivating others to become spiritually mature Christians who also make disciples.²⁰¹

The church as an assembly is vital for a believer's spiritual growth and maturity, and this community is a crucial setting for the advancement of solid relationships.²⁰² The Community Model of discipleship employs the mature believer and their spiritual gifts to edify the Body of Christ.²⁰³ Note what Henry writes concerning spiritual gifts; he says, "Gifts are bestowed for the

¹⁹⁹ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 3.

²⁰⁰ Lane, *The Worship Band Book*, 20.

²⁰¹ Ogden, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*, 73.

²⁰² Hughes, "A Discipleship Mentoring Ministry," 24.

²⁰³ Brooks, "Addressing Apathy in the Church," 100-106.

advantage and salvation of others.”²⁰⁴ The Community Model offers a setting that fosters spiritual growth through effective ministry, accountability, and unity.²⁰⁵

The Community Model

The church is an integral part of the Christian journey. It can “bring about Christian transformation: learning that is life-changing, whole life and lifelong for Christian discipleship, as well as learning that created growth in knowledge and understanding applicable to all areas of life.”²⁰⁶ Accordingly, church-based curricular projects encourage authentic, practical, and communal elements in pedagogy. In this way, pedagogy and theology are interrelated and codependent factors for transformation, with mutual experiences and a natural founding for learning encounters to great extents.²⁰⁷

In K-12 education, there is a method called *pull-out*, where students whose educational needs are more significant are pulled out of the general education classroom to receive specialized instruction, usually in smaller groups. A comparable practice of grouping students with the same needs is *push-in* groups; however, in this instance, another educator acts as a co-teacher alongside the regular education teacher inside the classroom.²⁰⁸ Using the “push-in”²⁰⁹ strategy to involve mature Christians in the church’s discipleship efforts will come under the Christian Education ministry. Utilizing the Community Model of Discipleship and the push-in

²⁰⁴ Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary*, 23397.

²⁰⁵ Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 118.

²⁰⁶ Meneely, “Transformative Learning and Christian Spirituality,” 96.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

²⁰⁸ Chrystyna Mursky, “Pull-Out/Pull-In,” 1.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

approach as a framework, the Christian Education department would identify mature Christians who will take on the mission of discipling and equipping the worship ministry volunteers for service.²¹⁰

The Community Model follows the motto: ‘Sow, Grow, and Go!’ *Sowing* is the first step. It is a biblical concept central to Jesus’s ministry because it demonstrates how He repeatedly invested in others’ lives. He planted truth into their souls and being by forming relationships and gaining their trust. In the Gospel of Matthew and the eighteenth chapter, the writer illustrates how important it is to sow the seed of God’s Word into others’ lives. For example, Paul plants the seed, another watered, and God causes it to grow (1 Cor. 3:6). This model could be used for discipling in all local churches; however, the current study suggests the Community Model be applied to discipling the worship ministry volunteer personnel and the worship ministry in the broader sense. In this context, accomplished believers are sowing into others by discipling members of the worship ministry during weekly worship team, choir, or band rehearsals and meetings. These sessions will take place within a twenty or thirty-minute timeframe.

Sow, grow, and go

‘Sow, Grow, and Go’ are central to the Community Model of discipleship. *Sowing* is the first step. Jesus’s ministry represents this biblical concept demonstrating His recurrent investment into others. He planted truth into their souls by forming relationships and gaining their trust. Sowing requires three ingredients: relational vulnerability, the centrality of truth, and mutual accountability.²¹¹ Therefore, the mature disciple “must continue to invest in the lives of

²¹⁰ Max Anders, ed., *Holman New Testament Commentary—Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians* (Nashville: B&H, 1999), 1797q.

²¹¹ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 8.

new believers” with intentional and relational investment.²¹² These three represent intimate modeling, in that the disciple-maker is saying, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1).

The second step in the Community Model is the urgency to *grow*. The disciple must understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. In this session, personnel will be exposed to the true calling and nature of a disciple. The revelation and response come into play here, as being a disciple of Christ comes at a high cost. The disciple exchanges his or her life, as it is crucified with Christ then resurrected in Christ. It is also where the substitutionary ministry of Christ—exchanging His life to bear the pain of our sins is central to one’s faith as believers in Christ. Thus, the disciple begins to fulfill the call to live a life that has its cross deeply embedded within—loving God above all, taking up one’s cross, abandoning all to follow Jesus (Luke 14:25-33).²¹³

The first phase in growth would be a fundamental comprehension of what the Scriptures say about the Christian life. It will be a nine-week discipleship experience dealing with such issues as being a disciple, sin, redemption, defensiveness, servanthood, humility, jealousy and envy, and private worship. While most of the material deals with life application, the other topics are foundational. Included in this phase is the following Scriptures for Bible study and memorization, and spiritual readings (see appendix):

1. Being a Disciple – Luke 9:20-25, 51-62; Luke 9:23-24
2. Obedience – Ephesians 4:17-32; Ephesians 4:22-24
3. Sin – Genesis 3; Romans 3:23, 6:23

²¹² Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 111.

²¹³ Drissi, “What Is Transforming Discipleship?” 224.

4. Redemption – 1 Corinthians 15; Matthew 8:17
5. Prayer – Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8; Matthew 6:9-13
6. Worship – Revelation 4-5, Revelation 4:11
7. Bible Study – Psalm 119:1-6; 2 Timothy 3:16-17
8. Jealousy and Envy – Romans 12:5-15; Galatians 5:19-22
9. Servanthood – 1 Corinthians 13, Philippians 2; 2 Timothy 2:24-25

The third step is *sending*. Jesus declares, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20). The current study is not concerned with sending as in preparing worship ministry volunteers for evangelism. It is the spiritual maturity taking place in these personnel’s hearts and minds. Sending will be interpreted as lifestyle worship. Brooks points out that “this is a “sending out” of disciples for the sole intention of spreading the gospel for the cause of Christ.”²¹⁴ A healthy church is at the forefront of this model. Jesus’s ministry is the ultimate model for discipleship practicing spiritual disciplines, pouring into the lives of His followers, presenting them to God, and effectively transforming them into His image.²¹⁵ It is the church’s responsibility to promote healthy spiritual living, thereby fulfilling Christ’s mission.

Deeper Worship Experience

Discipleship is foundational to lifestyle worship and a critical trait that worship ministry personnel must demonstrate. Without it, leading corporate worship has very little significance to

²¹⁴ Brooks, “Addressing Apathy in the Church,” 115.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 120.

God. The day-to-day attitudes of Christian are a representation of worshiping God. These include reverence, communion, righteous living, obedience, trust in God's salvation, sacrificial thanksgiving, and fruitfully multiplying the earth as a representation of worshiping God. As the priests appointed to the Temple in the Old Testament, we must serve God and love Him consistently. In this way, worship is intended to be a ceaseless act. It is what occurs beyond the corporate gathering. It is inseparable from one's daily living and the body corporate; lifestyle worship includes personal discipleship. Lifestyle worship is a product of personal discipleship, sharing the Gospel, and demonstrating qualities of a Christian disciple in all aspects of daily life.

There is an established connection between discipleship and worship. When the worship ministry volunteer personnel are discipled and begin to focus on God's redemptive power through Jesus Christ in themselves and the church, a God-centered and more profound worship experience occurs. As the discipleship of worship ministry personnel is evident in fellowship with the congregation, we will witness a heightened worship experience. Church members will see worship ministry personnel living what they sing or perform. Moreover, when worship leaders engage in spiritual disciplines, it positively affects their relationship with Christ and the faith community. If worship ministry volunteer personnel were committed to discipleship, then corporate worship services would be Holy Spirit-filled, and people would be compelled to follow Jesus Christ. Likewise, one could not expect the worship ministry to lead others in a profound worship experience without participating in discipleship training. Therefore, if worship ministry volunteer personnel are equipped, trained in discipleship toward spiritual formation, they will likely be more attuned to God's work in their lives beyond while leading the believing community in a profound worship experience.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This final chapter will begin with a summary of the study to include an overview of its purpose and procedures, followed by a short discussion of the study's research findings and a discussion of the relationship between the findings and prior research. Limitations of the study will also be addressed. This chapter will offer church leaders implications regarding implementing discipleship for worship ministry volunteers in the local church. The closing section provides recommendations for future study.

Summary of the Study

Despite the benefits of biblical discipleship, the church administration often overlooks the worship ministry volunteer personnel in discipleship efforts. While some research addresses discipling worship leaders, there is limited research regarding discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel in the local church. As worship leaders, these volunteer personnel serves at the platform's forefront, and their ministry is only secondary to the senior pastor.²¹⁶ In this study, sources were gathered, examined, and analyzed to describe the possible challenges associated with discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel and to identify the benefits of discipling worship ministry volunteers and its impact on ministry effectiveness. Also, recent sources were reviewed to propose discipleship models that could be used to disciple worship ministry personnel.

²¹⁶ Robbins, *The Complete Worship Ministry Handbook*, 94; Johnson, "Back to the Heart of Worship," 126.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to describe the challenges associated with discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel, identify the benefits of discipling these ministry members, and propose discipleship models for worship ministry personnel in the local church. Although there is limited research specific to discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel, current research can be adapted and extended to address discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel in the local church.

The worship ministry is an integral part of the local church, and its members are servant-leaders called to minister to others' spiritual needs using music as a medium. Each week, they minister to God and others in prayer, singing, praise, and thanksgiving. The worship ministry itself involves many members in various roles, but they all serve one purpose. The worship team's biblical function can be traced back to 2 Chronicles, where their calling was and still is to be God's lead worshipers and lead warriors. These persons are often unpaid singers, dancers, instrumentalists, actors, or technicians serving in some capacity within the worship ministry, freely giving their time, talents, and gifts.²¹⁷ Therefore, qualities such as personal character, virtues, and talents are significant requisites related to their ministry's mission.

Research regarding the challenges of discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel revealed common themes found in Brosius, Burggraff, Hicks, and McKinney's works. Several themes emerged to include a shifting focus from discipleship to programs to support church operations, shortage of disciple-makers and absence of discipleship on the local level, musical skill preferred over discipleship, and biblical literacy. Every church was planted to evangelize and make disciples; however, those objectives were neglected somewhere along the way. The

²¹⁷ Suggs, "Music Training for Volunteer Church Music Leaders," 43.

church became busy with programs, failing to cultivate discipleship: a faithful, intimate, and personal relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ.²¹⁸ For the worship ministry volunteer and the worship ministry proper, the church must return to discipleship as a reorientation of one's life, a process and personal approach, a relational one that happens as the worship ministry volunteer personnel, among other disciples, live and learn. The shortage of disciple-makers is due to contemporary evangelical Christians' slothful behavior that renders them unable to recognize and use their gifts to benefit the worshipping community. They give little thought to their membership in the priesthood of believers or to the Great Commission and their role in carrying out God's mission.

The emergent themes from the research found in the works of Brooks, Noland, and Meneely involves advantages of discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel, and these included discipling in the communal setting contributed to their spiritual maturity and a more cohesive and productive ministry. McKinney suggests, "More scholarship is needed that teaches choir directors and worship leaders how to implement discipleship training in their training of choirs in the twenty-first century."²¹⁹ This research study acts on that recommendation by providing a plan for church leaders, including worship leaders, to disciple to worship ministry volunteer personnel based on areas of need.

The spiritual maturity of the worship ministry volunteer would benefit from the guidance of a community of disciple-makers. These mature Christians realize they belong to the priesthood of believers, and the spiritual gifts they possess are to be used for the benefit of the worshipping community. When the trained disciple-maker engages their giftings within the

²¹⁸ Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 205.

²¹⁹ McKinney, "Moving from Performance to Missional Worship," 116.

congregation, the church will experience a renewed focus on discipleship to help the church find disciple-makers who can disciple come into the worship ministry and disciple its volunteer personnel in the way Jesus did. That process teaches, correct, admonish, support, comfort, and restore persons being disciplined.²²⁰

A common occurrence among many worshipping communities is the tendency to focus on music as entertainment. The main problem is that church leaders choose team members and ministry volunteer personnel based on “musical skill” rather than personal discipleship.²²¹ There must be a process where the volunteer personnel is disciplined to become spiritually mature servants who are fully prepared to minister before the congregation. This research study proposes a model for such preparation.

Studying the Scripture, adopting its principles to form one’s system of beliefs, resulting in the transformation of the mind as evident in their actions,²²² is a central component of discipleship. To be a true disciple of Christ, one must understand His message and teachings and the principles and standards for living a Christ-like life, as recorded in Scripture. God uses His Word to nurture mature disciples transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Equipping occurs through practicing spiritual disciplines, i.e., solitude, Scripture study, prayer, worship, fasting, fellowship, and observing the sacraments.²²³ Training refers to developing faith, as in *the shield of faith* (Eph. 6:16) — unwavering trust and faith in Christ’s redemption (Eph. 6:16) and His

²²⁰ Harvey, “Growing Together,” 69.

²²¹ Harding, “A Pilot Project,” 4.

²²² Burggraff, “Developing Discipleship Curriculum,” 399.

²²³ Park, “Discipleship Principles and Applications,” 122.

righteousness planted in the disciple, strengthens the worship ministry volunteer's spirit against Satan's attacks.²²⁴

Bible study provides an opportunity for dialogue, sharing, and inspiring life-changing knowledge through self-awareness, life-changing values, and self-empowerment.²²⁵ Moreover, it adds vigor and wisdom that influences believers' personal and corporate worship,²²⁶ as God uses Scripture to nurture mature disciples transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.²²⁷ It is not merely moral instruction. The Bible is formational, revealing God's truth to the believer, affecting right thinking and right living. Discipleship is not solely about acquiring information but also about transformation—the renewing of the mind.²²⁸ In this way, the volunteer personnel may receive proper teaching regarding what it means to be a Christian disciple during life's battles. The weekly disciple sessions during worship ministry rehearsals and meetings include background Bible study and a memory verse.

Spiritual transformation occurs when one applies biblical principles to daily life. Noland encourages worship leaders to “read God's Word with every intention of doing what it says, and it'll change your behavior.”²²⁹ Scriptural knowledge influences every part of one's being. As the Word of God is read, the convert's living and thinking are transformed and renewed by the Holy

²²⁴ Henry, *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, 1154.

²²⁵ Meneely, “Transformative Learning and Christian Spirituality,” 98.

²²⁶ Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday*, 204.

²²⁷ Vanhoozer, “Putting on Christ,” 151.

²²⁸ Sprinkle, *Go*, 16.

²²⁹ Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 458.

Spirit. God's Word is the source of Christian doctrine, which ultimately leads to what one does; hence, the importance of engaging in biblical meditation and memorization.

Worship is not only the volunteer personnel's calling; it is his or her lifestyle. Worship ministry members trained in discipleship will be equipped for service within the local church, allowing them to minister so that the song texts exemplify Christ's image reflected in their ministry and lifestyle.²³⁰ The integrity of each individual and the collective is indicative of genuine worship. Whaley puts it this way: "Real worshippers demonstrate personal integrity."²³¹ The worship ministry volunteers' souls are cared for with character flaws and all by church leaders and spiritually mature congregation members. Worship ministry volunteer personnel who are disciplined and equipped are attuned to God's work, leading the congregation in a profound worship experience. Participation and inclusion in discipleship render the personal and corporate ministry of the volunteer personnel dynamic and transformative. Therefore, when worship ministry volunteer personnel are committed to discipleship, then corporate worship services may be Holy Spirit-filled, compelling others to follow Christ.

Worship ministry volunteers must not offer their gifts and talents out of an obligation to serve. Still, they must: 1) see their commitment in the church as a ministry, not as a simple act of community service; 2) be persons who are called and committed to serving, 3) confront interpersonal conflict and seek resolution toward unity in the worshipping community, 4) regard rehearsals as an opportunity to serve God, 5) be called by God to arrive at practice and services prepared, 6) be open and appreciative of feedback as they strive to give their best to the Lord, 7) live by the Spirit, shunning jealousy, instead, thanking God for the gifts He provides, 8)

²³⁰ McKinney, "Moving from Performance to Missional Worship," 115-116.

²³¹ Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 335.

persevere through discouragement and adversity, 9) called by God knowing their labor is not in vain, and 10) called by God to grow and answer God's call with humble reliance on Him.²³²

Limitations of the Study

This researcher acknowledges certain limitations of this study. When conclusions are being drawn regarding the research, the following limitations should be considered:

1. While research exists regarding engaging the worship ministry leader in discipleship, very little research exists regarding any discipleship geared specifically for worship ministry volunteer personnel in the local church. Thus, research regarding discipleship and the worship leader's involvement in discipleship training was extended to worship ministry volunteer personnel. Although there are many similarities between the demands and responsibilities of worship ministry volunteer personnel and worship leaders, these differences were not considered in this research study.
2. Research regarding discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel's discipleship in a communal setting conventionally includes participants' discussions; however, this study was conducted using document analysis as a primary element of the project design. It goes beyond interviews and observations directly to interpretation.

²³² Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 95-97.

Recommendations for Further Study

The following recommendations for future study are made based on the findings and limitations of this study:

1. A future study could consider qualitative and quantitative surveys and interviews of worship ministry leaders whose volunteer personnel have been intentionally disciplined. This future study would generate data to support the qualitative research reported here. The results of such a study could help churches fully prepare incoming volunteer personnel for worship ministry positions.
2. Future research may want to study the formation and implementation of small group discipleship for discipling worship ministry volunteer personnel over an extended period. This future study should examine the impact that type of discipleship has had on the worship ministry and the corporate worship experience.

Implications for Practice

Pastors and church leaders are faced with decisions on how best to provide opportunities for the congregation's on-going spiritual formation and continual discipleship beyond the weekly Sunday School and corporate worship services. These leaders must also include the worship ministry and its volunteer personnel in the church's discipleship efforts. This study provides a guide for church leaders and worship leaders to draw from when making decisions regarding implementing discipleship in the worship ministry.

Pastors and church leaders will need to select Christians who are mature in their walk with Christ to disciple worship ministry personnel. The spirituality of worship ministry volunteer personnel is a principal area of growth over professional artistry. One's musical skills should be secondary to his or her spiritual well-being. These character traits include humility, integrity, and

servanthood. Worship ministry volunteers need the faith community for spiritual growth. Their spiritual growth would be significantly enhanced as they are discipled in the context of community, formed, conformed, transformed into the image of Christ. Therefore, the volunteer personnel needs discipleship that addresses areas of need.

Research indicated that the church is returning to the communal nature of New Testament discipleship practices that are closely following Jesus’s discipleship ministry. His discipleship ministry involved worship, community, service, and multiplication. These can occur by adapting the “push-in”²³³ approach used in K-12 education to include the worship ministry volunteer personnel in the church’s discipleship efforts. Utilizing the push-in strategy, the Christian Education department would identify mature Christians who will take on the mission of discipling and equipping the worship ministry volunteers for service.²³⁴

Christian artists need the faith community for spiritual growth, accountability, fellowship, and opportunities to serve. Spiritual growth does not necessarily occur through formal instruction but in community, worship, and mission.²³⁵ The faith community is the ideal setting for the spiritual formation of the worship ministry volunteer through discipleship. This kind of discipleship is the body of Christ worshipping the Lord in communion with other believers working, professing, and practicing the truth made known by Jesus Christ.²³⁶ The volunteer personnel’s spiritual formation and maturity are influenced by these very actions experienced in the faith community. The worshipping community’s ability to nurture the volunteer personnel’s

²³³ Mursky, “Pull-Out/Pull-In,” 1.

²³⁴ Max Anders, ed., *Holman New Testament Commentary—Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians* (Nashville: B&H, 1999), 1797q.

²³⁵ Cherry, “Discipleship and Christian Character,” 195.

²³⁶ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 209.

spiritual maturity is realized in the sharing, telling, teaching, and showing of life genuinely transformed into Christ's image.

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Appendix

Recommended Resources:

Noland, Rory. *The Heart of the Artist: A Character-Building Guide for You and Your Ministry Team*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Ogden, Greg. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019.

Nine-Week Discipleship Session Guide²³⁷

Session Topic	Bible Study	Memory Verse	Reading
Being a Disciple	Luke 5:1-11, Luke 9:20-25, 51-62	Luke 9:23-24	Demands My All
Obedience	Eph. 4:17-32	Eph. 4:22-24	The Principle of Replacement
Sin	Gen. 3	Rom. 3:23, 6:23	Bewitched and Beguiled
Redemption	1 Cor. 15	Matt. 8:17	The Hope Jesus Offers
Prayer	Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8	Matt. 6:9-13	How Do We Pray
Worship	Rev. 4-5	Rev. 4:11	Handling the Trauma of Holiness
Bible Study	Ps. 119:1-6	2 Tim. 3:16-17	Inductive Bible Study
Jealousy & Envy	Rom. 12:5-15	Gal. 5:19-22	The Artist in Community ²³⁸
Servanthood	1 Cor. 13, Phil. 2	2 Tim. 2:24-25	Servanthood Versus Stardom ²³⁹

²³⁷ Adapted from Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019).

²³⁸ Noland, “The Artist in Community,” in Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 91-117

²³⁹ Rory Noland, “Servanthood Versus Stardom,” in Noland, *The Heart of the Artist*, 51-81.